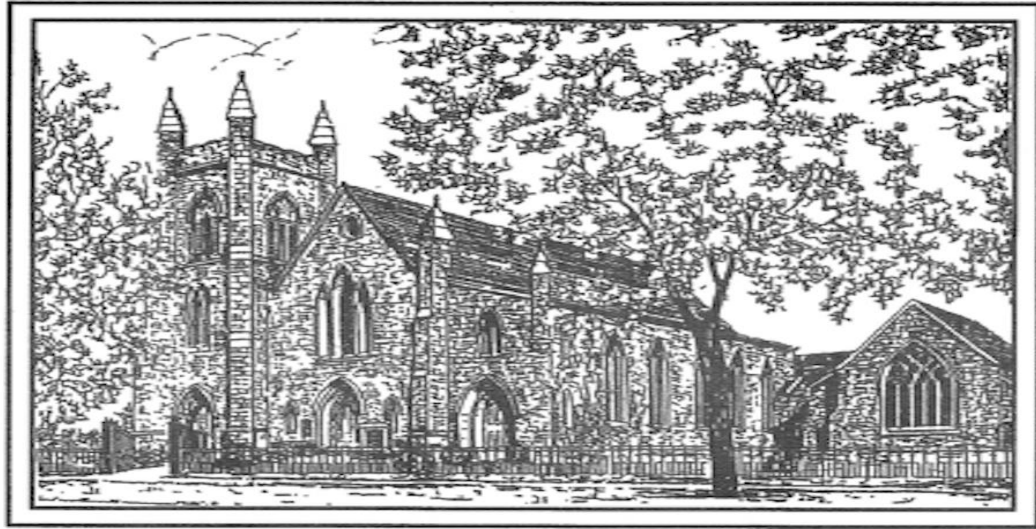


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS  
DECEMBER 28, 2025 ~ 10:00 am**

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Introit**

**Bringing Forth the Light of Christ**

Acolytes

**\*Call to Worship**

"When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
...To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart." ~ Howard Thurman

**\*Invocation**

## Seeking Light

In this season of waiting, of longing,  
of looking for you to come into our world  
We are seeking light  
In our own lives  
We are seeking light  
In our neighborhoods  
We are seeking light  
In our families  
We are seeking light  
In our work  
We are seeking light  
In Grace  
We are seeking light  
In our nation  
We are seeking light  
In our world  
We are seeking light  
Seek and you shall find  
Knock and the door will be opened  
Ask and it will be given to you  
Jesus Christ you are the light of the world  
May we have eyes to see you  
And ears to hear you  
Come into our world today  
Amen

**\*Prayer for Transformation**

## Unison Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,  
we would like to be among those who saw the coming of the Christ Child,  
those who dropped all that they were doing  
and traveled to worship the coming of God's love into this world.  
We would like to be those who cared for God in infant vulnerability;  
who tickled and cuddled and comforted the growing child,  
that he might know love and safety.

And yet, merciful God,  
we must recognize all the times we are more like Herod.  
Whenever we, in our actions or in our inactions,  
find our own need for control more compelling  
than the needs of others for health and safety.  
Whenever we cling to the security of our privilege,  
rather than standing up for the rights of the oppressed.  
Whenever we are complicit in the harming of innocents  
for the sake of profit, or power,  
or because we fear to know, and to change,  
the injustices of this world.

Loving God,  
we confess our sins against you and one another,  
and pray that you will fill us with your light,  
that we may live our lives as true disciples in your name,  
without counting the cost.  
In the name of Christ,  
the one who showed us the way, we pray. Amen.

~ written by Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, Pastor at First Church Congregational, Rochester, NH.

### **Assurance of God's Love**

~ written by Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, Pastor at First Church Congregational, Rochester, NH.

