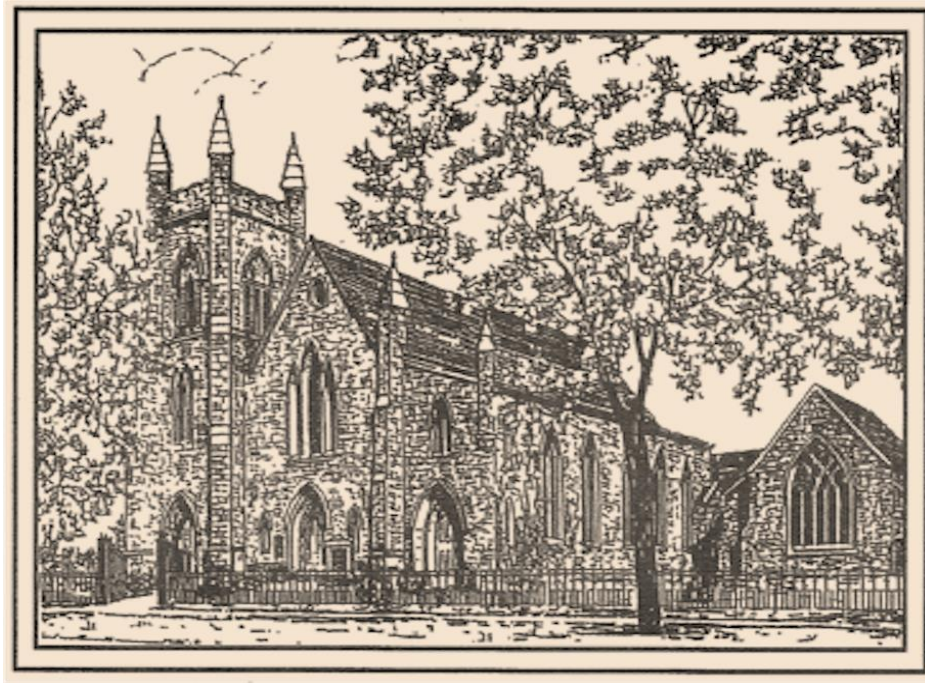


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AUGUST 30, 2026 ~ 10:00 am**

Prelude

“Come thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Mayo

Welcome and Announcements

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

***Call to Worship**

On: We come to worship this morning from different places.

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: We come to worship this morning for different reasons.

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: We experience the presence of the Spirit in different ways.

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: We hear Jesus’s words with different ears.

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: “Deny yourselves.”

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: “Take up your cross.”

Many: O God, do not be far from us.

One: “Follow me.”

Many: O God, we thank you for drawing near to us in this place, in our lives. Amen.

***Invocation**

Listen! God is calling! Can you hear it? Calling us to turn away from self-interest; to put down the things that distract us, to take up our cross and follow. Can you hear it? Amen.

***Hymn**

"I Would Be True"

(in back of bulletin, from NCH#492)

The New Testament Reading

Romans 12:9-21

Steve Brosnihan

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in afflictions, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says the Lord. Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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 16:21-28

Steve Brosnihan

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? For the Son of God is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of God coming in his realm."

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**

"Come, O Font of Every Blessing" (in back of bulletin, from NCH#459)

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

Message

"Abandon the Illusion"

Rev. Dr. Nancy 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

NCH #769 George Whelpton

*Hear our prayer, O God,
hear our prayer, O God;
incline your ear to us,
and grant us your peace.*

Offertory Invitation

Offertory

"Happy"

Artist/Composer Marina
Katherine Harcourt, solo

*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 Jesus, you call us into a life that others have told us is easy, but it is not. You challenge us to forgive, to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us. We want the easy way, but you have given us the hard path. Grant us the patience and endurance to journey with you, to allow ourselves at times to stumble, to live into the hard way so that we might fully experience your love, grace, and peace in this world by becoming a people full of love and grace and forgiving others. In your name we pray. Amen.

