To Witness
May 17, 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: Today we begin worship together. After the Time for All God's Children, young people grades K-8 are invited to follow teachers upstairs to our one-room classroom. There are clipboards with paper and coloring pages at the back of the sanctuary, for worshippers of any age to use during the service.

PRELUDE *Be Thou My Vision (with Gymnopedie No. 1)* Eric Satie, Arr. P. Roussaki and Lenny Seidel

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

THRESHOLD MOMENT

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We are sparked by wonder, and fanned by awe,
ALL: We are set ablaze by love!
One: We are lifted high to shine more brightly,
One: and held aloft to light the World.
ALL: May God's Spirit move among us,
and make us to illuminate dark places,
by filling us with wisdom, with mercy, and with grace!

OPENING HYMN *Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow* #217

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

When we fail to ask questions and to resist the easy answers, forgive us! When we accept our own ignorance because it grants us freedom from responsibility, forgive us! We know that to love the world as Christ did, one must see the world, and we cannot avoid hard truths to prevent our own discomfort. When we cease to witness and to name the injustice in this world, open our eyes, and open our hearts, and open our minds, that we might see where your love is needed, and rush to offer it. Transform us O God, from passive spectators into active witnesses. Amen.

PRAYERFUL PAUSE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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

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

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Easter People* David Light

We are an Easter people and hallelujah is our song!
We are an Easter people and hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah is our song!

TIME FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION Luke Borelli

One: God of life-renewing power,
All: Harness our attention, spark our curiosity, and ignite our desire to radiate enough love and justice to restore your world.

SCRIPTURE Acts 1:6-14

SERMON *To Witness* Rev. Stephen Savage

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM *Jubilance* Kevin McChesney

Ring For Joy Handbell Choir

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom 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 kingdom 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.

SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION

SUNG RESPONSE *Earth and All Stars* *#14 v. 5*

Knowledge and truth, loud sounding wisdom, sing to the Lord a new song!
Sibling and friend, loud praying members, sing to the Lord a new song!
God has done marvelous things. We will sing praises with a new song!

OFFERING INVITATION

Help us to live God's love and justice. You can make a secure gift by using 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

CLOSING HYMN *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me* #467

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Mixolydian March* Michael W. Joy

Ring For Joy Handbell Choir

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WORSHIP NOTES

Thank you to this morning's ushers: Team H, Carrie Skeffington, captain.

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

The flowers on the altar are given by Terry and Nancy Dallaire in celebration of their grandsons Tommy, Charlie and Peter.

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.

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 Wright Pavilion. If you are interested in ringing in the choir or would like more information, please contact bell choir director Sharon Potter: handbells@fccucc.org.

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? Contact Lynne Lanctot at lanctotla74@gmail.com.

TODAY @ FCC UCC

Tech Help Day, 11:30 am - 1 pm: Looking for assistance in figuring out your electronic devices? Visit our Tech Table in Wright Pavilion. Get help with Venmo, Instagram, or any tech question. If you need help with your phone, our tech gurus will resolve your issues or point you to more help.

Parents of Adult Children Group, 6-7:30 pm: All parents of adult children (over 18 years old) are welcome to join us. No judgment, no advice-giving -- just a time to build friendships and mutual support, wherever you are on this part of the parenting journey.

COMING UP @ FCC UCC

Game Night, Tuesday, May 19, 7:00 pm, Wright Pavilion: The rumor is that cookies are now served and you can play whatever game you prefer. All are welcome! Questions? Contact Kathy Sahrbeck: kathrynsme@yahoo.com

Mission Trip Fundraising Dinner and Auction: Saturday evening, May 30, **Dinner and Silent Auction - 6 pm; Live auction - 7 pm:** Menu: Chicken or eggplant parmesan with spaghetti, salad, and dessert. Cost: $20 per adult / $12 per child. Dinner reservations required. Email Chris Keiter at cfkeiter@gmail.com with the number of attendees and meal choices (or if you are interested in participating in the July 12-17 mission trip). To donate auction items, contact Lynne Lanctot at 207-318-1605.

New Member Sunday, May 31: We will welcome new members during worship. Curious about joining FCCUCC? See Pastor Alison and consider attending the New Member Orientation on May 12.

