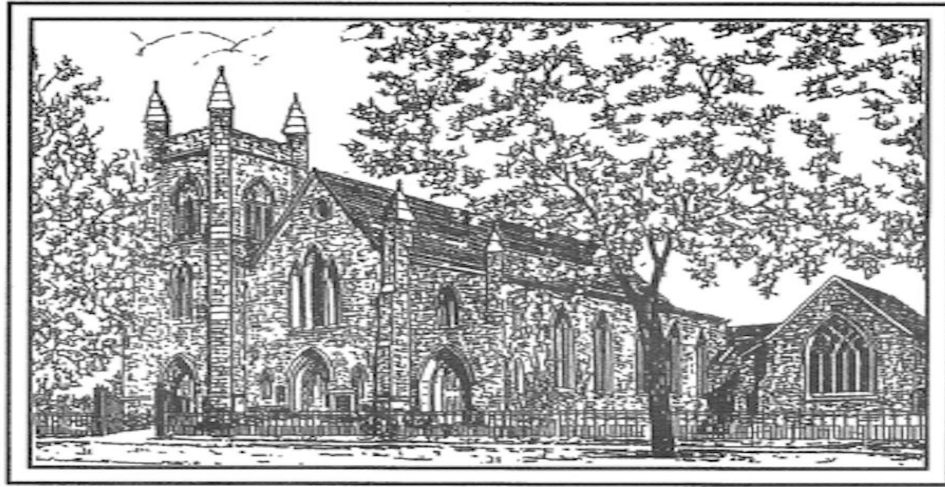


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Founded in 1680



Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
DECEMBER 21, 2025 ~ 10:00 am**

Prelude

“Mary, Boy Child”

Arr. J. Hariston

Welcome and Announcements

The Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle — Today we light the Candle of Love.

Susan and Tony Morettini

John 3:16 reads:

One: “For God so loved the world that God gave God’s Son.” God so loved the world—all of the world, not just certain humans, not just certain regions, not just certain animals or plants.

The author of the Epistle to the Romans reminds us that “all of creation awaits with eager expectation for the glory to be revealed.” The birds wait; the trees wait; and the oceans wait. God so loved all of this world, and our hope should be in redemption for all of creation.

**Many: As we light this candle of love, let us center our love and hope on all of creation.
(candle lit)**

Introit

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

***Call to Worship**

One: In this season of expectation
we prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah.

**Many: Into the bustle of our lives
and the hard to find moments of solitude
we prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah.**

One: Into our homes and situations
along with friends and families
we prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah.
**Many: Into our hearts, and those often hidden parts of our lives
we prepare to welcome Christ Jesus, Messiah.**

— written by John Birch and posted on the [Faith and Worship](#) website.

***Invocation**

Holy God, who weaves together the tapestry of our lives and the patches of our memories. We cherish the pieces of our diverse stories, and the beauty of narratives sewed together. We honor the ways these Holy Threads have connected us. May our lives be like a quilt to our souls, keeping us warm in this season of reflection. Amen.

***Hymn**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

PH #110 (verses 1-3)

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

God spoke again to Ahaz. This time he said, “Ask for a sign from your God. Ask anything. Be extravagant. Ask for the moon!”

But Ahaz said, “I’d never do that. I’d never make demands like that on God!”

So Isaiah told him, “Then listen to this, government of David! It’s bad enough that you make people tired with your pious, timid hypocrisies, but now you’re making God tired. So the Master is going to give you a sign anyway. Watch for this: A girl who is presently a virgin will get pregnant. She’ll bear a son and name him Immanuel (God-With-Us). By the time the child is twelve years old, able to make moral decisions, the threat of war will be over. Relax, those two kings that have you so worried will be out of the picture.

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 1: 18-25

The birth of Jesus took place like this. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. Before they enjoyed their wedding night, Joseph discovered she was pregnant. (It was by the Holy Spirit, but he didn’t know that.) Joseph, chagrined but noble, determined to take care of things quietly so Mary would not be disgraced.

While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God’s angel spoke in the dream: “Joseph, son of David, don’t hesitate to get married. Mary’s pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God’s Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus—‘God saves’—because he will save his people from their sins.” This would bring the prophet’s embryonic revelation to full term:

Watch for this—a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son;
They will name him Immanuel (Hebrew for “God is with us”).

Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God’s angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.

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!