*Closing Hymn

"More Love to You, O Christ" (in back of bulletin, from NCH#456)

*Benediction

*Benediction Response

NCH #809

Thomas A. Dorsey/Artelia W. Hutchins

*God be with you,
God be with you,
God be with you till we meet again
O God be with you,
God be with you,
God be with you till we meet again.*

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

Schrader

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

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Steve Brosnihan ~

~ 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 k

Sources: Prayers from this service were written by or adapted from the following: Joanna Harader, <http://spaciousfaith.com/>, re:Worship:

Proper 17 A; re:Worship: Call to Worship: August 28, 2011; Steve Garnaas-Holmes, <https://www.unfoldinglight.net/>, re:Worship:

Proper 17 A; Nathan Nettleton, "Short Preface," www.laughingbird.net/LectureTexts/CP10.html,

http://actsofffaith.org/resources/downloads/Year_A/09%20Immigration_final.pdf, re:Worship: A Prayer for Neighbors; re:Worship: Prayer:

People of Love and Grace; and Jan L. Richardson, <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>, re:Worship: Blessing in the Round: Mark 8: 35.



FCC Prayer List

For cares and concerns in the world:

Our children and youth who are returning to a new school year

Our country, as we are in the midst of an election season

Members of our local community who are experiencing food insecurity

Prayers for peace in the Middle East and the Ukraine

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

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:

Norm, recently diagnosed with cancer; for his treatment to be successful and his spirit to be strong

Fred, who seeks healing for his leg

William, Joe Girouard's husband with a glioblastoma; Pat, Joe's mother-in-law; and Joe, who is a caregiver for both William and Pat

Johnson family, undergoing transitions as both Jacob and Sarah return home, and thanksgivings that Jacob has found a full-time job at RWU

Matt Benson, who is recovering from back surgery

Church Ramos's sister, who is recovering at home after being in hospital

Raye, Lynne and Church Ramos' granddaughter, who is undergoing medical tests

Caroline Jacobus, who is recovering from hip surgery

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

Nick and his family, as they find themselves between chemo cycles, living on hope and strength of character

Josephine

Chris Desusa, to be safe and well

Kathy Conoway, Sug Grant's niece, whose breast cancer has come back after eight years in remission; she will be getting additional treatment at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix

Barbara and Jack Ringland

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
 Ray, Lorraine, and Kathleen for peace and healing
 Bob and Sally Evans
 Tracy, who is undergoing a difficult time in her life
 Bridget, who 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
 Dana Corbett, healing and happiness as she returns home from cancer treatment
 Stephen, the nephew of one of our members, and for his recovery
 Juan Morales
 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, 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
 Nick Chaconne, for recovery
 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
 Kellie and Juan Morales's daughter
 Bruce C., who is in rehab, and Pat P., both friends of Ed Wiacek

Upcoming Birthdays:

Matthew Benson 08/30

Pam Vagnini 09/01

Isabella Crouse 9/08

Caleb Walsh 09/10

Alexandra Delgado Damiano 09/18

Megan Fisher 09/23

Gary Butler 09/04

Katie Evans 09/09

Erin Donovan 09/11

Sandy Patterson 09/25

Amy Halt 09/05

Sug Grant 09/10

Douglas Fisher 09/13

Shannon Evans 09/21

What's on the Church Calendar

August 30, 2026 Sunday Worship Service 10:00am (AC in DeWolf Room)

Sept. 01, 2026	Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm (Guiteras House)
Sept. 02, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Diman Room)
Sept. 03, 2026	Thursday NO Fitness class this week
Sept. 06, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
Sept. 07, 2026	HOLIDAY (Labor Day)
Sept. 08, 2026	Tuesday Facility Meeting (DeWolf Room)
Sept. 09, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Diman Room)
Sept. 10, 2026	Thursday Deacons Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)
Sept. 13, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am RALLY DAY/ Blood Drive (in front of church)
Sept. 14, 2026.	Caregivers' Support Group 6:00pm (DeWolf Room)
Sept. 15, 2026	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
Sept. 16, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Diman Room)
Sept. 18- 21	Rev Nancy away
Sept. 20, 2026	Sunday Worship: 10:00am
Sept. 23, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Diman Room)
Sept. 25 – 27	SNEUCC Annual Meeting (Worcester)
Sept. 26, 2026	Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
Sept. 27, 2025	Sunday Worship: 10:00am (DeWolf Room); special livestream service from the SNEUCC Annual Meeting, featuring the Rev. Sen. Raphael Warnock as the preacher
Sept. 30, 2026	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Diman Room)

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

Church office line 401/253-7288 or e-mail office@FCCbristol.org

Pastoral Office Hours: You may also schedule an appointment

by contacting Rev. Nancy at nhsoukup@gmail.com.

