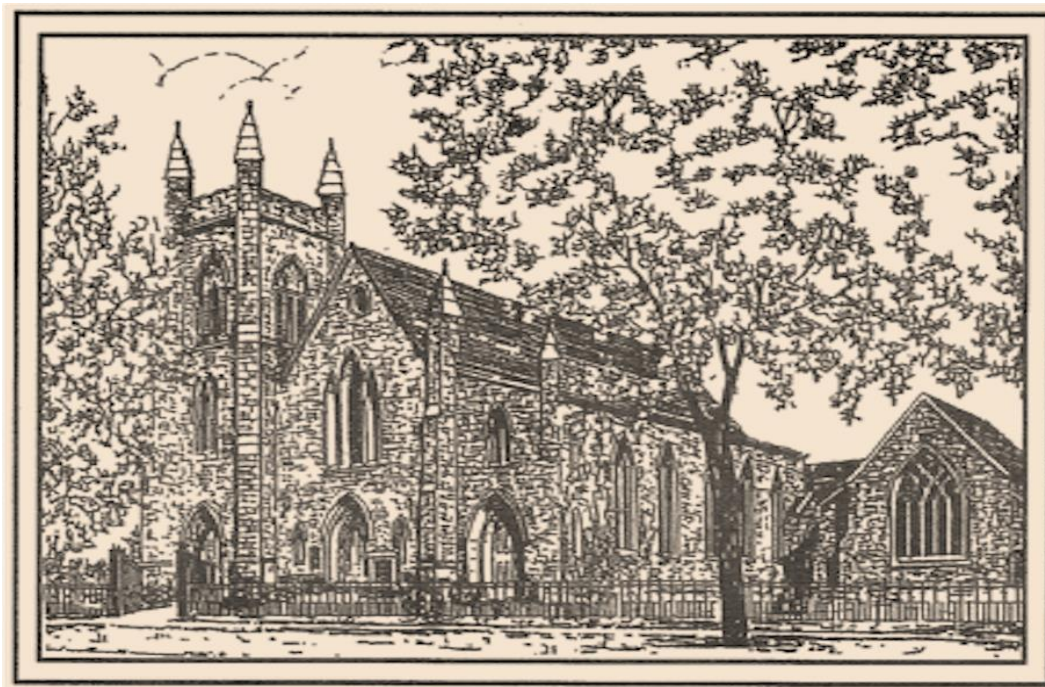


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

**ASCENSION SUNDAY
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

May 17, 2026 ~ 10:00 am

Prelude *“Four Seasons: Spring”* A. Vivaldi

Welcome and Announcements

Introit *“This Is the Day”* I. Watts

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ Acolytes

***Call to Worship/Invocation**

One: I tell you this: It is a wonderful thing when members of the family live together in love and peace.

Many: They shall be like trees planted beside flowing rivers.

One: May the church be one, just as Christ and God are one, so that Christ may be glorified in us.

Many: They shall yield good fruit in its season, and their leaf shall never wither.

One: The grace, mercy, and peace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.

Many: And also with you. Amen.

*Invocation

Holy Love, our Companion and Source, shower us with your presence, shelter us in your sanctuary, shield us with your peace. Open our receptivity to your Word, Wisdom, and Way. May our worship honor your name and draw us nearer to you and to our neighbors. Be glorified in our midst as we exalt your many Names. Amen.

*Hymn

"Hail the Day that Sees Christ Rise"

NCH #260

Children's Moment

The New Testament Reading

1 Peter 4:12-14;5:6-11

Dyan Vaughan

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange was happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that God may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on the Holy One, because of God's great care for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, staying steadfast in your faith, for you know that your siblings in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to eternal glory in Christ, will restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To our Loving God be the power forever and ever. Amen.

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 17:1-11

Dyan Vaughan

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Abba Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed."

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now, they know that everything you have given me is from you, for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me because they are yours. All mine is yours, and yours are mine; I have been glorified in them. And, now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

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**

“Beautiful Savior” from the Worship & Rejoice #105
(Congregation will sing this hymn three time.)

*Beautiful Savior,
Wonderful Counselor,
clothed in majesty,
Lord of history,
you’re the Way, the Truth, the Life.*

*Star of the Morning,
glorious in holiness,
you’re the Risen One,
heaven’s Champion,
and you reign, you reign over all!*

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

Message

“So that They May Be One, as We Are One”

Rev. Nancy H. 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

*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

“Every Time I Feel the Spirit”

Traditional Spiritual

***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**

Almighty God, by your Holy Spirit, you have made us one with your saints in heaven and on earth. Help us to see your presence burning in the hearts of others. Grant that we may be united in a fellowship of love and prayer. Give us the courage to pick up our cross and respond to the needs of the world. Give us the stamina to follow you, to be your hands and heart in the world. Enable us to witness to your grace and mercy. We pray all this through the love your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

“Alleluia! Gracious Jesus”

NCH #257

***Benediction**

One: As people of faith, we have gathered for worship.

Many: As people of faith, we now return to the world.

One: Go out to share the story of faith, the story of life, with the world around you.

Many: We share the faith in word and in deed, in speech and in action.

One: As you go out to give a living witness, as you go out to testify to God’s love active in the world, go knowing that God goes with you, sharing the laughter and the hope, the fears and the tears.