### **\*Hymn**

*"Good Christian Friend, Rejoice"*

NCH #129

### **Children's Moment**

### **The Old Testament Reading**

Isaiah 63:7-9

#### **All the Things GOD Has Done That Need Praising**

I'll make a list of GOD's gracious dealings,  
all the things GOD has done that need praising,  
All the generous bounties of GOD,  
his great goodness to the family of Israel—  
Compassion lavished,  
love extravagant.  
He said, "Without question these are my people,  
children who would never betray me."  
So he became their Savior.  
In all their troubles,  
he was troubled, too.  
He didn't send someone else to help them.  
He did it himself, in person.  
Out of his own love and pity  
he redeemed them.  
He rescued them and carried them along  
for a long, long time.

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 2:13-23

After the scholars were gone, God's angel showed up again in Joseph's dream and commanded, "Get up. Take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt. Stay until further notice. Herod is on the hunt for this child, and wants to kill him."

Joseph obeyed. He got up, took the child and his mother under cover of darkness. They were out of town and well on their way by daylight. They lived in Egypt until Herod's death. This Egyptian exile fulfilled what Hosea had preached: "I called my son out of Egypt."

Herod, when he realized that the scholars had tricked him, flew into a rage. He commanded the murder of every little boy two years old and under who lived in Bethlehem and its surrounding hills. (He determined that age from information he'd gotten from the scholars.) That's when Jeremiah's revelation was fulfilled:

A sound was heard in Ramah,  
weeping and much lament.  
Rachel weeping for her children,  
Rachel refusing all solace,  
Her children gone,  
dead and buried.

Later, when Herod died, God's angel appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt: "Up, take the child and his mother and return to Israel. All those out to murder the child are dead."  
Joseph obeyed. He got up, took the child and his mother, and reentered Israel. When he heard, though, that Archelaus had succeeded his father, Herod, as king in Judea, he was afraid to go there. But then Joseph was directed in a dream to go to the hills of Galilee. On arrival, he settled in the village of Nazareth. This move was a fulfillment of the prophetic words, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

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**

*"Sing a Different Song"*

NCH #150

**Message:**

"What is Next?"

Rev. Jametta Alston

**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**

**\*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**

Emmanuel, hear our prayer! We bring these gifts before you to spread peace throughout our homes, our communities, and our world. On every street corner, beside rivers, lakes, oceans, at the top of your tallest mountains, and dwelling below the cliffs, your people are in need. Take these gifts to strengthen our church and bring relief to your beloved children. Amen

### **\*Hymn**

*"Who Would Think What was Needed"*

NCH #153

### **\*Benediction**

### **\*Benediction Response**

*"Hallelujah"*

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

### **Postlude**

*~ Leading Worship today are the Rev. Jametta Alston ~*

*~ Our Pianist today is Patrick Dow ~*

*~ 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 28, 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

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:**

Tony Morettini In the hospital after a bad fall

Ronald Blackburn, Rev. Nancy's brother-in-law, who is in hospice care

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 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:

Naomi Carpenter 12/28

John Ringland 01/01

Lisa Andrade 01/18

Mikey McGowan-Roach 01/23

Anne Archibald 01/27

Meredith Stone 01/29

Adria Sartrys 01/16

Karen Griffith-Dieterich 01/21

Kara Pisasale 01/23

Mike Oglo 01/28

Anthony Morettini 01/29

Steve Walsh 01/17

Ryan Gamon 01/23

Glenn L. Donovan 01/25

Jarrold Riccio 01/28

Sally Evans 01/31

## What's on the Church Calendar

**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 10, 2026 Saturday Flower Committee un-deck the Church 9:30am

**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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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**

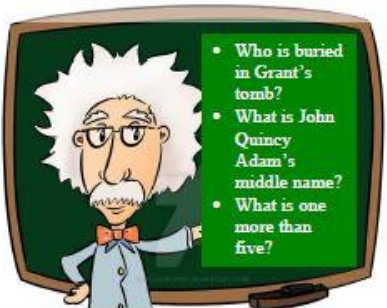
*Team Trivia Night*

*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](mailto: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.



Discover the Excitement  
**BRISTOL'S STONE  
CHURCH COFFEEHOUSE**  
*Live Acoustic Music Since  
2007*