“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/>.



I Would Be True

Phil. 4:8-9

St. 1, 2, Howard Arnold Walter, 1917

St. 3, anon.; 48

1 I would be true, for there are those who trust me; I would be
 2 I would be friend of all, the foe, the friend-less; I would be
 3 I would be prayer-ful through each bus-y mo-ment; I would be

pure, for there are those who care; I would be strong, for
 giv-ing, and for-get the gift; I would be hum-ble,
 con-stant-ly in touch with God; I would be tuned to

there is much to suf-fer; I would be brave, for
 for I know my weak-ness; I would look up, and
 sense God's slight-est whis-per; I would have faith to

there is much to dare, I would be brave, for there is much to dare.
 laugh, and love, and live, I would look up, and laugh, and love, and live.
 keep the path Christ trod, I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod.

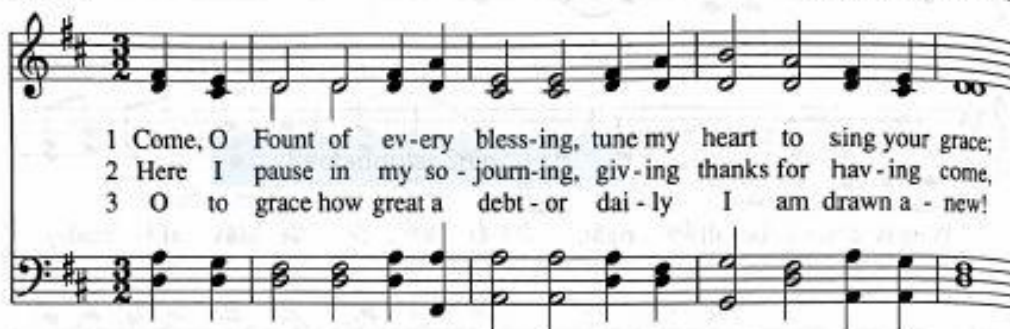
The first two stanzas of this hymn are from "My Creed," a poem that Howard Walter sent to his mother from Japan, where he taught English before becoming a Congregational minister. Walter died at the age of thirty-five while working for the Y.M.C.A. in India.

Tune: PEEK 11.10.11.10.10
 Joseph Y. Peek, 1911

Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Ps. 36:7-9

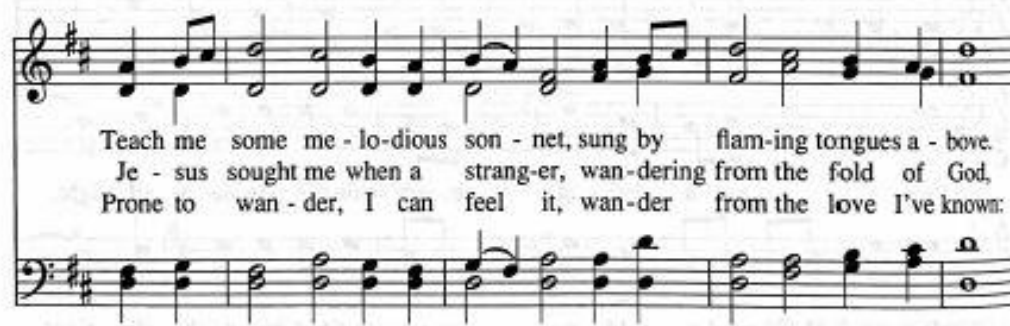
Robert Robinson, 1758; ed.



