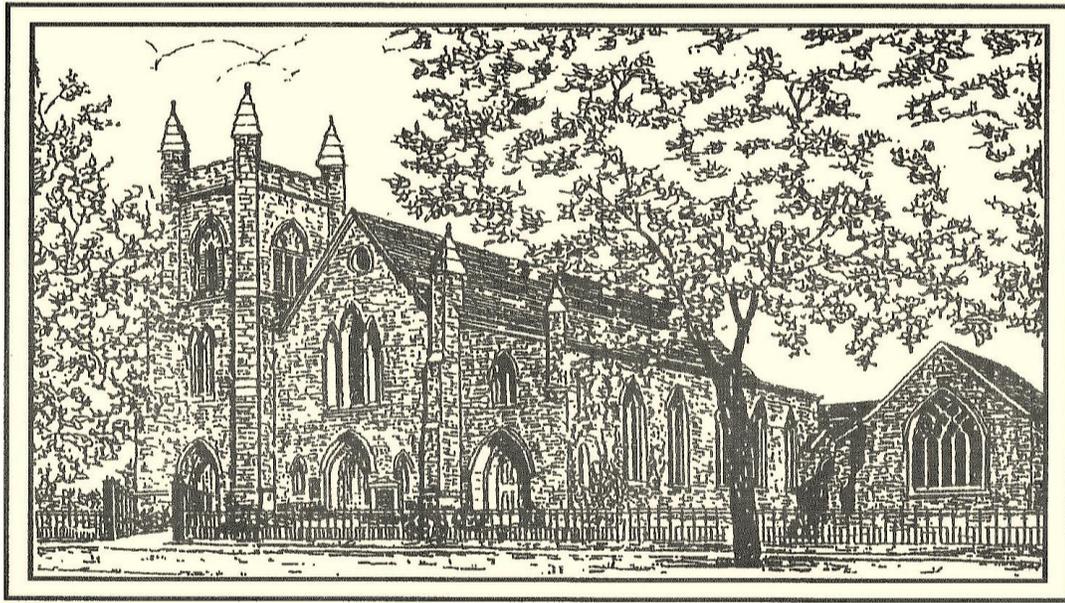


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

## FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

February 22, 2026 ~ 10:00 am

**Prelude**

*“La Carolina”*

JS Bach

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Introit**

*“Awesome God”*

R. Mullins

**Bringing Forth the Light of Christ**

Acolytes

**\*Call to Worship**

One: After he was baptized by John, Jesus went by himself to the wilderness where he was tempted.

**Many: Forty days in the desert, Jesus was tempted to become relevant, spectacular, and powerful.**

One: Today, we begin to journey with Jesus through the season of Lent, which brings us to face some of our own weaknesses and temptations.

**Many: Let us worship God and walk the journey together, seeking the spirit as our guide and companion along the way. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Invocation**

**God, you know our hearts. You have knitted together our inmost being, and you know our deepest desires, fears, and worries. Help us to journey during this Lenten season into a new awareness of your presence in our lives. Save us from our own temptations, so that we may more freely follow you. Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*“O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free”*

NCH #209

## **Children’s Moment**

### **The Old Testament Reading**

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Doug Harrington

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

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 4:1-11

Doug Harrington

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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**

*“Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days”*

NCH #211

**Sermon**

“In the Land of Good and Evil”

The Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup

## Sharing our Joy and Concerns

### 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

*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

#### Offertory

*"God's Peace"*

B. F. White

#### \*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

Holy God, by the grace of Jesus Christ you know the tests and trials we face. Walk with us through this wilderness. Come to us with ministers of healing and visit us with messengers of hope, so that we may return to you in faith, believing the good news of the gospel; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### \*Closing Hymn

*"God Marked a Line and Told the Sea"*

NCH #568

#### \*Benediction

#### \*Benediction Response

*God be with you till we meet again;  
By God's counsels guid, uphold you,  
With God's sheep securely fold you:  
God be with you till we meet again.*

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

#### Postlude

*"Prelude in E flat minor"*

JS Bach

*Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship*

*~ Leading Worship today is the Rev. Dr. Nancy Soukup ~*

*~ 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 #3066590 CCSD924 and One License.Net #A-728124. CVLI #505517348

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## **Prayer List for Sunday, February 22, 2026**

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

Prayers for those who died or were injured in the shooting incident at the Lynch Arena in Pawtucket this past week and for all victims of gun violence.

