



The Power to Tell Stories

October 19, 2025

We are a progressive community of faith seeking to follow the teachings of Jesus, pursue justice and live God's love.

**No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.**



A Note for Families / Folks of All Ages: Today we begin worship together. After the Passing of the Peace, young people grades K-8 are invited to follow teachers Kathy Sahrbeck and Sandra Kochy upstairs to our one-room classroom. This week's focus: *The Story of Zacchaeus*.

There are clipboards with paper and coloring pages at the back of the sanctuary, for worshippers of any age to use during the service.

PRELUDE *6 Romances sans paroles (VI. Méditation)* Cécile Chaminade

WELCOME TO WORSHIP Rev. Alison Buttrick Patton and Rev. Stephen Savage

SUNG SUMMONS *When Long Before Time*
Meetinghouse Choir

Lyrics for contemplation:

*When long before time and the worlds were begun,
when there was no earth and no sky and no sun,
and all was deep silence and night reigned supreme,
and even our Maker had only a dream –*

*The silence was broken when God sang the Song,
And light pierced the darkness and rhythm began,
And with its first birth-cries creation was born,
And creaturely voices sang praise to the morn.*

THRESHOLD MOMENT

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: People of God, we are storytellers, every one of us.

So tell me: how would you weave the tale of the world's beginning,
of *your* beginning? Where would you start?

Would you tell your tale straight, with all the false starts, and all the pain?

Or would you choose the bits that comfort or amaze –
with a dash of wit or whimsy?

What would you say about heartbreak and longing,

About fears that keep you up at night,

or terrors that wake you at 3 am?

How would you speak about the grace that left you speechless,

or the love that filled your heart with song?

Beloved of God: We are storytellers, every one of us.

All: Let us weave the tale of our lives' unfolding.

Let us tell a story about God in the world.

***OPENING HYMN** *When Long Before Time – Verses 3-6*

#61

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Author God, when the stories we tell are too narrow or self-serving, when we put ourselves at the center of every narrative, forgive us, we pray. When we think we know how the story will go, remind us that you are full of surprises. Pique our curiosity and turn our attention to the stories we may have missed, and to the people and creatures who tell them. And when you have a role for us, prepare us to step into it with courage and joy.

PRAYERFUL PAUSE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Peace Like a River* African American Spiritual 

**I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul. [Repeat]**

I've got joy like a fountain...

I've got love like an ocean...

TIME FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Pat Thatcher

One: This is the sacred story of God's journey with God's people.

All: Holy One, open our ears to hear, our hearts to receive and our lives to be expanded by your Word. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING 1 Samuel 16:1-13

*Please rise, on your feet or in your hearts.

SERMON

The Power to Tell Stories

Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM

The Promise of the Holy

Haley, adapt. / Shelton

THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kin-dom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE

Bless the Lord, My Soul

Taize

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

OFFERING INVITATION

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

BLESSING THE OFFERING

CLOSING HYMN

I love to Tell the Story

#360

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Thou Art Worthy

Pauline Michael Mills/Arr. Fred Bock

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WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team I, Richard Parker, captain.

The Mission Globe is lit by Heather Hansen in loving memory of her mother and father.

Livestream: Thank you to Alex Ratta for managing our worship livestream!

☞ **Royalty for Spirituals:** Historically, the composers of African American Spirituals were neither known nor compensated for use of their songs. The FCC UCC music

department has committed to paying forward a 'royalty' each time we include a Spiritual in worship. We are now donating funds to the **Indigo Arts Alliance**. You are invited to contribute, as well. Donate by check or online, with "Royalty for Spirituals" in the memo. Thank you.

WEEKLY @ FCC UCC

Tuesday Bible Study meets from 12:30 - 1:30 pm in Davidson Lounge:

Whether you are an FCC UCC member or just interested in joining in the fun, you are invited to join our weekly bible study group, to enjoy fellowship and to discuss the scripture from the past Sunday. Led by Rev. Steve Savage. All are welcome!

Meetinghouse Choir rehearses on Wednesdays, 6:15 – 8 pm. All singers are welcome. We meet in the Choir Room on the lower level of the church.

Questions? Contact choir director Deirdre McClure at dmccclure@fccucc.org.

Handbells rehearse on Wednesdays, 4:45 pm in Wright Pavilion. If you are interested in ringing in the choir or would like more information, please contact bell choir director Sharon Potter: handbells@fccucc.org.

OCTOBER @FCC UCC

TODAY: Second Hour with Josh Caldwell, Natural Resources Council of Maine Climate & Clean Energy Program, Sunday, October 19, 11:30 am – 1 pm, Wright Pavilion: Josh will speak on reducing climate change through a cleaner, better transportation system in Maine. Free lunch provided, no registration necessary. (No separate coffee hour). Organized by our Environmental Team.

Short Story Group Returns! Tuesday, October 21, 7 pm on ZOOM:

Join Pastor Steve as we discuss "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. This story is a brief but creepy piece of psychological fiction for this Halloween season. Scan the QR code or see the Weekly Word to access the story.