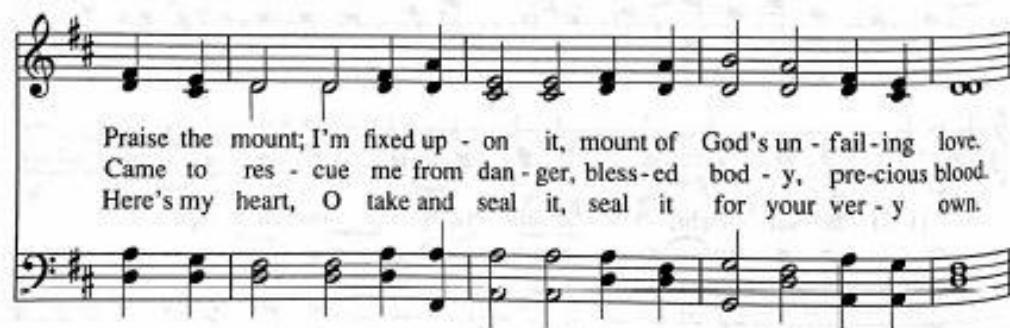
1 Come, O Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, tune my heart to sing your grace;
2 Here I pause in my so - journing, giv-ing thanks for hav-ing come,
3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I am drawn a - new!



streams of mer - cy, nev-er ceas-ing, call for songs of end-less praise.
come to trust, at ev-ery turn-ing, God will guide me safe-ly home.
Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to you.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a - bove.
Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God,
Prone to wan - der, I can feel it, wan-der from the love I've known:



Praise the mount; I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - fail-ing love.
Came to res - cue me from dan - ger, bless-ed bod - y, pre-cious blood.
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your ver - y own.

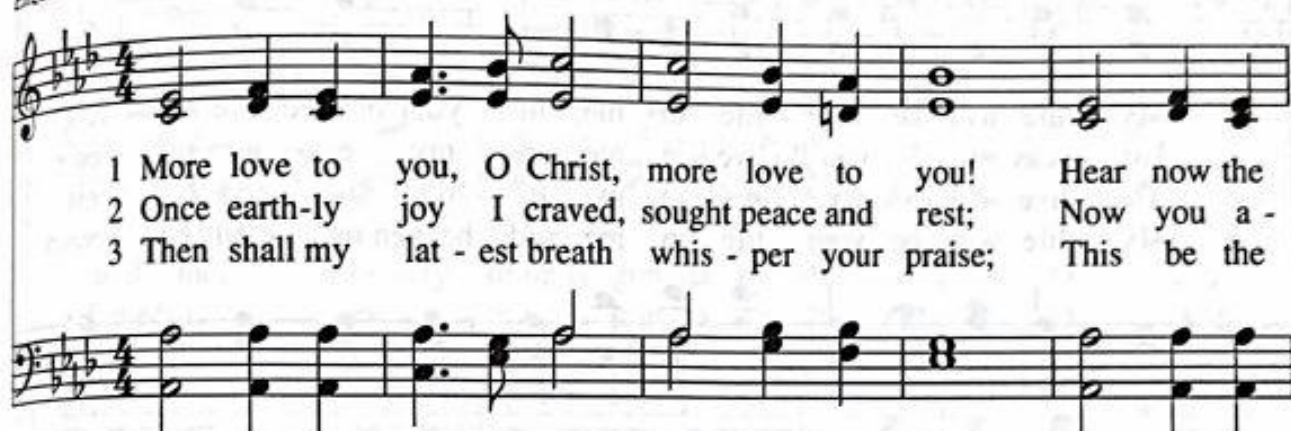
Converted to Methodism at age twenty, Robert Robinson soon became a Calvinistic Methodist preacher and later gained great popularity. The melody, associated with this text since 1813, is an American folk tune.

Tune: NETTLETON 8.787.D
John Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813

More Love to You, O Christ

456

Elizabeth P. Prentiss, c. 1856; alt.

