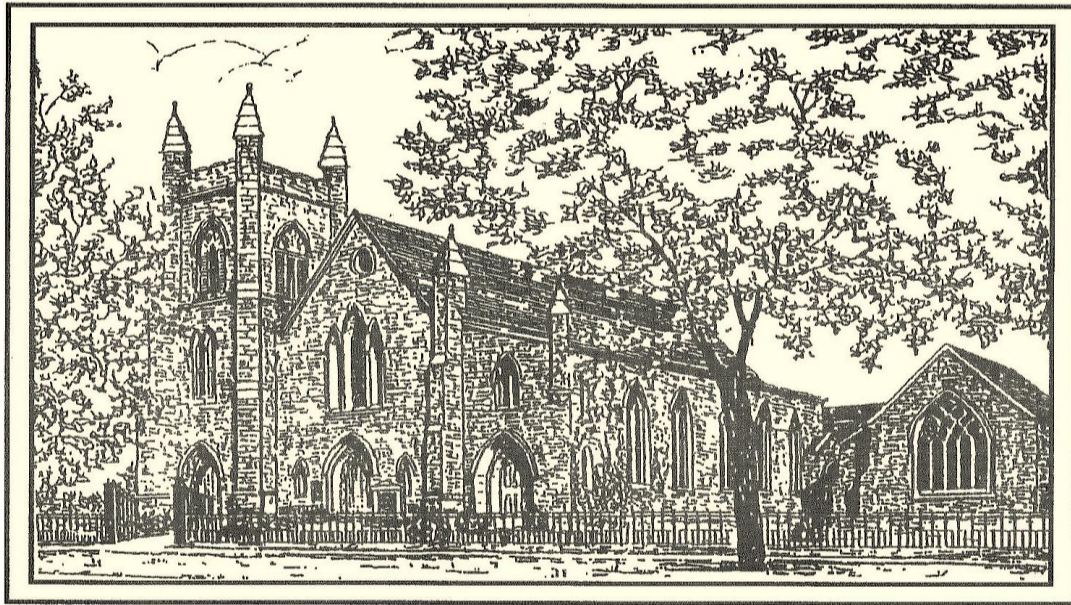


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 8, 2026 ~ 10:00 am

Prelude

“Christe qui lux”

W. Blitheman

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

“They’ll Know We Are Christians”

P. Scholtes

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

***Call to Worship**

One: Come, let us sing to Yahweh;

Many: **Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come into the Divine presence with thanksgiving;
Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!**

One: It is good to give you thanks, O Yahweh;

Many: **To sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and harp,
to the melody of the lyre.**

One: For you, O God, have made us glad by your work;

All: **At the works of your hands we sing for joy.**

***Prayer of Invocation**

Holy, Creating, Creative God,
We sing from the depths of our sorrow.
We sing from the abundance of our joy.
We sing in voices separate and unique.
We sing with one voice as your body.
May the words of our mouths, whether in speech or song,
and the meditations of our hearts, whether in prose or poetry,
be pleasing in your sight. Amen.

***A Prayer for Transformation**

Holy God, before time you named us
Through time you redeem us
You call us, precious in your sight
May we love as you love.

Holy One, through the turbulent waters
Make us steady, your hands
Holding strong the fragile and weak
May we love as you love.

Gracious God, may the fruits of our lives
be food for the hungry, bread
clothing, shelter, fire, water, Word
May we love as you love.

God of justice, remove the chaff
Of our lives that keep us from
Hearing, following, Your call
May we love as you love.

Loving God, take this day our fears our
Worries, distractions, and all
Turn them into wheat, heart food
May we love as you love. Amen

Unison Prayer of Confession

God of living water, we confess the dryness of our lives:
the brittle words we have thought and spoken . . .
the relationships that are crumbling . . .
the arid perspective that centers on self . . .
the cracked and jagged edges of our world . . .
Hear our confession, O Christ,
and rain down your mercy upon us.

[Silence]

Assurance of God's Love

Jesus says,
"Those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.
The water that I will give will become in them a spring of living water."

