



# Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12



## Communion Sunday: We Step into the River October 4, 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.**



**A Note for Families / Folks of All Ages:** Children are invited to follow their teachers upstairs for Church School after the Passing of the Peace. They will return for communion.

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**

*Faith*

Mark Hayes, Arr. Marvin Gaspard

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

**THRESHOLD MOMENT**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP\*\***

One: In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. And God called them good.

**All: Come Holy Spirit and cleanse the waters.**

One: The prophet saw a river flowing from the Temple, and wherever the river flowed, everything lived.

**All: Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the Earth.**

One: Jesus cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me... Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water. "

**All: Come, Holy Spirit and heal your people.**

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*All Who are Thirsty*

See Insert

**LAMENT AND PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS**

One: We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve: Rivers run polluted. Oceans choke with plastic. Marine life disappears from warming seas. Coral reefs fade and fisheries collapse.

**All: Ashamnu - we have all been guilty**

One: The seas rise and swallow coasts. Storms grow stronger. Floods destroy homes. Drought cracks the Earth and children thirst.

**All: Ashamnu - we have all been guilty**

One: We confess that we have not guarded your waters. We have consumed water without restraint. We have polluted what you called good. We have forgotten that the river of life flows from your throne.

**All: Forgive us, O God.**

**PRAYERFUL PAUSE**

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

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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

**\*SUNG RESPONSE**

*Turn the World Around*

Harry Belafonte

**We come from the water, living in the water**

**Go back to the water, turn the world around!** [clap, clap, clap!]

**Water make the river, river wash the mountain**

**Fire make the sunlight, turn the world around** [clap, clap, clap!]

**Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh! Oh-oh, turn the world around!** [clap, clap, clap!]

**Heart is of the river, body is the mountain**

**Spirit is the sunlight, turn the world around** [clap, clap, clap!]

**We are of the spirit, truly of the spirit**

**Only can the spirit, turn the world around** [clap, clap, clap!]

**Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh! Oh-oh, turn the world around!** [clap, clap, clap!]

**Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh! Oh-oh, turn the world around!** [clap, clap, clap!]

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Joyce Brown

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

Ezekiel 47:1-12 *and* John 7:37-38 Craig Patton & Joyce Brown

## SERMON

*We Step into the River*

Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

## MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

## ANTHEM

*Nia (Swahili word for 'Purpose')*

Glenn Burleigh

## 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](http://fccucc.org) and clicking on "Donate," or by adding your contribution to the box at the back of the sanctuary.



## MUSICAL INTERLUDE

## CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

## **Responsive Prayer of Preparation**

Karen Hessel, Craig Patton, Jill Saxby

*Adapted from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa*

One: God of living waters, today we pray for a wounded world and the waterways that connect your global village. We pray for places whose fishing waters are contaminated and children drink from polluted streams. Heal what has been poisoned. Bring justice where profit has silenced truth.

**All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.**

One: We pray for the oceans, for sea turtles and whales imperiled by ghost nets; for plankton and the krill mingled with the dust of synthetic waste. We pray for the rivers that carry our runoff —fertilizers, dyes, and heavy metals. Turn our guilt into grace and our apathy into action. Teach us to live justly and bring healing to every shore and stream.

**All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.**

One: We pray for lands where rising seas claim ancestral lands, where saltwater invades freshwater wells, where graves are washed away with memory and belonging; for those who have contributed least to climate change, yet suffer first and most. Hold them in dignity and strengthen global resolve for justice.

**All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.**

One: We pray for those whose lives are closely intertwined with water - coastal peoples, fisherfolk, marine biologists, water engineers – who can teach us wise ways to live with water. Stir governments, corporations, and neighborhoods to listen, protect and share water justly.

**All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.**

One: Convert our hearts, O God. Where we have consumed water without thought, teach us simplicity. Where we have used water without reverence, remind us that it is a gift entrusted to every generation. Where we have tolerated injustice, make us courageous protectors of rivers, defenders of seas, and companions to those who suffer water injustice, until justice and mercy flow like the river of life throughout our global village.

