

Walking Our Way into Love
October 25, 2026

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.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC • SO. PORTLAND, ME •

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A Note for Families / Folks of All Ages: Children are invited to follow their teachers upstairs for Church School following Sacred Play.

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

PRELUDE *Breathe on Me, Breath of God* Robert Jackson, arr. Marvin Gaspard

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

THRESHOLD MOMENT

***CALL TO WORSHIP** *Inspired by Psalm 139*

One: Have you seen? How marvelous are the works of God!
All: How beautiful are the people, body and soul!
One: God knit you together in your mother's womb.
All: God knit *you* together in your mother's womb.
One: We are *all* made: fierce and wonderful.
All: Wonderful and fierce God made every child.
One: Praise God, who knows us from the inside out!
All: Praise God, who knows and loves *all* the bodies, *all* the souls.
One: Let us worship the Source of Life and Love.

***OPENING HYMN** *God of Justice, God of Mercy,* verses 1-4 No. 504

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

God on the Journey, it is fair to say that we are not at our best when we are feeling anxious or facing the unknown. When we feel lost, off balance or under siege, we can take out our discomfort on the people around us. When we judge or blame others to escape our own shame or distress; when we confuse "different" with "threatening," forgive us, we pray. Teach us to be curious instead of condemning. May we "learn to experience the unfamiliar as an unfolding and not as an undoing." *

*Nadia Bolz-Weber

Silence is kept.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you. **All: And also with you.**

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

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Guide My Feet* African American Spiritual

Guide my feet while I run this race. [3 times]
For I don't want to run this race in vain.

Stand by me while I run this race…

I'm your child while I run this race…

SACRED PLAY

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Sandy Candelore

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 Micah 6:1-8 *and* Psalm 169:13-18

SERMON *Walking Our Way into Love* Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM *Just As I Am* Charlotte Elliot

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kin-dom come; Your 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 Yours is the kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE *There is More Love Somewhere* African American Spiritual

1. **There is more love, somewhere. There is more love, somewhere. I'm gonna keep on, 'til I find it. There is more love, somewhere.**

2. **There is more peace somewhere…**

OFFERING INVITATION

Help us to live God's love and justice. You can make a secure gift by scanning the QR code, by going to fccucc.org and clicking on "Donate," or by adding your contribution to the box at the back of the sanctuary.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

BLESSING OF OUR GIFTS

***CLOSING HYMN** *Draw the Circle Wide* Friedell/adapt. Turner

Refrain: *Draw the circle wide, Draw it wider still. Let this be our song,*
No one stands alone, standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

God the still point of the circle, 'round whom all creation turns;
Nothing lost, but held forever, in God's gracious arms. **Refrain**

Let our hearts touch far horizons, so encompass great and small;
Let our loving know no borders, Faithful to God's call. **Refrain**

Let the dreams we dream be larger, than we've ever dreamed before;
Let the dream of Christ be in us. Open every door. **Refrain**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Autumn Crocus* Billy Mayerl

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WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team A, Terry Dallaire, captain.

Recording: Gratitude to Alex Ratta for recording our worship this morning.

The altar flowers are provided by Pat Thatcher, Katye Thatcher, and Scott Thatcher in memory of Bill Thatcher.

Royalty for Spirituals: Historically, the composers of African American Spirituals were neither known nor compensated for use of their songs. The FCCUCC music department has committed to paying forward a 'royalty' each time we include a Spiritual in worship. We donate funds to the **Indigo Arts Alliance**. Join us: you can donate by check or online, with "Royalty for Spirituals" in the memo. Thank you.

Today we are participating in a Trans Justice Preach-in with faith communities around Maine. To support mutual aid for trans+ folks seeking safety and refuge in Maine, consider donating to Pink Haven (FCC is a member). See the back cover.

WEEKLY @ FCC UCC

Bible Study every Tuesday, 12:30 - 1:30 pm in Davidson Lounge: Explore the scripture from the past Sunday, led by Pastor Steve.

Prayer Shawls, every Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, in Davidson Lounge: New and experienced knitters welcome. Bring needles size 9, 10, or 11, and your own yarn, or check out the church yarn supply. Questions? Lynne: lanctotla74@gmail.com.

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 dmcclure@fccucc.org.

Handbell Rehearsal every Wednesday, 4:45 pm in the Sanctuary.
Anyone who would like to join the ringers this year should contact handbell director Sharon Potter at handbells@fccucc.org to arrange a time to meet.

COMING UP @ FCCUCC

TODAY Defend Democracy Vigil, October 25, 11:30 am – 12 pm: Join us on our front steps for this important vigil, to encourage folks to vote with love for justice.

