

Give Thanks!
November 22, 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 *Thanks to God for My Redeemer* Johannes A. Hultman, Arr. Jan Sanborn

WORDS OF WELCOME

THRESHOLD MOMENT

***CALL TO WORSHIP** ** *based on Psalm 107*

One: Give thanks to God, who is good,
All: Whose steadfast love lasts forever!
One: When we are hungry or thirsty, or can't find our way
All: God satisfies our thirst, and fills the hungry with good things.
One: God turns deserts into pools of water, and thirsty ground into springs.
All: Rooted in God's love, all things will flourish!
Let us give thanks for God's steadfast love.

***OPENING HYMN** *Now Thank We All Our God* No. 27

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Holy God, giver of blessings, we thank you - for love and wonder and abundant harvest! When we fail to pause and thank Land, Water, and neighbors who share their bounty; when we forget that You are source of all good, forgive us. When we hold tight to what we have, afraid that there won't be enough, remind us that sharing leads to flourishing for all. Plant in us grateful and generous hearts.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING THE PEACE

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

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Siyahamba (We Are Marching)* South African Freedom Song

We are marching in the light of God,
We are marching in the light of God. [Repeat two lines]
We are marching, marching; we are marching, marching;
We are marching in the light of God.

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

Siyahamb' e-ku-kha-neyen'-kwen-khos'
Siyahamb' e-ku-kha-neyen'-kwen-khos' [Repeat two lines]
Siyahamba, hamba, Siyahamba, hamba
Siyahamb' e-ku-kha-neyen'-kwen-khos'

SACRED PLAY

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Chris Keiter

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 Isaiah 58:6-12

SACRED CONVERSATION Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton in dialogue *with* Giving Season speakers: Rich Mead, Sue Farris and Christine Caldwell

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM *23rd Psalm* Bobby McFerrin

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Where have *you* experienced or witnessed flourishing because of FCC?

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 *We Share a Hunger* Jill Kirsten Warner

We share a hunger, a hunger for justice in our world.
That all may find joy, all may find wholeness, all may find peace.
We share a hunger, a hunger to feel the light of Christ
shining through us, shining on all, bringing God's reign.

GATHERING OUR PLEDGES, GIFTS AND GRATITUDES

All are invited to come forward to add gifts, pledge cards and 'Flourishing' cards to our basket.

Scan the QR code or go to fccucc.org to make a secure online gift.

MUSIC *We Gather Together* Netherlands Folk Melody, Arr. Edward Kremser

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF BLESSING

One: God of Generosity and Compassion,
Bless these gifts gathered here today!

All: Bless the food, gathered and given.
Bless the tables on which it will be served,
And the bellies that it will fill.

One: Bless the givers of all these gifts.

All: Bless the pledges of support and the promises of commitment.
Bless the ministries that they will empower,
And the good work that they will make possible.

One: Bless our neighbors and community partners,
those we know, and those we've yet to meet!

All: Bless all the ways we conspire for love and justice
Bless our walking side-by-side through adversity,
learning that collaborating makes us stronger.

One: Bless this church, this community, these people.

All: Bless our commitment to Your Perfect Love.
Bless our dedication to pursuing Your vision
of the flourishing world we will build together! Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky* No. 461

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *All Things Bright and Beautiful* Trad. English Melody, Arr. Gary Norian

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WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team E, Rich Armstrong, captain.

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

Thanksgiving Bounty Purchased by the church to fill the altar and distribute to food baskets after service.

****The Call to Worship** is adapted from Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, 'Hold Fast to What Is Good'. Used with permission.

WEEKLY @ FCCUCC

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 pm - 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.

PREPARING FOR THE HOLLY DAZE BAZAAR

Treasures Needed for Grandma's Attic
Each year at our Holiday Bazaar people can browse the antiques and cherished treasures in our Grandma's Attic room. This year we need your help to fill out the room's offerings. If you have something you would like to donate to Grandma's attic you can drop it off at FCC, on the outer wall of Guptill Hall, during office hours, anytime after Thanksgiving. Please Contact Prudy Wiggins with any questions at prudywiggins@yahoo.com.