Introducing: *Faith and Fiction*, May 31 and June 28, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm: Join FCCUCC member Chuck Warner and Pastor Steve for reflection on various books and short stories. On May 31, we will discuss the first in a hope-filled two-book series set in a sustainable climate future: *A Psalm for the Wild Built* by Becky Chambers. On June 28, we will discuss the second book: *A Prayer for the Crown Shy.* These books can be bought in a single volume called *Monk and Robot.*

JUNE - SAVE THE DATES!

Understanding Gender and Sexuality Workshop Series, three Tuesdays May 26, June 2 & 16, 6 pm - 8 pm: See back cover for details. We are excited to welcome educator Christine Caulfield, advocate for equal rights and treatment of LGBTQ+ folks. Responding to recent controversies, this series will draw on the disciplines of biological science, sociology, history, and political science. Limited space.

Church Lunch and Annual Meeting, Sunday, June 7, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm: Join us after worship on Sunday, June 7 for this annual gathering. Reflect on the past year, elect our leaders and learn what's been cooking at First Congregational Church, UCC. Don't miss it!

Pride Parade, Saturday, June 20: March with FCCUCC members and friends, and others from our Greater Portland multi-faith community, in celebration of the LGBTQ+ community. Watch for details.

MISSION AND SOCIAL WITNESS

Children's Clothes Closet is now open to the public! Beginning May 13, The Children's Clothes Closet will be open:

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

Interested in volunteering? contact AnnElissa Leveque: imzadidog@maine.rr.com.

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 left-hand 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! www.apparelimpact.com

Volunteer for Preble Street Food Hub: On the last Friday of the month, we prepare meals at the Food Hub, 75 Darling Avenue, South Portland. To learn more, see the Weekly Word or contact Danna Wiggins: dannawig2@gmail.com.

Clynk Bags are in the narthex (inside main entrance). Return your cans and bottles to a Clynk collection site at Hannaford or other participating grocery stores. Scan the code on the bags and the refunds will be donated to our FCC mission team.

IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Green Teams Gathering, Saturday, May 30, 10 am - 4 pm, Wolfe's Neck Center, Freeport: The BTS Center invites faith communities from across New England to come together in a spirit of bold collaboration and vision. Passamaquoddy Language Keeper Dwayne Tomah will offer the keynote on an indigenous perspective on the Doctrine of Discovery. Learn more at: https://thebtscenter.org/greenteams/. NOTE: *There is a discount if you register as part of the FCCUCC Team*. Contact Pastor Alison at revalisonpatton@fccucc.org

NEW! Sea Change Chorale: My Heart Be Brave, Saturday, May 30, 4 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick and Sunday, May 31, here at FCCUCC. No tickets needed. All donations will go to the Maine Immigrant Rights' Coalition (MIRC). Directed by our own music director, Deirdre McClure.

Film Screening: *Heightened Scrutiny,* June 6, 4-6:30 pm, Equality Community Center. This is a free Pride month screening. Reserve your seat ECCMaine.org/film.

The Malaga Ship at the Maine Maritime Museum, Bath, ME, Wednesday, June 10: Beginning at 4 pm, guests are invited to enjoy free admission to Maine Maritime Museum's exhibits, including *Re|Sounding*, a powerful new exhibition centering Indigenous and Black perspectives on Maine's maritime past. Live performance of *The Malaga Ship* begins at 5 pm, with panel discussion to follow. 3 pm carpool (for those who want to see the exhibit). Return about 8:30 pm. Contact revalisonpatton@fccucc.org to join the carpool.

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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" then select "Contact Info Update Form."

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

Understanding Gender and Sexuality: A 3-Part Learning Opportunity

An invitation to honor Pride Month by deepening our understanding of gender and sexuality.

Join us for Three Tuesdays, 6-8 pm
Part 1: May 26
Part 2: June 1
Part 3: June 16

In a time of significant controversy concerning gender and sexuality, Educator and LGBTQ+ equal rights advocate Christine Caulfield will examine claims and information about gender, drawing on the disciplines of biology, sociology, history, and political science.

REGISTER:
HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/3MMR82NK

2026 Scholarship Recipients

2026 - GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Alexander Campbell
Plans: Currently attending Saint Michael's College studying Economics and Political Science, with an expected graduation in May 2027. He is exploring graduate school or immediate entry into a career in public policy.
"During my time at school, I have become extremely interested in public policy."
"As I enter my senior year, I hope to explore options that can lead me down this path."
"Whether it's graduate school or immediately entering the workforce, I hope to enter a career where I can leave an impact and do what I love at the same time."

