



*Unraveling
the Good News
Lent 2026*

Lent Week 6: Palms to Passion Sunday March 29, 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: Today we begin worship together. After the Passing of the Peace, young people grades K-8 are invited to follow teachers upstairs to our one-room classroom.

There is yarn for God's Eyes, knitting, and clipboards with paper and coloring pages at the back of the sanctuary, for worshippers of any age to use during the service.

PRELUDE

Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed

Hugh Wilson,
Arr. Mary McDonald

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

THRESHOLD MOMENT

PALM SUNDAY READING

John 12: 12-19

Craig D. B. Patton
and Victoria Goode

JOYFUL RESPONSE*

Shine, Jesus, Shine!

The choir will sing the first verse.

The congregation is invited to sing the chorus twice through:

Shine, Jesus, Shine!

Fill the land with a loud *Hosanna!*

Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.

Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;

Send forth your Word, now, and let there be light!

TIME FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

All: God on the road to Golgotha: The headlines are full of stories that make us shudder, rage or weep. It can be tempting to turn away, to protect our hearts and avoid discomfort. Forgive us, Holy One. When our stomachs turn and the tears threaten to overflow, teach us to breathe and not avert our gaze. Let our discomfort be a sign that something needs to change; then give us the stamina to stay engaged. Let us not leave anyone to carry their cross alone.

PRAYERFUL PAUSE

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

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

All: No matter how frayed the fabric of
our lives or relationships
God is ready to help repair what is torn.
You are loved, forgiven, and set free
to love, forgive and start again.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

*SUNG RESPONSE

There Is More Love

Black Spiritual ☰

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

The cross processes down the aisle.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Victoria Goode

One: Holy One, the story of Jesus' life is complicated: a tangle of love and betrayal,
hope and violence, pain and mystery.

All: Help us to unravel the Good News in this sacred text, to pull at the threads
of love and justice, until we can knit together a liberating garment of
healing and hope.

PASSION SUNDAY READING

John 19: 16b-22

MUSICAL RESPONSE *The cross continues to the front of the room.*

SERMON

Eyes on the Cross

Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Johann Sebastian Bach

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Consider some of what is happening in our community, country and world this
season: What are you tempted to look away from, because it is painful, and what
needs your prayerful attention? Contemplate, then write down your responses.

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 *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* Ken Medema

Lord, listen to your children praying. Lord, send your Spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying. Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

OFFERING INVITATION

Help us to live God's love and justice. You can make a secure gift by using the QR code, going to fccucc.org/donate, or by adding your contribution to the box at the back of the sanctuary. Thank you!



MUSICAL INTERLUDE

BLESSING THE OFFERING

CLOSING SONGS *Carry This All* Alexandra Blakely
Gonna Keep on Moving Forward Emma's Revolution

You are invited to come forward to lay palms at the foot of the cross and insert your rolled-up prayers into the wire on the cross, as the choir sings. You may choose to listen or to join in singing.

You do not carry this all alone.

No, you do not carry this all alone.

This is way too big for you to carry this on your own.

So, you do not carry this all alone. [Repeat]

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Pater Noster* Franz Liszt

WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team D, Scott Berry, captain.

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

Cover Design is by our Community Engagement Coordinator, Kat Roderick.

☰ **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. Funds are donated to the Indigo Arts Alliance: <https://indigoartsalliance.me/>. You are invited to contribute, as well. Mark your contribution as “Royalty for Spirituals.” *Thank you.*

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.

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 dmclure@fccucc.org.

Handbell Choir rehearses every Wednesday, 4:45 pm in Wright Pavilion. To ring or learn more about the choir, please contact bell choir director Sharon Potter: handbells@fccucc.org.

COMING UP @ FCC UCC

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS are available on our website (www.fccucc.org) under the GROW heading, or by calling the church office at 799-3361. Completed applications need to be returned to the church office by March 29. Direct questions to steve@fccucc.org. Scholarship Sunday is scheduled for May 17.