Pre-Order Your Christmas Wreaths: It's time to pre-order your wreath(s) for pickup at the Holly Daze Bazaar on Saturday, December 5:

Please email Marie Jordan (wooddk5555@gmail.com) with the following information: Your name, email address, phone number, and the number of wreaths. Costs: Wreath only: $20; Wreath with bow: $25; Wreath with bow, cones, and berries: $30; Wreath, bow/cones/berries and holiday decor: $35.

Please share whether you'd like a red or holiday theme bow and any special notes.

Calling all bakers! The Cookie Walk needs cookies. Festive homemade cookies of any kind are welcome (no chocolate chip cookies, please). Drop them off in Wright Pavilion on Friday, December 4 or before 8:30 AM on Saturday, December 5. Questions? Please reach out to Heather at heatherpayson@gmail.com.

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

Children's Clothes Closet is open to the public!
2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 11 am - 1 pm; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 12 - 2 pm.

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. Scan the code on the bags and the refunds will automatically be donated to our mission team. Thank you!

IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Maine Solidarity Fund has been a critical community resource this year, paying bonds for dozens of neighbors who have been detained, so that they can return home as quickly as possible. This week, the fund announced that it is critically low on funds. It saw large demand through the summer and continues to receive new requests for support from people who have been recently detained. Timely gifts will have a real impact. Donate and learn more: www.mainesolidarity.org/

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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".

Check out our Friends and Members Directory – now available online!
Email Kat at communicate@fccucc.org with questions, or to add your contact info!

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



ADVENT - CHRISTMAS - EPIPHANY

Advent Wreath-Making Workshop - Sunday, November 29, during social hour in Wright Pavilion.

Advent Bible Study, Tuesdays, 12:30 - 1:30 pm in Davidson Lounge: Explore last Sunday's scripture, along with reflections and art from our Advent Devotional, *Those Who Dream,* with Rev. Steve Savage.

Fellowship Club, Tuesday, December 1, 5:30 – 8 pm: Featuring seasonal music on the harp by Barbara Ryland. Social time: 5:30 pm. Dinner: 6:15 pm. Concert: 7 pm. Reservations for dinner: $25. Contact: carolyn.clark353@gmail.com

Holly Daza Bazaar, Saturday, December 5, 9 am – 2 pm. Hand-crafted gifts and goodies for all your holiday needs.

Caroling at the Rotary Tree Sale, Sunday, December 6, 12-1 pm, Mill Creek Park.

Women's Spirit Circle, Tuesday, December 8, 7 pm in the community room

Fellowship Club Christmas Cookie Sale, Sunday, December 13, during Social Hour. Plates of homemade cookies: $10 for one plate or $18 for two plates. Stock up on cookies for the holidays!

The McLean Chapel is open with **Advent Devotionals** available for contemplation.

WORSHIP EVENTS



Longest Night Service - Tuesday, December 15, 7 pm, A quiet, candlelit service for those seeking company or comfort. Music by the Ring for Joy handbell choir.

Thursday, December 24: Christmas Eve

5 pm: New! A Christmas Tale: *Have You Heard?* Whimsical, wonder-filled retelling of events that led to Jesus' birth, in story and song. Created for all ages.

8 pm: Candlelit Christmas Eve Worship with lessons and carols.

Sunday, December 27: Gather on the Sunday after Christmas to sing carols, pray and reflect on the turning of the year.

