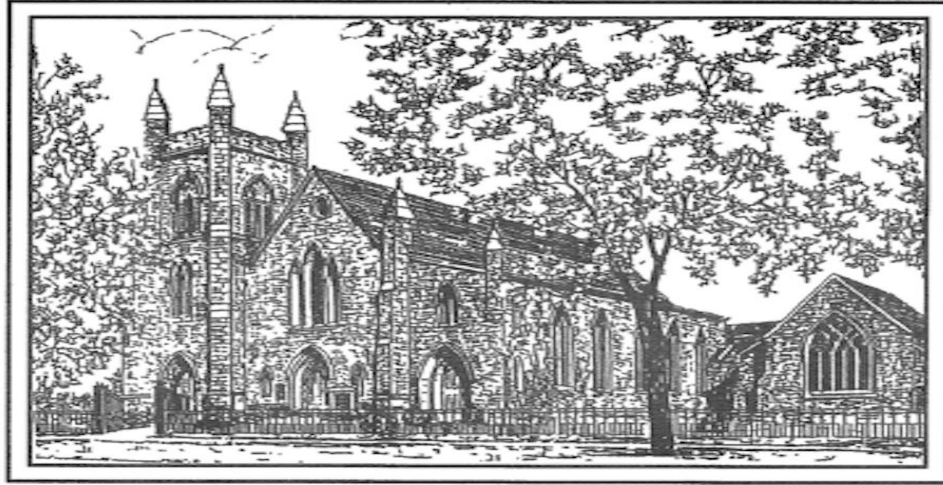


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Founded in 1680



*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 30, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

**Prelude**

*“Intermezzo”*

Brahms

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Introit**

*“He Has Made Me Glad”*

**Bringing Forth the Light of Christ**

Acolytes

**The Lighting of the First Advent Candle—the Candle of Hope**

One: We think of Hope as anticipation of something future, but in truth, Hope can be the incarnation of trust.

Many: **We trust in our Wonderful Counselor—that when we seek guidance, we will find answers.**

One: We trust that when we are exhausted, our Emmanuel will send someone to carry our burdens for a while.

Many: **We trust our Creator to renew our faith in community, in the goodness of others, and in the power of our empathy and action.**

Many: **We trust in our Beloved God, that, when everything around us seems too difficult, too broken, too devastating for us to put to rights on our own**

All: **Hope will appear, and we rush forward, arms open wide to receive grace. Amen.**

### **\*Call to Worship**

One: It is ancient as old as the first word because it is the first word ever spoken by a God, who was feeling the divine voice for the first time.

**Many: It's sound has taken many forms through the ages, but it speaks still, the single truth it always has.**

One: Some hear it beating swords into ploughshares others hear it hammering spears into pruning hooks and still others hear the original word that shaped these others the first word: the word, love. Amen.

### **\*Invocation**

Holy God of Hope, give us ears to hear and hearts to trust the promises you offer to us in this season of Advent. As we worship together, we offer ourselves to you and we open ourselves to your abundant grace. Amen.

### **\*Hymn**

*"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"*

PH #103

### **The New Testament Reading**

Isaiah 2:1-5

Doug Harrington

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that we can learn Lord's ways and walk in this path." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. God shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Reader: For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us

**ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD!**

### **The Gospel Reading**

Matthew 24:36-44

Doug Harrington

"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only God. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of God. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of God. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left.

Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Holy One is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Reader: For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us

**ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD!**

**\*Hymn**

*"Now Is the Time Approaching"*

NCH #609

**Message**

"Reflections"

Board of Deacons

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns**

**The Pastoral Prayer**

**Our Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Prayer Response**

Taizé

O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer;  
when I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer;  
come and listen to me.

**Offertory Invitation**

**The Offertory**

*"Three Shaker Songs"*

S. Kirchner

**\*The Doxology PH #515**

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Beloved Creator, we offer these gifts to you in the spirit of Hope. We place our trust in you and in those who faithfully care for your people, that these gifts will be used to protect and uplift those who are in need. Help us to remember our role to act as agents of your grace each and every day. Amen**

**\*Hymn**

*"We Would Be Building"*

NCH #607

**\*Benediction**

One: We began our worship with thanksgiving. Let us move out into the world with thanksgiving.

**Many: O give thanks to our God who is so good, whose love stands firm forever.**

One: Let thanksgiving enhance the joys we experience, let thanksgiving transcend the pains we may suffer, let thanksgiving sweeten the work we do in the world.

**Many: O give thanks to our God who is so good, whose love stands firm forever.**

One: The love of the Redeemer, the love of the Creator, the fellowship of the Sustainer, will be with us now and always.