Fellowship Club, Tuesday, April 7 at 6:15 pm: We will be joined by Scott “Smoking Bear” Edwards. Mr. Edwards’ performances feature a variety of flutes. Dinner Reservations are required and can be made by emailing Carolyn Clark at carolyn.clark353@gmail.com by noon on Sunday, April 5.

Handbell Concert, Saturday, April 11, 4 pm at Greely Middle School, 351 Tuttle Road, Cumberland: Ring for Joy, FCCUCC’s handbell choir will be joining other ringers from the state of Maine for the Handbell Musicians of America’s Area 1 Spring Ring. The day will end with a concert which is open to the public.

Luncheon at Southern Maine Community College Thursday, April 16 at 11:45 am
We have a group reservation for lunch at the Culinary Arts Dining Center. All are welcome but seats are limited so RSVP as soon as possible. \$20 plus gratuity, Contact Kathy Sahrbeck at 415-0170 or kathrynsme@yahoo.com.

Earth Sunday Lunch and Learn, April 19, 11:30 am- 1:00 pm, Wright Pavilion:

Guest speaker Molly Schen, Ed.D., of Third Act Maine (TAM) will speak on expanding solar power, lowering utility costs and making large corporate polluters share the high costs of climate change-driven storm damage on Maine's environment and communities. No registration needed. Light lunch provided. Hosted by Environmental Working Group. Learn more about Thirdact.org.

SAVE THE DATE for our Mission Trip Fundraising Dinner and Auction: Saturday evening, May 30.

MISSION AND SOCIAL WITNESS

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!*

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

IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

NEW: Understanding Gender and Sexuality - A 3-Part Workshop Series, 6-8 pm on April 1, 8, 15, at First Parish UU, Portland: In a time of significant controversy concerning gender and sexuality, this three-part workshop will present a factual basis for understanding why these controversies and issues exist. It will examine claims and information about gender from the disciplines of biological science, sociology, history, and political science. Led by educator Christine Caulfield. Learn more and register at: <https://tinyurl.com/3tu3uas4>

UPDATE - Weekly Multi-Faith Vigil: Several months ago, multi-faith community members began to gather weekly outside the Cumberland County Jail. It was recently decided not to continue the weekly vigil in its current form. Leaders are discerning where and how we feel called to be together in prayerful vigil next. Please sign up for this email list to receive updates from the planning team, please sign up for this email list: <https://tinyurl.com/ud2tcj97>.

Holy Week Schedule *elle*

Maundy Thursday,
April 2

5:30 - 7 pm in Guptill Hall: Gather for a shared meal, communion, and hand or foot washing.

Good Friday,
April 3

6 am Good Friday Hunger Walk: Meet in Wright Pavilion to walk up to 8 miles to mitigate hunger.

7 pm in the Sanctuary: Mark the final hours of Jesus' life with scripture readings, prayer and music by the Meetinghouse Choir. Livestream available. Watch for a link in your email.

Lenten Vigil

8 pm Fri - 6 am Sun in the Chapel: Sign up for two-hour shifts to pray, meditate, read, or reflect.

Easter, April 5
Sunrise Service

6 am at Fort Williams Park: Gather on the hill by the flagpole, to welcome the rising Son.

Festival Worship

10 am in the Sanctuary: Come make a joyful noise as we celebrate the resurrection! Easter Egg Hunt to follow worship.

Maundy Thursday
Dinner Sign-up

Good Friday Hunger
Walk Sign-up

Lenten Vigil
Sign-up

tinyurl.com
/bdfyv7nv



Email: blockwood@
portlandresearch.com

Email:
debgrew1@gmail.com

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."

Your positive reviews on social media help others to find us.

Write a review on Google (Thanks!). Like and follow us:





**First Stitches:
Stating our Faith in Urgent Times**

**Three Sundays: March 15, 22 and 29,
11:45 am – 1 pm, Davidson Lounge**

What do you believe – about God or justice or love? What do you trust about Jesus or the Holy Spirit? How might our statements of faith tether or guide us as we respond to the unsettled world around us?

Join Pastor Alison for a three-part conversation informed by the collection, *Stating Our Faith in Urgent Times*, by the UCC Still Speaking Writers.

Curiosity encouraged. All welcome.