



Borders & Belonging

Part 1: The Stories We Tell

Sunday Worship
June 29, 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.

“We’re sorely in need of the kind of stories that might help us tell better stories about each other.”

Border & Belongings
The Book of Ruth: A Story for Our Time
Pádraig Ó Tuama & Glenn Jordan

PRELUDE *Andante from Third Organ Sonata* Felix Mendelssohn

WELCOME TO WORSHIP Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

SUNG SUMMONS *Spirit of Life*

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

THRESHOLD MOMENT

SUNG SUMMONS, repeat: *Spirit of Life*

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Welcome to the story of God and God’s people

All: A story that stretches back through time

One: And forward into the lives of our great-great-grandchildren

All: In every generation, God writes a new act

One: Performing deeds of border-crossing love and mercy

All: Because in every generation, people forget and put up walls

One: In every generation, we must re-learn that we belong to each other

All: We must re-learn how to do justice and love kindness

One: Welcome to the story of God and God’s people

All: This is our story. Together let us praise the Author of our days.

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

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Narrator God: Our stories are littered with the labels we impose on people from *away*. When we choose stereotypes over genuine encounters, when we project our assumptions and diminish the humanity of the foreigners around us, forgive us, we pray. Remind us, again, that your people are complex and multi-dimensional. Reveal to us the blessing in befriending those we have called “stranger.” Teach us to tell better stories about each other.

PRAYERFUL PAUSE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

***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

Debbie Rideout

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

Ruth 1:1-22

SERMON

The Stories We Tell

Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM
Summer Pop-Up Choir

We Are Called to Welcome Strangers

Simon Hancock

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

BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

CLOSING HYMN

Draw the Circle Wide

Songs of the Spirit (gray hymnal) #93

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Hymn of Praise

Alexander Schreiner

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Join us for lemonade on the front porch after worship.

WORSHIP NOTES

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

The flowers on the altar are shared with us from one member's garden.

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 will continue their Tuesday tradition of worship reflection. All are welcome!

Meetinghouse Choir, Handbells and Handchimes are on summer recess. Rehearsals will resume on August 27.

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!

CONTINUES 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.

Lunch-n-Games NEW DATE, Sunday, July 13, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm: Our Game Nights have been a hit, so we're adding a *Game Day!* Join us for light lunch and board games in Wright Pavilion. Please RSVP at outreach@fccucc.org so we can plan to feed you.

Blessing Sunday, July 20, 11:15 – 12 pm: As we conclude our summer series, *Borders and Belonging*, join us for a special fellowship hour after worship, when you will be invited to add fabric to the Bless Weaving and make your own blessing oil. Both are made possible through the Bless Project at South Congregational Church, UCC in Kennebunkport. As part of their summer-long project, they have invited other congregations to join them in exploring the power and meaning we find in blessing each other. *See the back page of this bulletin* to learn more and request a daily blessing.

Open Air Worship, Sunday, July 27, 10 am at Bug Light: We're taking our worship outside! Join us at Bug Light for our regular Sunday service followed by a Tailgate social hour and lawn games! Bring your own chair (and an extra to share, if you have one). *We will not be livestreaming, but we will post a recording of worship on Sunday afternoon.*

FCC UCC Goes to the Theater! For those of you who love the theater, we have three opportunities to take in a show together this summer:

- *As You Like It* – Shakespeare in the Park, Deering Oaks Park, **Thursday, July 17** at 6:30 pm (Tickets are free)
- *Barefoot in the Park* – Hackmatack Playhouse in Berwick on **Thursday, July 31** at 2:00 pm
- *Grease* - Hackmatack Playhouse on **Thursday, August 14** at 2:00 pm.

Want to join us? Contact Kathy Sahrbeck to let her know you are interested (or if you have questions) at outreach@fccucc.org. You can also find Kathy after worship, at Lemonade on the Porch, most Sundays.

Handbell Workshops coming this summer:

The FCCUCC handbell director will be presenting two workshops this summer. Each hour-long workshop will be presented twice:

Bell Basics

Wednesday, July 23, 11:00 am-12:00 pm

Wednesday, August 13, 6:00 pm-7:00 pm

For those who want to learn how to ring handbells and play in the choir or are just curious about how the instrument works.

Advanced Ringing Techniques

Wednesday, July 23, 6:00 pm-7:00 pm

Wednesday, August 13, 11:00 am-12:00 pm

For ringers with at least one year of ringing experience who would like to learn more advanced techniques.

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Sharon Potter at handbells@FCCUCC.org.

Pop-up Handchime Choir on Sunday, August 10. Come at 8:30 am to learn a song or two to play during 10 am worship.

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

BUILDING UPDATES!

Steeple Repairs: Did you know that there is only one steeple repair person in our region? After waiting for about two years, we finally have a team on site. Check out the work they are doing to repair our steeple and give it a face lift!

Small Parking Lot: The small church parking lot adjoining Mitchell Road is about to be repaved. The town is also scheduled to repave Mitchell Road sometime during the month of July. Please plan accordingly.

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



IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

A DAILY BLESSING: Need a spirit-lift? Sign up to receive a daily blessing in your inbox, each morning between now and September 15. Offered as part of the **Bless Project** at South Congregational Church, UCC, in Kennebunkport.

Sign up here:

<https://www.southchurchucc.org/blessproject#daily-blessing>

Then, watch for the arrival of the *Bless Weaving*, which FCC UCC will be hosting July 14-July 20. Add to the weaving during a special fellowship hour on **Sunday, July 20** (see details in this bulletin under “Summer at FCC UCC”).



Doodles, Notes and Reflections...