**All: Amen!**

## **\*Benediction Response**

*Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.*

## **Carrying the Light of Christ into the World**

### **Postlude**

*“O Come, O Come Emanuel”*

Arr. J Broght

*~ Leading Worship today are the Board of Deacons ~  
~ Our Music Director and Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~  
~ Our lay liturgist today is Doug Harrington ~  
~ Our greeters today are Janine Beausoleil, Eleanor Ingraham & Clifford Gustafson ~*



*NCH = New Century Hymnal (black hymnal) and PH = Pilgrim Hymnal (red hymnal)*

*Sources and Credits: Hymn tune names - as well as composers of the music and authors of the text - are listed in the hymnals with each hymn. CCLI License #1958911 and One License.Net #A-728124.*

*The prayers used during this service were written by or adapted from the following: Maria Mankin, Raised Above/: Service Prayers for the First Sunday of Advent Year A, UCC Worship Ways, Advent 1A - November 30 - United Church of Christ; Roddy Hamilton, Mucky Paws, <http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/index.php/mucky-paws>, re: Worship: Advent 1 A; Joanna Harader, <http://spaciousfaith.com/>, re: Worship: Advent 1 A; and Ted Loder, Guerrillas of Grace, <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0014ENRR4/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?ie=UTF8&btkr=1>.*

## **Prayer List for Sunday, November 30, 2025**

### **For cares and concerns in the world:**

The citizens of the United States as we come together this Thanksgiving to remember the earliest aspirations and strivings of our country nearly 250 years ago

Members of our local community who are experiencing food insecurity as well as frustration about access to health care and or those who may be affected by a government shutdown

The Palestinian and Israeli people that they will be able to broker a lasting peace from the fragile negotiations in the ancient land of our spiritual ancestors

Peace in the Ukraine

Prayers for all victims of violence

Prayers for those who have lost their way may have wisdom, courage, and strength

### **For those in need of healing on our prayer list:**

Rev. Nancy Soukup

Our congregation family as we recover from the fire on October 31

Mary Ann, who is recovering after surgery, and for all those who are preparing for surgery and are recovering from their procedures

Angel Rose, a local teenager who is in the hospital after neurosurgery and for her family  
Marina, as she mourns the loss of her friend Kaitlyn Bric  
The residents of Atria Senior Living Residence, where a COVID required a lockdown recently and  
for the recovery of all those who had COVID  
Bill Walsh, who is at the VA Hospital  
Tommy, who is dealing with a degenerative muscular disorder  
Sug Grant, who is undergoing evaluation for cancer treatment  
Sally Evans, who is undergoing tests in preparation for surgery  
Ronald Blackburn, Rev. Nancy's brother-in-law, who is in hospice care, and her brother  
Alan Dana Soukup  
Kathy Conoway, Sug Grant's niece, who has Stage 4 Breast Cancer, which had been  
in remission but has probably reoccurred  
Kathy, Jen Johnson's cousin, who decided to return home against her doctor's recommendation;  
prayers for her safety and for Jen's Uncle Paul's safety as he tries to care for Kathy  
Kristen, calling on all available angels to gather around Kristen as she undergoes extensive  
chemotherapy treatments with a minimum of pain and discomfort  
Camille Pansa, who is recovering from a fall  
Sarah, Celeste's niece, who is nine years old and is waiting for a liver transplant  
Steve, Amanda, and Elliana Wiacek, Ed Wiacek's son and family, who have begun a  
three-year diplomatic tour at the U.S. Embassy in Manila, Philippines.  
Nick Chaccone, for recovery  
Ryan Higgins, Lilly Kilvert's son-in-law, who has Leukemia  
A beloved son, who is suffering from Leukemia  
Marty Costianes  
Renee that she may find resolutions to issues pressing in on her  
Claudia and her family, as she enters hospice  
Scott, Brenda, and Cameron, who need divine guidance and strength to follow  
God's path for them  
Max, for healing and freedom, and for his Mom  
Robin Vestal, who has Stage 4 Duodenal Cancer, and her husband Ulysses, who are friends  
of the Grant family  
Rusty, who has Lung Cancer  
Ellie's Dad, who she misses  
Carol, Karen's cousin, who had brain surgery  
Carrigan, who has cancer, and for Carrigan's nurse, Kristen, who is also  
being treated for breast cancer  
Ken Latham in Leicester, MA, who is on chemotherapy for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma  
Harriet  
Ryan  
Mark E., who has an aggressive form of prostate cancer  
Fred Davis, who has stomach cancer  
Meriel Smith  
Charlotte Griffith  
Kellie and Juan Morales's daughter  
Bruce C., who is in rehab, and Pat P., both friends of Ed Wiacek

## Upcoming Birthdays:

Beverly Larson 11/30  
Andrew MacKeith 12/02  
Susan Morettini 12/08  
Eleanor Ingraham 12/13  
Meriel Smith 12/21  
Barbara Sakstead 12/24