***Hymn**

"Praise to God"

NCH #5

The Old Testament Reading

Exodus 17: 1-7

Celeste Bernardino

All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Reph'idim; but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people found fault with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you find fault with me? Why do you put the Lord to the proof?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people murmured against Moses, and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand the rod with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Mer'ibah, because of the faultfinding of the children of Israel, and because they put the Lord to the proof by saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

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

John 4:5-42

Celeste Bernardino

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

Now when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again to Galilee. He had to pass through Samar'ia. So he came to a city of Samar'ia, called Sy'char, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samar'ia to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samar'ia?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in

spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

Just then his disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but none said, “What do you wish?” or, “Why are you talking with her?” So the woman left her water jar, and went away into the city, and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” They went out of the city and were coming to him.

Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him food?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

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** *“When, Like the Woman at the Well”* NCH #196
Sermon What is Missing in Our Lives The Rev. Jametta Alston

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 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

Offertory *“Lenten Song”* D. H. Williams

***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**

For the loving of the world, these gifts. For the flowing of the water, these hearts. For the coming of the God's realm, these lives. May it be so. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

"Just as I am"

NCH #207

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

*God be with you till we meet again;
By God's counsels guide, 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

"Sunset"

M. Magle

Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship

~ Leading Worship today is the Rev. Jametta Alston ~

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Celeste Bernardino ~

~ 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

Sources for this service are written by or adapted from the following: Joanna Harader, Spacious Faith blog; <http://spaciousfaith.com/>; and Terri, RevGalBlogPals, <http://revgalblogpals.blogspot.ca/>.



Prayer List for Sunday, March 8, 2026

For cares and concerns in the world:

Members of our local community who are experiencing food insecurity

Prayers for peace in the Middle East

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:

Bob Wilson

Tara, Steve Aveson's daughter-in-law who has been newly diagnosed with cancer

Charlotte Burnham's brother and for his improved health

Stephen, the nephew of one of our members, and for his recovery

Juan Morale

Tony Morettini

Betty Soukup Blackburn and Patrick McLean Blackburn

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

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 are 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

For thanksgiving:

Sug Grant, who has completed her cancer treatment
Gratitude for all those who helped this past week during the blizzard

Upcoming Birthdays:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------|--------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Lynne Ramos | 03/10 | Alma Ivor-Campbell | 03/11 | Sandie Campbell | 03/11 |
| Sasha Temple | 03/12 | Camille Pansa | 03/14 | Shawen Williams | 03/14 |
| Justin Riccio | 03/16 | Jennifer Johnson | 03/19 | Steven Brosnihan | 03/22 |
| John Tyler | 03/25 | | | | |

What's on the Church Calendar

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| March 08, 2026 | Third Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm |
| March 09, 2026 | Monday Outside Group Meeting 7pm (DeWolf room) |
| 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) |
| March 22, 2026 | Fifth Sunday in Lent Worship 10:00pm |
| 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 Christian Ed Meeting 7pm (Zoom) |
| March 28, 2026 | Saturday Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm (DeWolf Room) |
| March 29, 2026 | Palm Sunday Worship 10:00pm |
| March 30, 2026 | Monday Lenten Book group 6:30pm (Guiteras House or Zoom) |

Acolyte Training, Sunday, March 8 at 9:15

We will hold the second training for those who wish to be acolytes on Sunday at 9:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. These session will be led by Katherine Harcourt. All those interested should join her at that time.

Main Doors Closed after Service

After each service, we lock the main doors to the church. We wait until most have left the sanctuary. However, there have been occasions when people will come back through the sanctuary after Coffee Hour and exit through the main doors, which do not lock automatically, leaving the church unsecured. We ask that after the service, everyone exit the building from the DeWolf Room doors. We have signage now in the narthex that will help remind you. Many thanks.