Emma Campbell
Plans: Currently attending the University of Southern Maine studying Marketing, with an expected graduation in 2026. After graduating, she hopes to gain experience at a marketing company and eventually start her own business providing marketing services to small businesses.
"Working in a restaurant has taught me many exciting things about running a business, and I've found my niche in working in the promotional side of things."
"After graduating I hope to gain more experience by working for a marketing company, and eventually start my own business providing marketing services to small businesses."

Evan Campbell
Plans: Currently attending Case Western Reserve University studying Chemistry, with an expected graduation in 2029. He is a pre-med student who plans to pursue research and ultimately earn a doctorate.
"I am a pre-med student with a passion for chemistry."
"I wish to engage in research soon and get a doctorate in my future."
"Receiving a scholarship would greatly reduce the burden and stress placed upon both myself and my family that would come as a result of pursuing my academic interests."

Victoria Goode
Plans: Currently attending the University of Southern Maine studying American Sign Language Interpretation. She plans to pursue a career as an ASL-English interpreter, serving as a bridge of connection between the Deaf community and broader audiences.
"Since connecting with the Deaf community here in Maine, I have had this unrelenting motivation and desire to serve the community which I see build each other up, make connections, welcome newcomers, support those they love and remember those they have lost."
"My aspirations are not to 'help' Deaf people. I have learned along this journey that Deaf people do not need to be 'helped.'"
"I aspire to become not someone who speaks FOR Deaf people, but rather someone who connects their message to a wider audience."

Maggie Reynolds
Plans: Currently attending the University of New Hampshire majoring in Exercise Science with a minor in Nutrition, with an expected graduation in 2028. She plans to earn a Doctorate in Physical Therapy.
"In sixth grade, I received physical therapy for debilitating hip and knee pain, which is where I found a strong pull and interest in the field."
"My passion to help people get back to their most confident, strong, and healthy self is very important to me and I am deeply grateful for any opportunity of financial assistance that will help me continue my education."

Abigail Scifres
Plans: Completing her undergraduate degree at Skidmore College and accepted to the University of Maine School of Law (Maine Law) beginning in the fall. She is interested in mediation, conflict resolution, and advocating for marginalized and underrepresented people.
"After a few internships at different law offices, I have discovered an interest in mediation."
"I see a great need in society for compromise and conflict resolution."
"I hope that I can help people in conflict come to a peaceful solution and help marginalized and underrepresented people through the study of law."

Declan Scifres
Plans: Currently attending Bowdoin College majoring in Biochemistry on a pre-medicine track, with an expected graduation in 2029. He plans to attend medical school and return to Maine to practice medicine and expand access to high-quality care.
"I plan to major in Biochemistry with a pre-medicine track and then apply to medical school, finally practicing as a doctor back in Maine as my career."
"I hope to expand access to high-quality medicine in Maine."

Eddie Warner
Plans: A graduating high school senior planning to attend college. He is focused on finding his calling and developing both the practical and personal skills necessary for a fulfilling and successful life beyond graduation.
"Finding your calling should be your utmost priority."
"Life is a journey, and the goal is not the joy that lies off in the distance far ahead of you, but rather in the happiness found in the series of moments unfolding today and every day."
"Community and knowledge are both essential to completion of a college degree and a successful career, and neither should be disregarded."

Silas Zechman
Plans: Currently attending the University of Baltimore School of Law, studying Law with expected graduation in 2027. He plans to use his degree to advocate for the equitable treatment of all as a community-focused attorney.
"I am a civic minded individual who enjoys giving back to my community, wherever that may be at the time."
"I want to use my professional experience and college degree to continue to advocate for the equitable treatment of all."
"There are less scholarship programs and money available for graduate degrees which is why I am so grateful to my church for making this opportunity available to students at all levels of their education."

2026 - LORETTA THOMPSON POND SCHOLARSHIP

Luke Borelli
Plans: A graduating high school senior accepted to Oxford Brookes University in England to study Motorsport Technology Engineering. His dream is to work for a Formula One racing team, designing and engineering parts for cars.
"My dream now is to one day work for a racing team in Formula One. I want to design and engineer parts for the cars and help push the limits of automotive performance."
"Getting through college and succeeding in that field will take more than just interest. It is going to take discipline, work ethic, and the ability to work well with others, qualities I've built through my experiences in the church."
"Through my mom's involvement in the church and the experiences I've shared with my brother, I've learned the importance of giving back, staying committed, and being part of a community."