Dave Sartrys 12/07  
Melissa Fournier 12/09  
Susan Butler 12/18  
Ruth Fisher 12/21  
Rev. Nancy Soukup 12/27

Susan Brosnihan 12/07  
Barbara Ringland 12/10  
George Roach 12/18  
Diane Swire 12/22  
Naomi Carpenter 12/28

## What's on the Church Calendar

**November 30, 2025 Sunday Worship 10:00am FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
December 02, 2025 Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm  
December 03, 2025 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
December 05, 2025 Friday Trivia Night 7pm (DeWolf Room)  
**December 07, 2025 Sunday Worship 10:00am SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**Stewardship Sunday and Special Meeting to vote.**  
**Alternative Christmas Giving 11am-1pm (Dimond Room)**  
December 10, 2025 Wednesday Facility Meeting 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
December 11, 2025 Thursday Deacons Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)  
**December 14, 2025 Sunday Worship 10:00am THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**Private Event 3:00pm – 6:00pm Sanctuary**  
December 16, 2025 Tuesday Church Council Meeting 6:30pm (Dimond Room)  
December 17, 2025 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
December 18, 2025 Thursday CE Meeting (Zoom)  
December 20, 2025 Saturday Cookie Walk (Dimond Room)  
**December 21, 2025 Sunday Worship 10:00am FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**Christmas Pageant**  
**December 24, 2025 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 6:00pm**  
**December 25, 2025 CHRISTMAS DAY**  
**December 28, 2025 Sunday Worship 10:00am First Sunday after Christmas**  
December 31, 2025 NEW YEAR'S EVE

Please visit our website for more information about the Church and its events: [fccbristol.org](https://fccbristol.org)



## “Invitation to Share Time, Talent, and Treasure”

When you give to First Congregational Church, you make possible our ministries that serve all God's people. Your gifts share the love of Jesus all year long. The act of giving is our personal expression of worship and also keeps our church financially healthy. Stewardship is not payment for services rendered. It is an act of faith and devotion to God. You may go to the following link to give now: <https://fccbristol.org/support-us/>.



**Church Office Hours** are Tuesday – Friday 10:00am – 2:00pm

Office e-mail address: [office@FCCBristol.org](mailto:office@FCCBristol.org)

**Pastoral Office Hours** Tuesday – Thursday, 10:00am – 1:00pm

Call the Church office to schedule an appointment.

Church office line 401/253-7288 or e-mail [office@FCCbristol.org](mailto:office@FCCbristol.org)

To all the church

Below you will see all the vendors who generously gave to our Silent Auction. Please use them often and offer them thanks for helping us.

15 Point Road Restaurant  
1776 Liquors  
Abbigale's Salon  
Aiden's Pub  
Alfred's Consignments  
Ananda Hair Lounge  
Audrain Automobile Museum  
Audubon Society of RI  
Basil & Bunny  
Beau Bleu  
Black Duck Marine Canvas  
Blue Wave Car Wash  
Bristol Ace Hardware  
Bristol Bikes  
Bristol House of Pizza  
Bristol Sunset Café  
Caron Jewelers  
Chomp Kitchen & Drinks  
Clement's Market  
Common Pub & Grille  
Community String Project  
Crate Escape  
Destiny's Diner  
DeWolf Tavern  
Dudek Bowling Lanes  
Dunkin Donuts Gift Basket  
E.L.J  
Epilogue  
Feminine Fancies  
Fenwick and Oliver  
Folklore  
Four Town Farm  
Frerich Farm  
Gil's Appliances  
Herreshoff Marine Museum  
Intl. Tennis Hall of Fame Museum  
Interstate Navigation Co.  
Jenny & Company Salon  
Jesse/James Antiques

Johnson's Roadside Farm Mkt & Bakery  
Judge Roy Bean  
Le Central  
Leo's Ristorante  
Linden Place  
Mad River Glen Ski Area/Kate Sparrow  
Montaup Country Club  
Mystic Seaport Museum  
Newport Car Museum  
Organic Cleaning Specialist 2  
Paper, Packaging and Panache  
Pomodoro's Itaalian Kitchen  
Portside Tavern  
Quitos  
Pasqua's  
Riccotti's Sandwich Shop  
Roberto's  
Safeway Auto Sales, Inc  
Shaw's  
SIGHTSAILING of Newport  
S.S. Dion  
Stone Church Coffee House  
Stop & Shop  
Swansea Country Club  
The Beach House  
The Guild Brewing Co. in Warren  
The Revival Craft Kitchen & Bar  
The Lobster Pot  
The Mooring  
The Nest  
Tom's Market  
Tony's Seafood  
Wink  
WoofWoof  
Worcester Red Sox  
Your Bike Shop





# ***Alternative Christmas Giving Project***

**Alternative Christmas Giving December 7<sup>th</sup> 2025    11am to 1pm**

Since 2014, First Congregational Church in Bristol has invited area nonprofit service organizations to share information about their important work and to offer charitable donations as an alternative for those who may not want physical items as holiday gifts. On December 7, 2025, the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Alternative Christmas Giving event will be held at First Congregational Church. Between the selection and the opportunity to honor friends and family with charitable contributions.

