

Wisdom is a Listening Heart

November 8, 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 *Nuit Embaumée* Marc Delmas

WORDS OF WELCOME

THRESHOLD MOMENT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Shhh: Can you hear it?
All: The beating of our hearts? The rustling of our neighbors?
One: Yes, and also the anxious breath, the splash of a tear, the tentative smile, the silent prayer…
All: These things are hard to hear!
One: Then lean in. This room is full of all the emotions:
All: Relief and gratitude, worry and sadness, hope and longing…
One: Let us listen to each other;
All: Let us listen to our neighbors;
One: Let us listen for God.
All: There is wisdom in the listening. It takes compassion *and* courage. Let us listen to the Spirit that moves among us today.

***OPENING HYMN** *Be Now My Vision* No. 445

RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS **

One: When our hearts are hard, O God –
All: Soften them with your love.
One: When our hands are clenched, O God –
All: Open them with your grace.
One: When our feet are planted too firmly, O God –
All: Invite us to dance with you.
One: When our lives are not our own, we know –
All: Let us live and move and have our being in you, O God. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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

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.

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'

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Betsy Westcott 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 1 Kings 3:4-15

SERMON *Wisdom is a Listening Heart* Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM *Seal Lullaby* Eric Whitacre
Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.
Where billow meets billow, there soft be thy pillow;
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.

TESTIMONY *Where have you witnessed flourishing?* Sue Farris

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 *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.

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** *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending* No. 454

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *The Great Pumpkin Waltz* Vince Guaraldi

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WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team C, Bill Campbell, captain.

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

Cover Graphic designed by FCCUCC member Bryan Wiggins.

The Mission Globe lights the altar today in loving memory of Carol Thorne, in remembrance of her birthday, from the family of Judy Magnuson

**** The Prayer for Forgiveness** is adapted from a prayer written by 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.

COMING UP @ FCCUCC

TODAY: Wabanaki Allies Working Group meeting, 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

TODAY: Poster Making Session for LGBTQ+ Vigil, 11:30 – 12:00 pm in Wright Pavilion. Gather to make posters for next Sunday's vigil (November 15).

Women's Spirit Circle, Tuesday, November 10, 7 pm, Community Room (5th floor)
A welcoming, sacred space where we can slow down, breathe deeply, and connect with one another through laughter, reflection, and soulful conversation. Come just as you are. All women, including LGBTQIA+ women, are welcome. For more info contact: nancy.brajtbord@gmail.com or pat.thatcher123@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.

Parents of Adult Children, Sunday, November 15, 6:00 – 7:30 pm, Davidson Lounge: A relaxed, supportive, safe, and confidential space to share and listen to

each other's joys and concerns at this stage of parenting. No judgment, no advice-giving -- just a time to build friendships and mutual support, wherever you are on this part of the parenting journey.

Game Night, Tuesday, November 17, 7:00 PM, Please join us for Game Night. We have both old and new games and you also may bring any game of your choice to play. We would love to see you there.

Youth Corps Service, Sunday, November 22, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm, Make trail mix at Preble Street Food Security Hub, 75 Darling Ave, South Portland. RSVP to amber@stalbansmaine.org by November 19.

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.

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 Deb Sandler (dhallsandler@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.

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!*

Children's Clothes Closet is open to the public!

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

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Through YOU as food donors and organized by Community Crisis Ministries (CCM) and the Missons & Social Witness Team (MSWT), is again providing bountiful Thanksgiving baskets for families, referred through South Portland General Assistance, Cape Elizabeth General Assistance, and the South Portland School System. We expect 20 baskets to be requested. Here's how this works:

- YOU pick up a full or partial shopping list for some or all of a Thanksgiving Basket on Sundays, November 8 or 15, before or after worship, in the Narthex (sanctuary entry) or Wright Pavillion (Coffee Hour)!
- YOU buy the specified items and return them during the weeks of November 8 or 15 to the Church office or on Sunday, November 22 to the altar for worship!
- WE provide gift cards for recipients to purchase their chosen main course – turkey, ham, or whatever – and enthusiastically accept donations! Donate online, or with a check payable to FCCUCC, memo "Thanksgiving Baskets".
- TOGETHER we celebrate your generosity during worship on November 22!
- WE assemble the donated food into baskets after worship on Sunday, November 22. Helpers welcome!
- RECIPIENTS provided by our community partners come to the church to pick up their basket the afternoon of Sunday, November 22!

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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!

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!

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

It's GIVING SEASON:
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.

We invite you to partner with us, as we do all that. *Watch for a pledge card in the mail* or find one in the pews. Then please prayerfully consider making a pledge of financial commitment to FCC, for 2027. *Help God's world to flourish.* Thank you!