Lenten Book Series

This Lent we will hold four sessions on the book by Howard Zehr, the *Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Our first meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 2, at 6:30 p.m. For this meeting, we will gather by Zoom because of the weather. I will have books at church on Sunday to give to those who have expressed interest in joining the group. Please let me know if you are interested. I will get a book for you and send you the zoom link for our first meeting. Rev. Nancy, nhsoukup@gmail.com.

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 with any questions. Thank you!

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

Office e-mail address: 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

**First Congregational Church
at 300 High St. Bristol, RI**

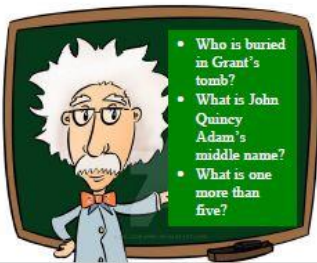
Team Trivia Night

This Friday, March 13, 2026 @ 7PM

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

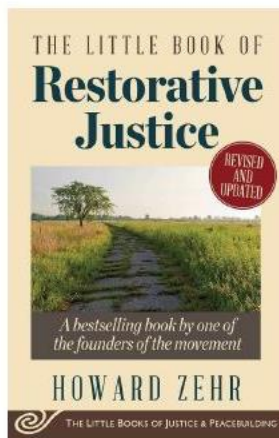
- *Up to 8 per Team*
- *No Charge*
- *Bring Snacks and a Beverage*
- *Light Refreshments and Snacks will be available*
- *Prizes for the Top Finishers*
- *Call (401) 253-4813 to pre-register*

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



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.

First Congregational Church in Bristol



**Sign up for Helping with
Ecumenical Meals**

You have been invited by The First Congregational Church to sign up for "APRIL Ecumenical Meals 13 MEALS."

Please consider cooking, baking, assembling or delivering as part of a team or as an individual. This is a great opportunity for the whole family. We have 13 recipients and will update when the current church delivering turns over the job to our Church on the last Saturday in April.

We have 4 Saturdays to prepare for, which is a wonderful blessing for our church to have the opportunity to bring light and nourishment to all who receive meals from the program.

WE NEED COOKS AND DRIVER FOR APRIL Saturdays.

Thank you for considering to serve through the Ecumenical Meals Program.

To sign up go to

www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4ACA72BA7F94-62680863-april#/

Lent & Easter Services

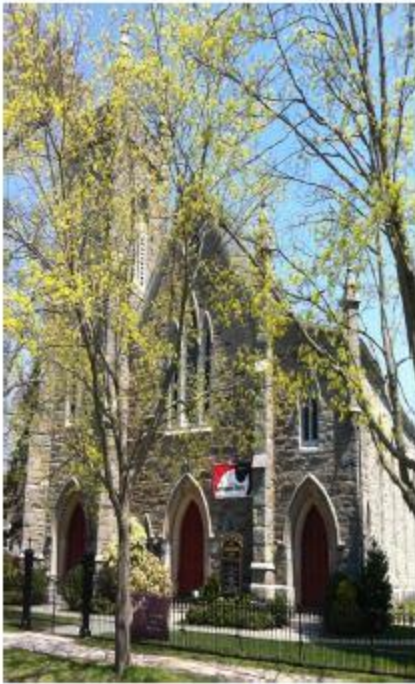
First Congregational Church

300 High Street

Bristol, RI 02809

401-253-7288 ~ office@FCCBristol.org ~ FCCBristol.org

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. Wherever you are on life's journey you are welcome here!



March 8th Third Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am

*The Rev. Jametta Alston, Guest Minister
Daylight Saving turn your clock ahead 1 hour*

March 13th Friday

Trivia Night

March 15th Fourth Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am

March 22nd Fifth Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am

March 28th Saturday

Stone Church Coffee House

March 29th Intergenerational Palm

Sunday

Worship 10:00am

April 2nd Maundy Thursday

Worship 7pm

April 3rd Good Friday

Labyrinth Walk Circle Noon to 3pm (DeWolf Room)

April 01, 2026 EASTER

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

118 Annawamscutt Dr. Bristol, RI

Intergenerational Easter Worship 10:00am

Officiating all worship will be The Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup

2026

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