**All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father-Mother 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## **The Story is Told**

## **The Gifts are Blessed**

## **\*The Meal is Shared**

You are invited to come forward by the center aisle to receive communion. All bread is gluten free. The juice is non-alcoholic. There are pre-wrapped communion elements for those who prefer, on the communion table.

**Communion Anthem**                      *Touch the Earth Lightly*

NCH 569

## **Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Christ in Every Heart, for this moment, this meal, this gathering, we give you thanks! Now, send us out to be your Church in the world, living the love and justice of Jesus. Amen.**

## **\*CLOSING HYMN**

*We'll Build a Land*

See Insert

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **BENEDICTION**

Including words adapted from Trinity Wall Street Lenten reflections, based on Saint Hildegarde of Bingen.

## **POSTLUDE**

*Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters*

B. F. White,  
arr. Bradley Sowash

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## **WORSHIP NOTES**

**Thank you** to this morning's ushers.

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

**\*\*The Call to Worship, Prayer for Forgiveness and Communion Prayer** are adapted from the *Celebration Guide 2026*, an ecumenical resource for the global Christian community, created by the Ecumenical Season of Creation Steering Committee, who also designed the theme logo.

**The Mission Globe** is lit this morning by Rev. Alison Patton and Rev. Steve Savage, with healing prayers for God's blue-green earth on Communion Sunday, and with deep gratitude for this congregation and the love and justice that flows from FCC.

## **GRATITUDES**

**Thanks to our Environmental Working Group** for inspiring this worship series by choosing to focus on watershed-related issues this year, and to working group members Karen Hessel, Craig Patton and Jill Saxby for participating in worship.

**Thanks to Communion Coordinator** Jennifer Goode for adorning our communion table, to Jennifer and the Spiritual Life and Worship Team for organizing our World Communion, and to everyone who contributed bread to the feast!

## **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](mailto: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 [dmccclure@fccucc.org](mailto:dmccclure@fccucc.org).

**Handbell Rehearsal every Wednesday, 4:45 pm in Wright Pavilion.**

Anyone who would like to join the ringers this year should contact handbell director Sharon Potter at [handbells@fccucc.org](mailto:handbells@fccucc.org) to arrange a time to meet.

## **COMING UP @ FCCUCC**

**TODAY: People of the Table: What Communion Has to Offer in a Fragmented World, Mini-Retreat, Sunday, October 4, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm:** See back cover.

**Dinner and Downtime (Hosted by the Fellowship Club), Tuesday, October 6, 5:30 - 8 pm in Guptill Hall:** Guitarists Gary Richardson and Rev. Jeff. \$25 Reservations are required, please email Carolyn Clark at [carolyn.clark353@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.clark353@gmail.com)

**Women's Spirit Circle, Tuesday, October 13, 7 pm, Community Room (5<sup>th</sup> floor)** A Sacred space to connect with one another. All women welcome, including LGBTQIA+ women. [nancy.braitbord@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.braitbord@gmail.com) or [pat.thatcher123@gmail.com](mailto:pat.thatcher123@gmail.com)

**Lunch and Learn: Flood or Drought - Two Sides of the Same Coin, October 18, 11:30 am, Wright Pavilion:** Dr. James Toxtli Melloh will explore how more severe flooding also heightens drought conditions. We will look at causes and potential solutions here and abroad. Lunch served by the Environmental Working Group.

**Parents of Adult Children group, Sunday, October 18, 6:00 - 7:30 pm:** All parents of adult children (over 18 years old) are welcome to join us. For more info contact FCC UCC member Jill Saxby at [revjillsaxby@gmail.com](mailto:revjillsaxby@gmail.com).

**Game Night, Tuesday, October 20, 7 pm in Wright Pavilion:** Cookies are now served and you can play whatever game you prefer. All are welcome, even if you don't know how to play! Questions? [kathrynsme@yahoo.com](mailto:kathrynsme@yahoo.com).

**Defend Democracy Vigil, October 25, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm:** Please mark your calendars for this very important vigil, occurring just before the midterm elections, to encourage people to vote, because the greater the turnout, the more robust our democratic process! Poster making session: October 18.