A Christmas Pageant Story

Pageant participants

Brady Harcourt
Sam Harcourt
Tekla Bailey
Grace Donovan
Raymond Harrington
Grace Finucane
Sage (last name)

With additional assistance from

Liam Donovan
Caleb Walsh
Bella Crouse
Gabe Crouse
Katie Evans
Xochitl Naty Quezada Grant

Written by Katherine Harcourt and Amy Halt
Music with Nikita Zabinski, Director of Music

***Hymn**

"Comfort, Comfort O My People"

NCH #101

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

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

Offertory Invitation

The Offertory

"Christmas is Coming"

Joel Raney

***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**

God of Holy Darkness and Returning Light, we give our full hearts, knowing that you will bless this world with love. We give our full minds, knowing that you will bless this world with peace. We give our full souls, knowing that you will bless this world with hope. May the joy of your gifts encourage us to share the best we have, creating your realm here on earth. Amen.

***Hymn**

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

NCH #129

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

“Hallelujah”

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

“Carol of the Bells”

Arr. M. Leontovych

~ Leading Worship today are the Rev. Jametta Alston ~

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

~ 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.

Prayer List for Sunday, December 21, 2025

For cares and concerns in the world:

The members of the Brown University community as they mourn the death of two students and pray for nine students wounded in the shooting Saturday a week ago on campus

The Jewish community in Bondi Bay, Australia, who suffered the loss of many members due to a violent hate crime on the first day of Chanukkah

Rob Reiner and Michelle Reiner who died last Sunday and for all families dealing with addiction and mental illness in their families

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:

Juan Morales
Rev. Nancy Soukup as she recovers from surgery
Patrick McLean Blackburn
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
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 preparing for surgery in January
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 Chaconne, 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:

Meriel Smith 12/21	Ruth Fisher 12/21	Diane Swire 12/22
Barbara Sakstead 12/24	Rev. Nancy Soukup 12/27	Naomi Carpenter 12/28
John Ringland 01/01	Adria Sartrys 01/16	Steve Walsh 01/17
Lisa Andrade 01/18	Karen Griffith-Dieterich 01/21	Ryan Gamon 01/23
Mikey McGowan-Roach 01/23	Kara Pisasale 01/23	Glenn L. Donovan 01/25
Anne Archibald 01/27	Mike Oglo 01/28	Jarrold Riccio 01/28
Meredith Stone 01/29	Anthony Morettini 01/29	Sally Evans 01/31

What's on the Church Calendar

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
January 1, 2026	Thursday New Year's Day
January 4, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am
January 6, 2026	Prayer Shawl Circle
January 7, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 9, 2025	Friday Trivia Night 7:00pm
January 11, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after worship (Diamond Room)
January 14, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 18, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after worship (Diamond Room)
January 21, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 24, 2026	Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House (DeWolf Room)
January 25, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after worship (Diamond Room)
January 28, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

Please visit our website for more information about the
Church and its events: fccbristol.org



Would all member please update your Pledges for 2025
And if you haven't already please pass in your 2026 pledge Cards.
Thank you from your Stewardship Committee.

“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

Pastoral Office

Call the Church office to schedule an appointment.
Church office line 401/253-7288 or e-mail office@FCCbristol.org

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.

First Congregational Church at 300 High St. Bristol, RI

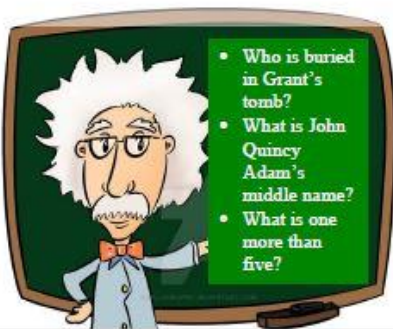
Team Trivia Night

This Friday, January 9, 2025 @ 7PM

**Ask Friends and Family and Come Join the Fun
Up to 8 Per Team**

- *Up to 8 per Team*
- *No Charge*
- *Bring Snacks and a Beverage*
- *Light Refreshments and Snacks will be available*
- *Prizes for the Top Finishers*
- *Call (401) 253-4813 to pre-register*

your team or send an email to dubordrjd@cox.net



Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents

*An Evening of Folk Music Featuring
Ellis Paul*



Photo Credit: Jack Looney

Saturday, January 24, 2026

Doors open at 6:45pm

Music starts at 7:30pm

First Congregational Church

300 High Street

(Corner of Bradford and High St)

Bristol, RI 02809

Tickets are \$25.00; Students are Half Price; Children 5 and Under are Free

Seating is Limited and Early Reservations are Recommended.

Please Call 401-253-4813 for reservations or ticket information.

