



Coming Home to Earth

Sunday Worship June 15, 2025

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.*

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST 

A Note for Families / Folks of All Ages: We worship all together this morning. 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 *Behold the Great Redeemer* George Careless

WELCOME TO WORSHIP Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

THRESHOLD MOMENT

Sung Response: *Spirit of Life* Bulletin back cover

CALL TO WORSHIP *

One: This we know: the earth does not belong to us,

All: We belong to the earth.

One: This we know: all things are connected,

All: Like the blood that unites one family.

One: This we know: we did not weave the web of life,

All: We are merely strands in it.

One: This we know: whatever we do to the web,

All: We do to ourselves.

One: Let us give thanks that all things are held together in Christ.

***OPENING HYMN** *God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale* #98

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Creator-Creating God, You formed the earth and its creatures from the same soil. You made us to be companions, to call each other by name. When we opt to go it alone; when we make choices based on our own needs and wants, without regard for the lives of others, forgive us, we pray. Remind us that we are all related. Teach us how to step back, until we can see and honor your whole, interconnected world.

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**

Shine, Jesus, Shine!

Graham Kendrick

**Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with Creator's glory.
Blaze, Spirit, blaze. Set our hearts on fire!
Flow, River, flow. Fill the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth your Word, God and let there be light!**

TIME FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Paul Zechman

One: This is the sacred story of God's Holy Spirit let loose in the world.

All: Holy Spirit, come! Open our ears, spark our curiosity and inspire our faithful responses to your Word. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 8

SERMON

Coming Home to Earth

Rev. Allen Ewing-Merrill

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM

This Land is Your Land

Woodie Guthrie

Bruce Martel, guitar

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

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

You can make a secure online 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

For the Beauty of the Earth

Pierpoint/Kocher

Bruce Martel, mountain dulcimer

BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

CLOSING HYMN

Restless Weaver

#520

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

The Glory of God in Nature

Ludwig van Beethoven

WORSHIP NOTES

Welcome to our guest preacher, the Rev. Ewing-Merrill. Allen is the Executive Director of the BTS Center. A Maine native, ordained in the United Methodist tradition, Allen served as the co-pastor (with his wife, The Rev. Sara Ewing-Merrill) of HopeGateWay in Portland from 2007-2019. He is also the founder and former convener of Moral Movement Maine, a network of multifaith leaders and people of conscience that advocates for social justice in the state. He serves on the Board of Maine People's Resource Center, the sister organization to Maine People's Alliance.

The BTS Center: With roots dating back to 1814, The BTS Center is a private operating foundation in Portland, Maine, building on the legacy of the former Bangor Theological Seminary. Today The BTS Center seeks to catalyze spiritual imagination, with enduring wisdom, for transformative faith leadership. It offers theologically grounded programs of spiritual and vocational formation, including workshops and retreats, learning communities, book studies, public conversations, and projects of applied research, all with an intention to cultivate and nurture spiritual leadership for a climate-changed world.

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

The flowers on the altar today are in celebration of our three wonderful children, Silas, Finn and Paul and Paul's college graduation from Carol and Chris Zechman.

**** This morning's call to worship** comes from *The Iona Community Worship Book*. Used by permission.

WEEKLY @ FCC UCC

Tuesday Bible Study will continue, every Tuesday, 12:30 - 1:30 pm in Davidson Lounge:

While Pastor Steve is on his much-deserved sabbatical, a loyal group of FCC UCC members has decided to continue their Tuesday tradition of worship reflection. The group will continue to meet, and all are welcome!

Meetinghouse Choir, Handbells and Handchimes are on summer recess. Rehearsals will resume in late August.

SUMMER AT FCC UCC

Art Exhibit - *Interconnected: Exploring Our Kinship With God's More-Than-Human Creation*, continues: View Earth Day-inspired quilts, paintings and photographs created by members and friends of FCC UCC, in the hallway outside the sanctuary. Let this diverse collection of images inspire your reflections about our relationship to God's more-than-human creation!

STARTS TODAY! History of Gospel Music by Terry Foster, Sundays - June 15, 22, 29, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm in the sanctuary: Join our co-director of music Terry Foster for an exploration of the history of gospel music via lecture, conversation, video and live music. With questions contact: terry@fccucc.org.

Portland Pride Parade and Festival, Saturday, June 21: FCC UCC will again be participating in the Portland Pride Parade and Festival. Parade marchers convene at 11:45 AM. Gathering spot in the Monument Square area yet to be determined. FCC UCC will have a table at the Festival in Deering Oaks Park. Please let Walter Kimball know if you are planning to walk in the Parade whkimball77@gmail.com

Pop-Up Choir on Sunday, June 29. Come at 8:30am and we'll learn a song or two to sing in church at 10:00 am. Everyone is welcome!

MISSION CORNER

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

Plan B Available: Recognizing that reproductive health care may not always be accessible, our pastors now have a supply of Plan B emergency contraceptive. Reach out to either pastor if you have need; no questions asked; full pastoral support available. Learn more about Plan B at: <https://www.webmd.com/sex/birth-control/plan-b>

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."

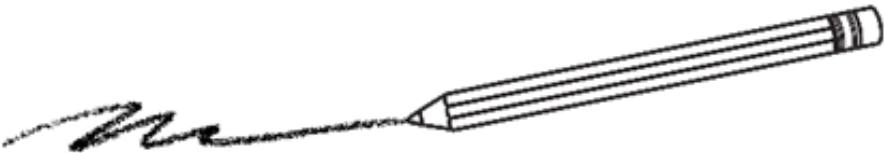
Also, look for us on Facebook: facebook.com/fccucc,

on Instagram: instagram.com/fccucc_s.portland

and on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@FCCUCCSouthPortland



Doodles, Notes and Reflections...



Spirit of Life

Carolyn McDade