TODAY Digital Tech Support Session, October 25, 11:30 am in Wright Pavilion: Your FCC UCC Care and Connections team wants to help you feel connected to the digital world. Please come to our second FCC UCC Digital Tech Support Session. Bring your questions to us, and we'll do our best to help you!

Staff Appreciation Social Hour, Sunday, November 1, 11:30 am: Join us after worship for an informal reception to honor our FCC staff. Come for cake and thank them in person for all they do to support FCC's mission!

Dinner and Downtime, "Easy Company: England to the Eagle's Nest", Tuesday, November 3, 5:30 – 7 pm: A presentation by Bruce Lockwood on his recent trip following the 101st Airborne's Easy Company tour of duty in World War II. Dinner will be provided, menu to be determined, for a cost of $25 per person. Vegetarian and gluten free options available upon request when making your reservation. Reservations are required, email carolyn.clark353@gmail.com by noon on Sunday, November 1. You do not need to be a member to attend. If you would like to attend, but either cost or driving at night is a barrier, please contact blockwood@portlandresearch.com for assistance.

Election Day, November 3 – The Sanctuary will be open for prayer and reflection, 8:30 am – 6 pm: Exercise your right to vote on November 3! Stop by the church before or after to pray for our country and community. We will also keep the sanctuary open on November 4.

Fair Fancy Crafters, Thursday, November 5, 5 pm - 7 pm, Room 5C, 5th Floor: The crafters are in high production mode in preparation for Holly Daze Bazaar. If you are a crafter and can't make any of the gatherings, we hope you are crafting at home. Consider adding your creations to our room at the bazaar.

Remember: Fair Fancy Crafters teach, supply, guide, support, and laugh as we create. Join us for fellowship and laughter. No matter your level of crafting, you are welcome here! With questions or craft ideas, contact Gin Gedney (318-1581).

Wabanaki Allies Working Group meeting, Sunday, November 8, 11:30 am - 1 pm, in Davidson Lounge: Come brainstorm ways that FCCUCC can live out its commitment to be an active partner in the Wabanaki Alliance Coalition. Whether you are a regular participant or just checking us out, you are welcome to attend. Questions? Marvin Ellison at mellison122@gmail.com

Book Discussion: *The Land is Not Empty,* Sunday, November 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm, in Davidson Lounge: The Wabanaki Allies working group is sponsoring a book discussion, facilitated by Judy Kimball and Deborah Tomblyn. The book is available at Nonesuch Books. Mention FCCUCC for a discounted price.

MISSION AND SOCIAL WITNESS

State Street Family Winter Shelter, Portland will open for the season on November 15. They are looking for volunteers to help host, with evening and overnight shifts. Sign-ups coming soon. For more information about joining the FCC team of volunteers, contact Walter Kimball: whkimball77@gmail.com

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!*

Children's Clothes Closet is open to the public!

- 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 11 am - 1 pm; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 12 - 2 pm

To volunteer, contact AnnElissa Leveque or Pastor Steve at steve@fccucc.org.

Clothing Donations:

1. Clean, wearable children's clothes of all sizes (including teens) can be dropped off on the 5th floor, in the Children's Clothes Closet donation bin just inside the lefthand door.
2. Adult clothes, shoes and accessories, both wearable *and* unwearable, can now be deposited in the *Apparel Impact* Bin in the main parking lot. Upcycle and recycle to keep clothes out of our landfills! Learn more: https://www.apparelimpact.com/.

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Community Responds to Toxic Tank Emissions, City Council workshop on Tuesday, Oct. 27 at 6:30 pm at South Portland High School (637 Highland Ave.). Email the City Council before the workshop and ask them to pressure the DEP to use the existing licensing process to stop tank farms from dumping pollutants into our neighborhoods. City Council email addresses are here: https://southportland.gov/411/City-Council]

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3: *Have you made a plan to vote?* There are hard copies of the *League of Women Voters of Maine 2026 Voters' Guide* and wallet-sized reference cards outlining your Voting Rights in the narthex (back of the sanctuary). Pick one up for yourself, and an extra copy to share with a friend.

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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".

Find us, like and follow us on social media. Now on Substack! @FCCUCC

To connect with each other, see our directory – now available online!

Everyone in the print directory has been invited by email to create an account. Please create a username and password. To log back in, go to https://fccucc301.breezechms.com/. (For easy future access, bookmark this link.)

Email Kat at communicate@fccucc.org with questions, or to add your contact info!

GIVE TO PINK HAVEN ME

Every dollar goes to mutual aid for trans+ folks seeking safety and refuge in Maine. Thank you for your generosity!

Pink Haven

MAINE

Scan the QR code to give!