Many: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***Benediction Response**

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

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

T. Lybbert

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

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Dyan Vaughan ~

~ Our greeters today are Janine Beausoleil, Eleanor Ingraham & Clifford Gustafson ~

NEXT WEEK IS PENTECOST SUNDAY, May 24, 2026
The Birthday of the Church
In celebration, please wear something red to church
for the occasion.

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: The prayers in this service were written by or adapted from the following sources: Bruce Prewer, <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>, re:Worship: Call to Worship & Prayer: Easter 7; Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, *In the World: Service Prayers for the Seventh Sunday in Easter Year A*, *Worship Ways*, *United Church of Christ*, *Easter 7A - May 17 - United Church of Christ*; *Monthly Prayers*, *Christian Aid*, <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>, re:Worship: *Easter 7 Year A*; and Rev. Gord, <http://worshipofferings.blogspot.ca/>, re:Worship: *Easter 7 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:

Grace Steere, as she recovers from surgery this past week

Matt Benon, as he recovers from a fall earlier in the month

James Hackett, a 50-year-old nephew of Celeste Bernardino's friend, who had a lung transplant a year ago and is now battling several other medical issues

Roy and Judy Evans, who are Tori's parents, as they recover from illnesses

The family of Julie Teeter

Jimmy Lai, Hong Kong publisher, democracy advocate, and Christian, who has been imprisoned

Children and grandchildren to return to church to know Jesus and persevere in the Holy Spirit

Jacob Johnson and Emma Tirrell, as they deal with the two-year deployment of Emma to Guam, and as Jacob moves back home to RI from Seattle

Ray, Lorraine, and Kathleen for peace and healing

Sally Evans, who is recovering from successful surgery this past

Pat Cory, who is recovering at home from a recent illness and for her family and all who are supporting her

A brother and his wife who are struggling

Grace, who is need of healing

Tracy, who is undergoing a difficult time in her life

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

Bob Wilson, who is recovering from a recent illness and for his family and all who are supporting him

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

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

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 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

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:

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

May 17, 2026

Sunday Worship: 10:00am

May 19, 2026

Tuesday Church Council Meeting 6:30pm (DeWolf Room)

May 20, 2026

Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

May 24, 2025

Sunday Worship, PENTECOST SUNDAY 10:00am (Sanctuary)

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

May 27, 2026

Wednesday Soup Giveaway 11:00am-2:00pm (Location TBD) (HOLD)

FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

May 30, 2026

Saturday RI Historic Conference and RI Association Spring Meeting

3:00-5:30pm (Peace Dale Congregational Church)

May 31, 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 02-05, 2026

Tuesday-Friday Barbara will be out of the office

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 06, 2026 Saturday Betty Kile Memorial Service 12:00-3:00 pm
(Bristol VFW Post 237, 850 Hope Street, Bristol, RI 02809)
[Obituary information for Bette Ann Kile](#)
- June 07, 2026 Sunday Worship 10:00am Church School Sunday**
Bristol County Choir Concert 1:00-5:00pm (Sanctuary)
- June 09, 2026 Tuesday Facility Meeting
- June 11, 2026 Bosworth Lecture on Rev. Henry Wight, Sixth Minister of FCC 6:30pm
(DeWolf Room)
- June 14, 2026 Sunday Worship 10:00am** (Sanctuary)
- June 16, 2026 Tuesday Council Meeting 6:30pm (DeWolf Room)
- June 17, 2026 Thursday Bristol County Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (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 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! Where do I drop off my receipts? At First Congregational Church in envelopes marked receipts that are pinned to the bulletin boards in the Narthex (the entrance of the church) and the DeWolf Room.

Bosworth Lecture Pays Tribute to Rev. Henry Wight: patriot, pastor, and Founder of Bristol's July 4th celebration



The life and times of Rev. Henry Wight, founding pastor of our July Fourth tradition, will be the topic of the Bosworth Lecture Series on Thursday, June 11, 6:30pm, at First Congregational Church, (FCC), in the DeWolf Room. The event is free and open to the public.

Members of the church, Dyan Vaughan and Rei Battcher, will explore the life and times of Rev. Wight, who presided as the sixth pastor of the town's founding church for 44 years after serving himself in the Revolutionary War. The Historical Properties Room at FCC, which exhibits relics and documents from this era, will be open on this occasion.

Rev. Wight was outspoken in the areas of religion, education, civic life, and politics, and his daily journals chronicled life in Bristol from 1784 until his death in 1837. In 1785 he started the tradition of reading the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July, which continues to this day, making it the first patriotic exercise in the history of the country.

In conjunction with the Fourth of July Committee, and in tribute to the 250th Anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, Ms. Vaughan, Mr. Battcher, and Rev. Nancy Hamlin Soukup invite FCC member and the larger community to learn about the life of this patriot and preacher, to see how he was shaped by the Revolution, and to discover how his views influenced the Town he loved. The lecture will conclude with excerpts from Rev. Wight's Patriotic Address from July 4, 1809, read by Mr. Steve Brosnihan.

The Roswell S. Bosworth Jr. Lecture Series is presented by the Men's Club, a local organization that pays tribute to its founding member, former editor and publisher of the East Bay Newspapers, with lectures of interest to the public. FCC collaborates with the Lecture Series to hold the annual June lecture at the church.

CHURCH SCHOOL SUNDAY

JUNE 7, 2026



Follow by

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ALL ARE WELCOME