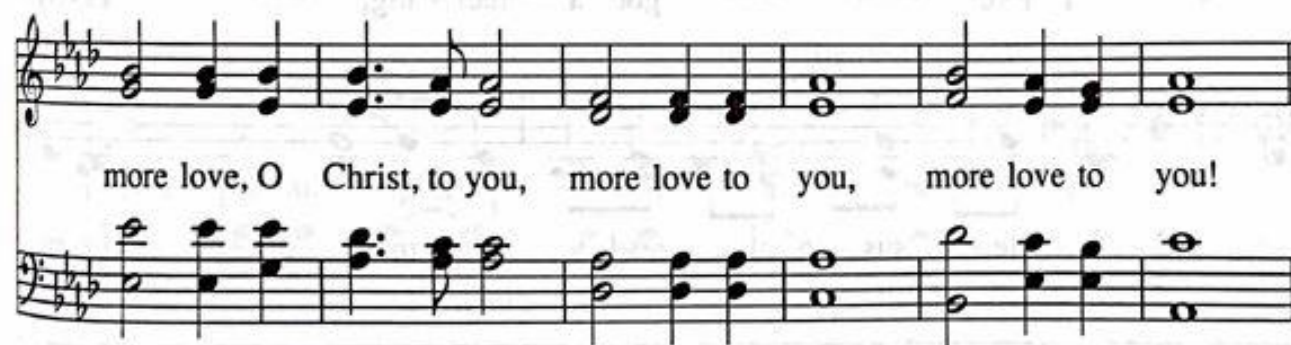


1 More love to you, O Christ, more love to you! Hear now the
 2 Once earth-ly joy I craved, sought peace and rest; Now you a -
 3 Then shall my lat - est breath whis - per your praise; This be the

Refrain



prayer I make faith to re - new.
 lone I seek, give what is best: In all I say and do,
 part - ing cry my heart shall raise:



more love, O Christ, to you, more love to you, more love to you!

Elizabeth Prentiss, a teacher and author of numerous books, wrote this hymn at a time of grief and physical illness. It was published some fifteen years later, together with William H. Doane's tune.

Tune: MORE LOVE TO YOU 6.4.6.4.6.6.4.4.
 William H. Doane, 1870



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! 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.

NO CLASS ON SEPT 3rd



**STRETCH, STRENGTH AND
BALANCE**

FITNESS CLASS

THURSDAYS 9AM TO 10AM

First Congregational Church, 300 High St. Bristol, RI



WORKSHOP DETAILS

Join experienced fitness instructor, Becca Capodilupo for a gentle exercise class designed to improve mobility, endurance, and flexibility.

EXERCISES WILL INCLUDE

- gentle warm-ups
- strength and balance exercises
- relaxing stretches

All experience levels welcome.

Participants must be able to get up from a chair without assistance.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED CALL BECCA TO SIGN UP!
(508) 843-8518



LOOKING FOR VENDORS

Applications for vendors are available for Harvest Moon Bazaar. Please call the church office at 401/253-7288

RALLY DAY

Sunday

September 13, 2026

Help us welcome back our Sunday School and their families
on Rally Day Sunday, September 13!

We will have an intergenerational service followed
by a fellowship luncheon and Cake for Dessert

Would you or your family members like to participate in the service?

Are you interested in volunteering to help with set-up, or clean-up?

Please reach out to Rev. Nancy Soukup (nhsoukup@gmail.com)

The Christian Education Committee would love to have your help.

We welcome all to participate.



GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE

This year we have an added element to our Rally Day! The RI BloodBank bus will be parked in front of the church from 8:00am to 12:00pm.

There is a severe blood shortage in our state right now. We hope churchgoing people around us and neighbors will take this opportunity to give the "GIFT OF LIFE" that morning. See the flyer in this Stone Church Weekly about how to sign up with the QR code.



IMPORTANT NOTE: If you think you want to donate blood on Sunday, September 13, the best time to do this would be early before church or immediately after the service. Please let Rev. Nancy know this Sunday, August 23, if you

are signing up to see how this can be arranged with the BloodBank. In the meantime, please sign up using the flyer's QR code.

Blood Drive

First Congregational Church

Sunday, September 13
8:00am - 12:00pm

Bloodmobile
300 High Street, Bristol



Sign up at ribc.org/drives
and use code RR08461

Prepare to donate



Eat well
and hydrate



Bring a
photo ID



Feel good and
symptom free



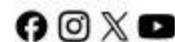
Must be 17+ or
16 with parental
consent form



Meet minimum
weight requirements

For full eligibility requirements
and COVID-19 information, visit
ribc.org/eligibility.