**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**

**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 St. satellite sites. To volunteer, see Danna Wiggins: [dannawig2@gmail.com](mailto:dannawig2@gmail.com).

### **Seeking Volunteers for our Children's Clothes Closet**

2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 11 am - 1 pm; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 12 pm - 2 pm. To volunteer email [revalisonpatton@fccucc.org](mailto:revalisonpatton@fccucc.org) or see coordinator AnnElissa Leveque.

## **THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

**An Evening with Bishop Mariann Budde, Thursday, October 8, 7 pm at Merrill Auditorium:** To support Maine Council of Churches. "Courage Is Contagious," <https://mainecouncilofchurches.org/2026/07/bishop-mariann-budde/>

**Living Both: Trans Journeys of Faith, Friday, October 23, 6:30 pm, Equality Community Center, 15 Casco St., Portland:** A panel discussion of trans+ Mainers from different faith backgrounds. Free.

# PEOPLE OF THE TABLE

What Communion Has to Offer in a Fragmented World.

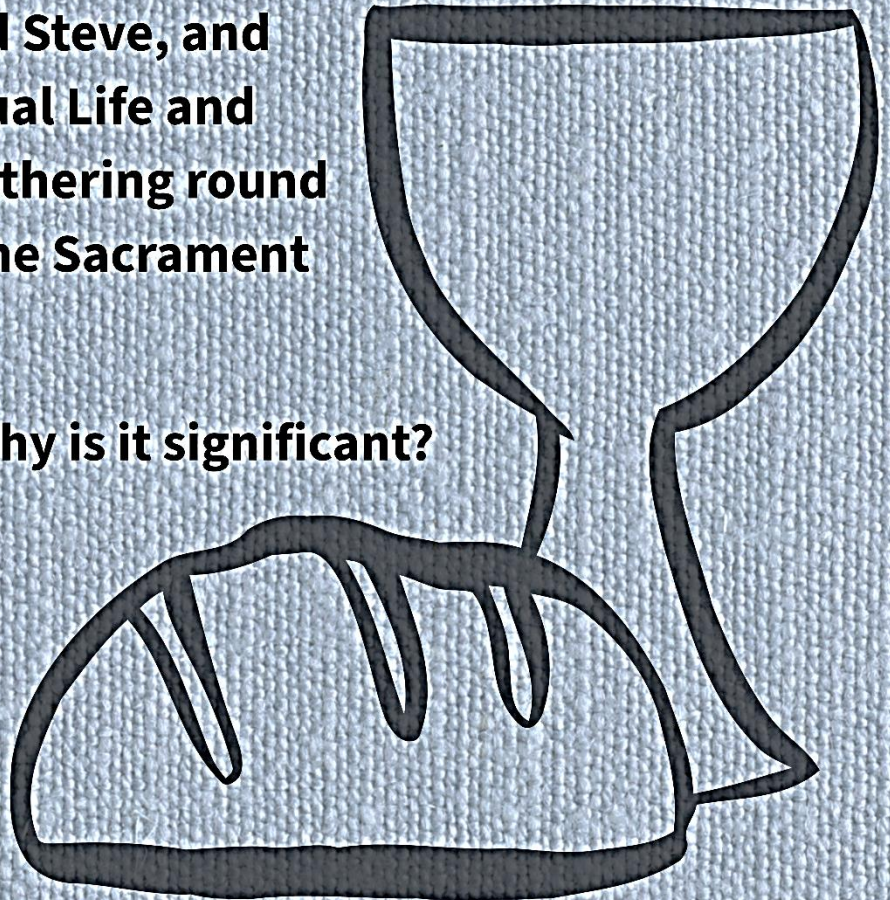
A mini retreat on Sunday, October 4 - 11:30-1:30 pm

**Join Pastors Alison and Steve, and members of the Spiritual Life and Worship Team, for a gathering round the table to consider the Sacrament of Communion.**

**How does it work? Why is it significant?**

**Bring your questions and your stories, and dig deeper into the Feast together.**

**\*Lunch Provided\***



## 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](http://fccucc.org) and select "Contact Us".

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