Members of our local community who are experiencing food insecurity

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—thanksgivings for his return to home from rehab

Juan Morales

Betty Soukup Blackburn and Patrick McLean Blackburn

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

Angel Rose, a local teenager who is in the hospital after neurosurgery and for her family

Bill Walsh, who is at the VA Hospital

Tommy, who is dealing with a degenerative muscular disorder

Sug Grant, who is undergoing cancer treatment

Sally Evans

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, and for Jen's Uncle Paul 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

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  
 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:

Jean Cotta 02/22	Ryan MacDonald II 02/22	Evelyn Crouse 02/26
Sandra Reynolds 02/27	Allison Allen 02/27	Roger Dubord 02/28

### What's on the Church Calendar

February 24, 2026 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
**February 22, 2026 Sunday Worship 10:00pm**  
 February 24, 2026 Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)  
 February 25, 2026 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
 February 26, 2026 Thursday Christian Education Meeting 6:30pm (Zoom)  
 February 28, 2026 Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm (DeWolf Room)  
**March 01, 2026 Second Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm**  
 March 02, 2026 Monday Lenten Book group 6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)  
 March 03, 2026 Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle  
 March 04, 2026 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
 March 05, 2026 Thursday Private event DeWolf Room  
**March 08, 2026 Third Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm**  
 March 10, 2026 Tuesday Facility Meeting 7pm  
 March 11, 2026 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)  
 March 12, 2026 Thursday Deacons Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)  
 March 13, 2026 Friday Trivia Night 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)  
**March 15, 2026 Fourth Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm**  
 March 16, 2026 Monday Lenten Book group 6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)  
 March 17, 2026 Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)

March 18, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
<b>March 22, 2026</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm</b>
March 23, 2026	Monday Lenten Book group 6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)
March 25, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
March 26, 2026	Thursday CE Meeting 7pm
March 28, 2026	Saturday Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm (DeWolf Room)
<b>March 29, 2026</b>	<b>Palm Sunday Worship 10:00pm</b>
March 30, 2026	Monday Lenten Book group 6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)

Please visit our website for more information about the Church  
And Events go to **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/>.



**KEEP THOSE RECEIPTS COMING**

**A Community Partners Program with Clements Marketplace**



Please save those Clements’ receipts and join with us in their Community Partners Program to benefit First Congregational Church! Please. 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 in the Narthex (the entrance of the church).

**Hands for Hospitality Are Needed:** Church on Sunday is not really church without Coffee Hour! The morning feels incomplete without the time to share refreshments and chat following worship. Since the fire in the church kitchen on October 31st 2025, Coffee Hour has had to adapt in its location and format as renovations take place. As of January 11th, it has returned to the DeWolf Room, but the re-opening of the kitchen is still many weeks away. Members of the Hospitality Committee continue their work each week in providing refreshments, but assistance is still needed on Sunday mornings to help set up, clean up, or provide goodies for this time of fellowship. If you are able to assist with any of these, there is no need to “sign up” ahead of time or to commit to a specific number of Sundays. Just show up and offer your help to the Hospitality members who are there! You may contact Sandy Patterson at 401-935-9066 or at [sandrasmpatterson@aol.com](mailto:sandrasmpatterson@aol.com) with any questions. Thank you!

**Church Office Hours** are Tuesday – Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm

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

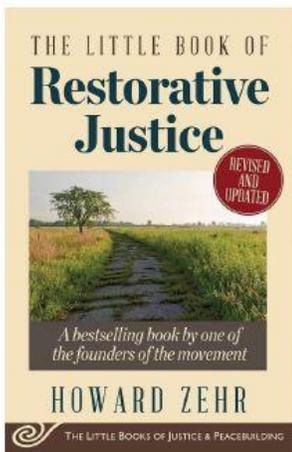
**Pastoral Office Hours**

You may also schedule an appointment by contacting Rev. Nancy.

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

**Lenten Book Group 2026**

**The Little Book of Restorative Justice  
by Howard Zehr**



Howard Zehr is known as the founder of the Restorative Justice process.

The Restorative Justice process began as another method to identify the justice needs between perpetrators and victims of crimes. It is based on the ancient art of talking circles in which a group comes together to work out problems, crises, conflicts to hear each other and find new levels of understanding.

However, Zehr's work has moved beyond use in the criminal justice system and now has been incorporated into multiple settings, including schools, community groups, and churches. In a world full of contention—restorative justice practice is a tool to open up constructive dialogue.

**Meetings:**

- Monday, March 2, 6:30 p.m., Guiteras House or Zoom.
- Monday, March 16, 6:30 p.m., Guiteras House or Zoom.
- Monday, March 23, 6:30 p.m., Guiteras House or Zoom.
- Monday, March 30, 6:30 p.m., Guiteras House or Zoom.

Books will be provided. Contact Rev. Nancy at [nhsoukup@gmail.com](mailto:nhsoukup@gmail.com).

**Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents**

*Irish Music and Dance Featuring*

**Kevin Doyle's Roscommon Soles**



**Saturday, February 28, 2026**      **First Congregational Church**  
Doors open at 6:45pm                      300 High Street  
Music starts at 7:30pm                      (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*



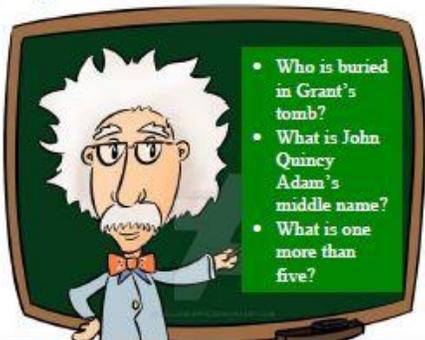
# **First Congregational Church**

*Team Trivia Night*

*Friday, March 14, 2025 @ 7PM*

## **Ask Friends and Family and Come Join the Fun**

- *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)*



## SPREAD THE LOVE

This February, let generosity be your Valentine! When you purchase a specially marked \$11.99 Bloomin' 4 Good bouquet at our selected Stop & Shop, \$1 goes directly to our organization. Your support helps make a real difference in our community.

<b>BENEFITING ORGANIZATION:</b> First Congregational Church in Bristol Ecumenical Meals  281 High Street Bristol, RI 02809	<b>AT THE FOLLOWING STORE:</b>  605 Metacom Ave. Bristol, RI Bristol, RI 02809
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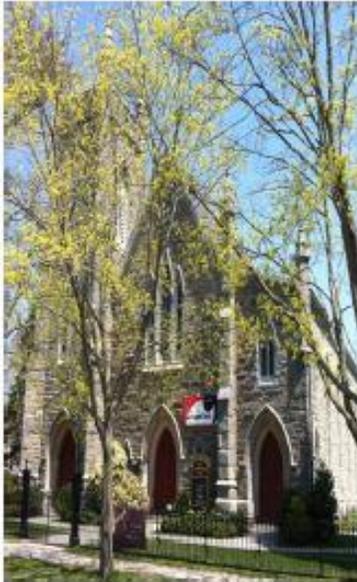
[stopandshop.2givelocal.com](http://stopandshop.2givelocal.com)  Bloomin' 4 Good program

# ***Lent & Easter Services/Events***

## **First Congregational Church**

300 High Street  
401-253-7288  
Bristol, RI 02809

Welcome to the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ,  
in Bristol. We are an open and affirming congregation and  
believe that God is still speaking to us.  
Wherever you are on life's journey you are welcome here!



### ***February 17<sup>th</sup> Shrove Tuesday Event***

*Dessert Bar Potluck and Donation Event  
for the East Bay Food Pantry at 6pm*

### ***February 18<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday***

*Labyrinth Walk Circle 3pm-6pm  
Worship Service 5:30pm-6pm*

### ***February 22<sup>nd</sup> First Sunday of Lent***

*Worship 10am*

### ***March 1<sup>st</sup> Second Sunday of Lent***

*Worship 10am*

### ***March 2<sup>nd</sup> Lenten Book Club Monday***

*6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)*

### ***March 8<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Lent***

*Worship 10am  
Daylight Savings—turn your clock ahead 1 hour*

### ***March 13<sup>th</sup> Friday***

*Trivia Night 7:00pm*

### ***March 15<sup>th</sup> Fourth Sunday of Lent***

*Worship 10am*

### ***March 16<sup>th</sup> Lenten Book Club Monday***

*6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)*

### ***March 22<sup>nd</sup> Fifth Sunday of Lent***

*Worship 10am*

### ***March 23<sup>rd</sup> Lenten Book Club Monday***

*6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)*

### ***March 28<sup>th</sup> Saturday***

*Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm*

### ***March 29<sup>th</sup> Intergenerational Palm Sunday***

*Worship 10:00am*

### ***March 30<sup>th</sup> Lenten Book Club Monday***

*6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom)*

### ***April 2<sup>nd</sup> Maundy Thursday***

*Choral Worship and Tenebrae 7pm*

### ***April 3<sup>rd</sup> Good Friday***

*Labyrinth Walk Circle Noon to 3pm (DeWolf Room)*

### ***April 05, 2026 EASTER***

*Sunrise Worship at Mt. Hope Boat Ramp 6:30am*

*118 Annawamscutt Dr. Bristol, RI*

*Intergenerational Easter Worship 10:00am*

*For information about any of these services or events, contact the church office  
at (401) 253-7288*

Church Office (401) 253-7288 • [Office@FCCBristol.org](mailto:Office@FCCBristol.org) •

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