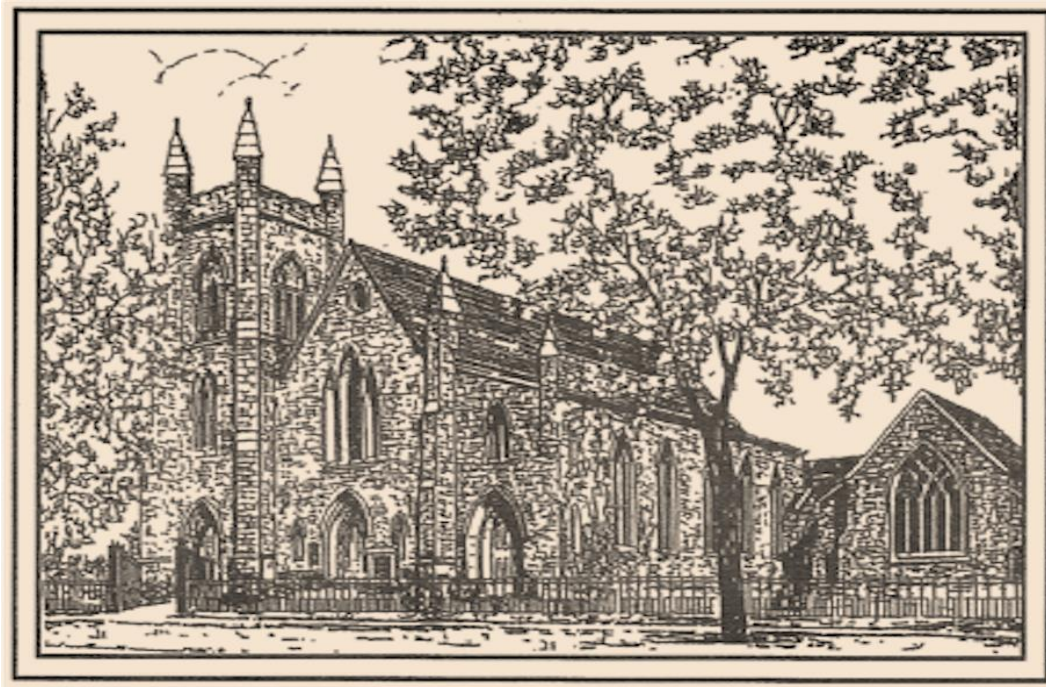


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026 ~ 10:00 am

Prelude

“I Organiste no. 1”

C. Franck

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

“This Is The Day”

I. Watts

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

***Call to Worship**

One: In the darkest valley,

Many: at the banquet table;

One: in the hard work of life,

Many: at the moments of ease;

One: in our day-to-day reality;

Many: at times set aside,

One: like this time, now,

Many: for worship, for listening, for paying attention;

One: with every step we take,

Many: goodness and mercy follow us.

ALL: our cups overflow. Amen.

***Prayer of Invocation**

Loving Shepherd, you know our names; you care for us. When we face darkness and death, walk beside us. When we hunger for your love, fill us with your presence. When we are fearful, feed us at your table. May we dwell in the house of goodness and mercy all the days of our lives. Amen.

***Hymn**

“My Shepherd Is the Living God”

NCH #247

Children’s Moment

The New Testament Reading

1 Peter 2:19-25

Karen Satti

For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. For to this you have been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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 10:1-10

Karen Satti

[Jesus said,] “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

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**

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

PH #80

(Prayer card requests will be collected by the Deacons during this hymn.)

Message

“To Have Life and Have It Abundantly”

Rev. Nancy Hamlin Soukup

Sharing our Joy and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

(The congregation will join in the responsive reading of Psalm 23 following the Pastoral Prayer.)

One: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Many: **He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;**

One: he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Many: **Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Many: **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long. Amen.**

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

Offertory

"Follow Me to Jordan"

Jay Althouse

*The Doxology PH #515

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known:

Creator, Word, and Spirit one.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*Prayer of Dedication

One: Merciful God, who is more than we can ever imagine, give us a wider vision of the world; give us a broader view of justice; give us dreams of peace that are not defined by boundaries of geography or race or religion or by the limitations of worldly structures and systems.