Monthly Game Night, Tuesday, October 21, 7:00 - 8:30 pm, Wright Pavilion:

Circle October 21 on your calendar if you like to play board games! From classics like Rack-O and Rummikub to newer options like Ticket to Ride, there's something for everyone. This is a great way to meet and socialize with fellow FCCUCCers! Questions? Contact Kathy Sahrbeck at outreach@fccucc.org.

Film Screening: *The Eternal Song*, Sunday, November 2, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Join the Wabanaki Allies working group in the Community Room to view and discuss the documentary film “The Eternal Song” about Indigenous spiritualities and connection to the earth and land. Pizza and drinks will be provided. To reserve your space and for us to have an accurate headcount for lunch, please RSVP to Marvin Ellison (mellison122@gmail.com) by October 31.

Fellowship Club, Tuesday, November 11, 6:15 pm, Guptill Hall (Save the date and note the change!).

Lee Humiston, founder of the Maine Military Museum in South Portland, will offer a special Veteran’s Day program. Make a dinner reservation (turkey dinner or vegetarian option) for \$25 by Sunday, November 9, with Carolyn Clark at carolyn.clark353@gmail.com.

MISSION AND SOCIAL WITNESS

TODAY: State Street Winter Family Shelter Open House, Sunday, October 19, 2-4 pm:

Another season of comfort and care for homeless families begins at State Street Winter Family Shelter on Monday, November 17. If you have not seen the facility or want to refresh your memory from last year, drop by for a tour. **Want to volunteer at the shelter?** Contact Mission and Social Witness Team chair, Walter Kimball at whkimball77@gmail.com

South Portland Food Cupboard – October Food Drive: Bring in non-perishable food donations throughout the month. Place them in the boxes located in the Narthex and by the outside door to the church office. All items will then be delivered to the Food Cupboard. Thank you so much for helping our neighbors.

Volunteer for Preble Street Food Hub: On the last Friday of each month, we prepare meals at the Food Hub, 75 Darling Avenue, South Portland, for delivery to Preble Street satellite sites. Please join us! To learn more about how to volunteer, see the Weekly Word or contact Danna Wiggins at dannawig2@gmail.com

Clynk Bags are in the narthex (inside main entrance). Collect your returnable cans and bottles and return them to a Clynk collection site at Hannaford or other participating grocery stores. Scan the code on the bags and the refunds will automatically be donated to our FCC mission team. *Thank you!*

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Emma's Revolution "Feel the Power Tour" with special guests, Women in Harmony, Thursday, October 23 at 7 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church of Auburn: Emma's Revolution, the singer/songwriter/activist duo from Oakland, California invite *Women in Harmony* as their special guests (FCCUCC has hosted WIH concerts many times and member Jill Saxby has been singing in this 60-voice feminist chorus since 2001). FMI or to order tickets:
<https://emmasrevolution.com/concerts>

South Portland Children's Choir Fall Concert, Saturday, November 1, 2 pm, in the sanctuary. A 30-minute, Halloween-themed concert by area grade school children.

Next *Community Sing*, Sunday, November 16, 3:30 pm, HopeGateWay Church, 515 Woodford Street, Portland (2:45 pm for anyone looking to get organized around singing at demonstrations and public events): All-ages gathering of people from diverse settings singing together to find hope. Pass it along! Register or ask questions: Emilia Dahlin at emilia@emiliadahlin.com

LOOKING AHEAD: "Decolonizing and the Role of Faith Communities," online two-session course, Saturday, February 28 (9-12) and Saturday, March 7 (9-12): MESOM, the Maine School of Ministry of the Maine Conference, UCC, is offering this Wabanaki REACH workshop online, *co-sponsored by FCCUCC*. The fee is \$50 per person (see revalisonpatton@fccucc.org for scholarship assistance). There's also an option to enroll for the entire 5-session course, "Organizing for Relationships and Repair." Register by February 14 at www.maineucc.org/mesom/.

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WHAT'S UP?

Want to stay in the loop? Make sure you are on our email list! To UPDATE or ADD your contact info, go to: fccucc.org and select "Contact Us" then select "Contact Info Update Form."

Also, look for us on Facebook: facebook.com/fccucc
on Instagram: instagram.com/fccucc_s.portland
and on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@FCCUCCSouthPortland





Sitting with Loved Ones

*Have you ever wished you were a better listener?
Or wondered how to help someone grieving?*

Join Pastor Steve after worship in Davidson Lounge for a three-part series that will help! Explore ideas and practices connected with visiting folks in their homes. Learn useful skills and considerations for being a Lay Visitor or for additional support as a caregiver.

October 26 **Tools for Listening**

November 9 **Sitting with Grief**

November 23 **Tips for Visiting**

Email Pastor Steve at steve@fccucc.org with any questions.

****Please note that participation in these sessions does not require a commitment to become a lay visitor.****