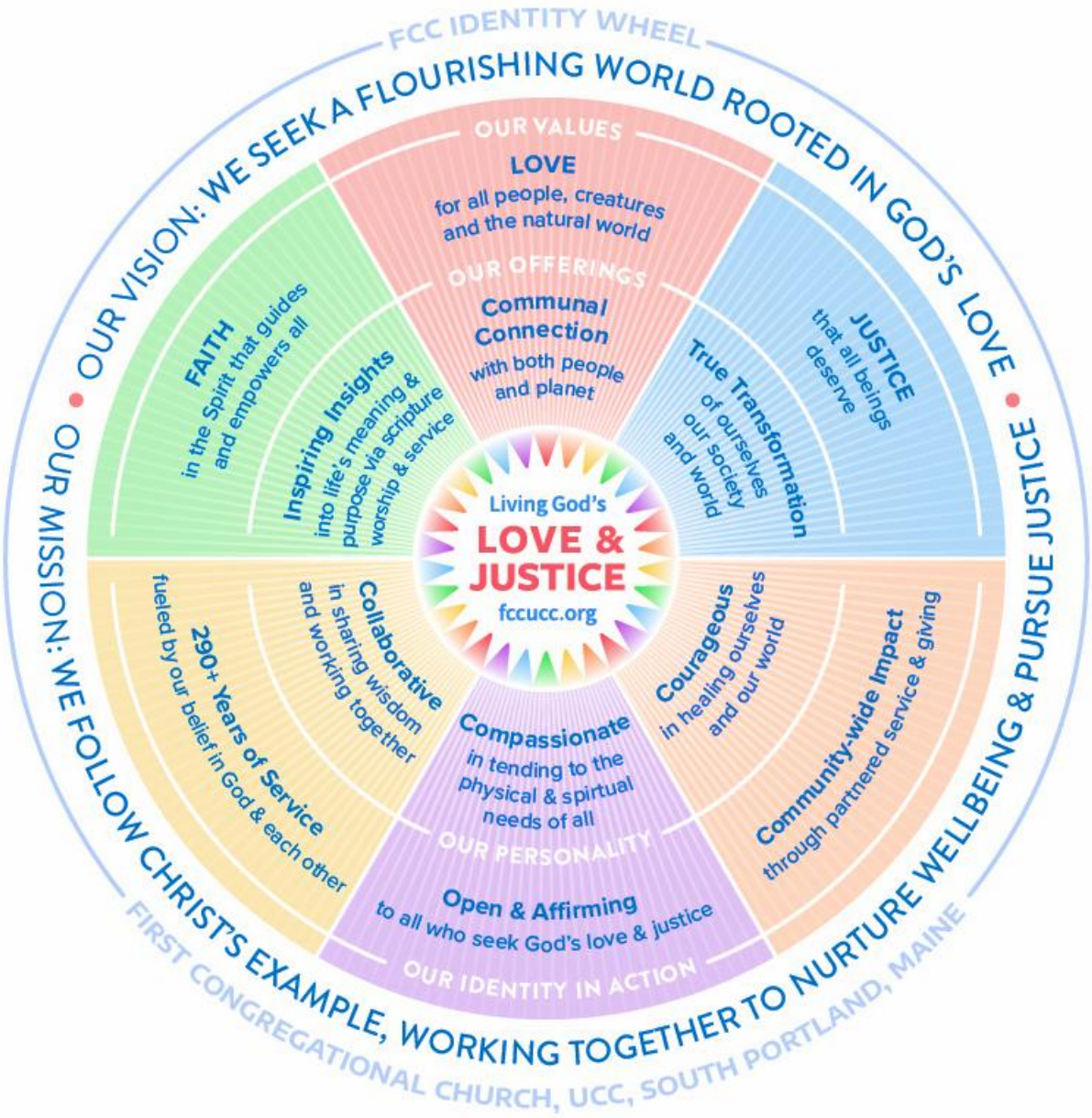
Sunday, January 3: Epiphany - The Magi's Journey - a creative, All-Ages Worship.

Church Offices will be closed December 25, 2026 - January 1, 2027.

GIVING THANKS
As we seek a flourishing world for all, rooted in God's love!

How can we help God's world to flourish? At FCC, we believe it takes collaboration, compassion and courage! So, we are building partnerships, caring for each other, and speaking up for and *with* our neighbors. We are singing, praying, marching, tending, connecting, learning, and growing together. In ways both simple and bold, FCC is cultivating just and loving community, in and beyond South Portland.

Thank you, to each and every one of you who brings your generous heart to this community of faith. May we continue to find meaningful ways to practice generosity together!



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