Many: **Open our eyes and our ears that wherever we go, we may hear your voice calling us by name; calling us to serve, calling us to share, calling us to praise, so that we never give up on the promise of your realm, where the world is transformed, and all can enjoy life in all its fullness. Amen.**

*Closing Hymn

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

NCH #478

*Benediction

***Benediction Response**

Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja. Halle, halle, halleluja. Halleluja. Halleluja.

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

“Sonata in B flat Major mov. 1, exposition”

W. A. Mozart

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

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Karen Satti ~

~ 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 used during this service were written by or adapted from the following: Joanna Harader, <https://spaciousfaith.com/>, re:Worship: Easter 4 Year A; Mary Petrina Boyd, <http://www.ministrymatters.com/>, re:Worship: Easter 4 Year A; Sally, *Eternal Echoes*, http://sallysjourney.typepad.com/sallys_journey/, re:Worship: Easter 4 Year A; Monthly Prayers, <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>, re:Worship: Easter 4 Year A; and Benediction excerpted from a longer prayer by St. Columba, re:Worship: Easter 4 Year A.*



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

Prayers for those who struggle with mental illness and that they have the resources for help and the courage to seek help

For those in need of healing on our prayer list:

A brother and his wife who are struggling

Grace, who is need of healing

Tracy, who is undergoing a difficult time in her life

Ray and Lorraine, for healing and a return to home

Bridget, who has had surgery for cancer

Rich Goldman, who is contending with Alzheimer's Disease and that he may enjoy days that reinforce the love so many send his way
Pat Cory, who is recovering at home from a recent illness and for her family and all who are supporting her
Bob Wilson, who is recovering from a recent illness and for his family and all who are supporting him
Barbara, as she travels
Dana Corbett, healing and happiness as she returns home from cancer treatment
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 Morales
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
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 thanksgivings:

A wonderful family who is so supportive

For those who have died:

Robin Vestal, a friend of the Grant family, who died from Stage 4 Duodenal Cancer, and for Robin's husband Ulysses, who mourns her loss

Merle Wassermn, who died recently

Julie Teeter, who died recently at the age of 96

Upcoming Birthdays:

Joanne Rotondo 04/26	Reinhard Battcher 3 rd 04/29	
Ellie Donovan 04/29	Leah Dieterich 04/30	
Karen Satti 05/03	Paul Temple 05/07	Jim Sapp 05/08
Michael Tyler 05/09	Allen Logan 05/09	Candace Alessandro 05/11
Oliver Crouse 05/11	Chris Frizzell 05/12	Laura Temple 05/12
Rev. Mary Aberg 05/14	Mark Dieterich 05/17	Bob Evans 05/24
Ray Frizzell 05/24	Dyan Vaughan 05/26	Gabriel Crouse 05/26
Cheryl Roger-Ramsay 05/28		

What's on the Church Calendar

April 26, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am
April 29, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
May 03, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
May 04, 2026	Monday Juniper Hill Cemetery Committee meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
May 05, 2026	Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm (Guiteras House)
May 06, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
May 09, 2026	Saturday Bristol's Stone Church Coffee House 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
May 10, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
May 12, 2026	Tuesday Facility Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
May 13, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
May 14, 2026	Thursday Deacons Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)
May 17, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
May 19, 2026	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
May 20, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
May 24, 2025	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
May 27, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
May 24, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
	Candace Alessandro Piano Classes Piano Recital 2:00-4:00pm (Sanctuary)
June 01, 2026	Monday Juniper Hill Cemetery Committee meeting 7pm (DeWolf Room)
June 02, 2026	Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm (Guiteras House)
June 03, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
June 04, 2026	Thursday Bristol County Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Sanctuary)
June 07, 2026	Sunday Worship 10:00am RALLY DAY
	Bristol County Choir Concert 1:00- 5:00pm (Sanctuary)

Please visit our website for more information about the Church and Events go to **fccbristol.org**



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

“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 RECIEPTS 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).

**Bristol’s Stone Church
Coffeehouse Presents**
*An Evening of Contemporary Folk Music Featuring
Tracy Grammer & Jim Henry*



Saturday, May 9, 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 for adults; 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.







*The First Congregational Church
of Bristol*

The Deacons have different scholarships available to all active members of the First Congregational Church of Bristol.

They have an Educational School Scholarship,
they have a Summer Interim Work Scholarship,
and they have a Summer Christian Camp Scholarship.

Please call the office to get an application 401/253-7288

All application are Due on May 1 2026

Thank you

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