800.283.8385 • ribc.org



CAREGIVERS TALKING TO CAREGIVERS

A Safe Harbor for those walking alone



End of life care is exhausting, isolating, and is a heavy load. You do not have to do this alone. No matter who you are, you are welcome here.

You can expect:

- Caregivers who truly understand through shared experiences
- Open, honest and confidential conversations
- Practical resources and support from our community

We are a compassionate community welcoming everyone in the spirit of love.



When: 2nd Monday of every month, beginning September 14, 2026

Where: FCC Bristol, 300 High St, Bristol, RI, 401-253-7288

Group Leaders: Rev. Nancy Soukup and Karen Satti

BRISTOL'S STONE CHURCH COFFEEHOUSE

2026 –2027 Season

September 26, 2026	Chris & Meredith Thompson	Folk	www.CMThompson.com
October 24, 2026	Brooks Williams	Blues and Americana	www.BrooksWilliams.com
November 14, 2026	Heather Pierson Acoustic Trio	Americana, Folk, Blues	www.HeatherPierson.com
December 2026	No Show		
January 23, 2027	Southern Rail	Bluegrass	www.SouthernRail.com
February 27, 2027	Timeless	Classic Hits from 1950s-Present	www.TimelessRI.com
March 27, 2027	Nick Bosse & The Northern Roots	Country Music	www.NickBosse.com
April 24, 2027	Mark T Small	American Roots Music	www.MarkTSmall.com
May 8, 2027	Fáilte (Fall-cha)	Irish Music	www.FailteMusic.com

Bristol's Stone Church Coffee House is located at the First Congregational Church (300 High Street in Bristol, RI).

Seating is limited. Early reservations are recommended.

Doors open at 6:45pm. All shows start at 7:30pm.

For ticket information, ticket purchase or to inquire about season tickets, please call 253-4813.

* Tickets are \$25 for adults; students are half price; children 5 and under are free.

Team Trivia Nights

(All Dates are Fridays @ 7pm)

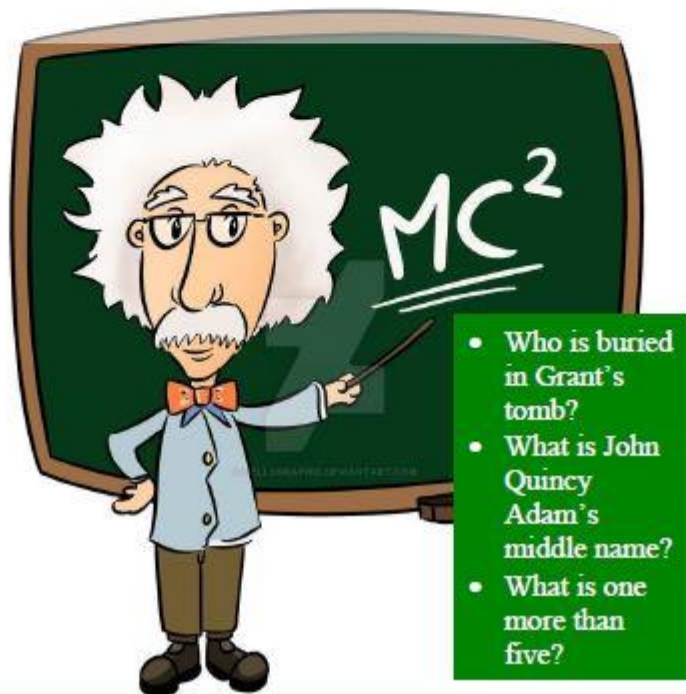
October 9, 2026; November 6, 2026;

December 4, 2026; January 8, 2027;

February 12, 2027; March 12, 2027; April 9, 2027

Ask Friends and Family to Join in on 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*



Church Office (401) 253-7288 • Office@FCCBristol.org • www.FCCBristol.org
Church location 300 High Street • mailing & office address 281 High Street • Bristol, Rhode Island 02809