Representatives from nine 501c3 nonprofit organizations will be present to share information about their missions and their critical work in the areas of health, social services, education, hunger, and the arts. The Deacons of First Congregational Church hope you will visit and donate generously as part of your holiday gift giving. If you are unable to attend this event, donations in the form of a check may be sent to the church office to be forwarded to the organization(s) you wish to support.

11<sup>th</sup> annual Alternative Christmas Giving event will feature:

**The Tomorrow Fund** (providing support to children with cancer and their families)

**East Bay Food Pantry** (decreasing hunger and increasing nutrition in the East Bay)

**Heifer International** (ending poverty and hunger in a sustainable way through agriculture)

**Matthew Patton Foundation** (providing education and advocacy to help active duty and Veteran service members achieve their best mental health)

**R.E.S.T.** (Resources, Education, Support, Together – recovery services)

**SHARE Foundation** (providing adaptive assistive technology to people living with disabilities)

**Community String Project** (providing affordable and accessible string music lessons)

**Bristol Animal Shelter** (providing Care and shelter for small animals ready for adoption)

**First Congregational Church** of Bristol (No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.)

## **First Congregational Church**

Church location 300 High Street • mailing address 281 High Street • Bristol, Rhode Island 401/253-7288 • FCCBristol.org





# Poinsettia Plants Order Form 2025

First Congregational Church  
281 High Street, Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

Fill in #1, OR #2 OR a combination of both

#1 I would like to donate \_\_\_\_\_ # (Quantity) of my plant(s).  
Is there someone you know who should be included in our plant ministry?

\*\* Name of shut-in \_\_\_\_\_

AND / OR

#2 I will take \_\_\_\_\_ # of my plant (s) home after the service.

Please fill in below for each plant you purchase so we may list it in the Christmas bulletin.

## Please Print

Please let me know which <u>In memory of</u> or <u>in honor of</u> or <u>?</u>	Given by:

(If you need more room, please use the back of this paper.)

The DEADLINE date for orders is Dec 17th . Please complete this form and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. Checks should be made payable to the First Congregational Church and sent in with this form. Please note "Christmas Flowers" in the memo. Plants will be \$ 18.00 each.

Please send order form and check to First Congregational Church, 281 High Street, Bristol, RI 02809  
Any question please give me a call Barbara 401/253-7288

*THANK YOU*



## KEEP THOSE RECIEPTS COMING



### A Community Partners Program with Clements Marketplace

Clements Marketplace at 1150 Hope Street in Bristol is engaged in their Community Partners Program. Twenty-seven years ago, they began this effort at their other locations to support organizations and groups in the area. By saving and submitting your Clements' shopping receipts, you help support First Congregational Church.

Where do I drop off my receipts? At First Congregational Church in an envelope marked receipts that is pinned to the bulletin boards in the Wardwell Room near the church kitchen and/or in the Narthex (the entrance of the church).

**Please save those Clements' receipts** and join with us in their Community Partners Program to benefit First Congregational Church! Please.

## Hands for Hospitality Are Needed

Church on Sunday is not really church without Coffee Hour. The morning feels incomplete without the time to sit, share refreshments, and chat following worship.

For many years, we've had a very dedicated group of Hospitality providers who Sunday after Sunday offer refreshments for us. They go about their work very quietly with a lot of dedication. However, this group needs an injection of helping hands to make our Coffee Hours happen.

Thus, the Hospitality Committee would like to do our fellowship time a little differently. They are putting out a call for your assistance on Sunday mornings to do set up, provide goodies, and clean up. Sign up with your family, fellow committee members, or use it as a chance to meet someone new or get to know someone in a different capacity. Let's try to meet the challenge of having everyone at church help take part in some small or big way this year with Sunday Coffee Hour Hospitality.

On most Sundays, a member from the Committee has signed up as a point person to train those newer to our kitchen. You can learn from the Committee volunteers as you help to put out snacks, coffee, juice and other treats for all to share. Then after Coffee Hour your help is needed with cleaning up the kitchen.

If you are not able to help on Sundays, all are welcome to consider shopping and or baking for Coffee Hour. Save your receipts if you would like to be reimbursed.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACA72BA7F94-58465024-sunday>