



The Power of Welcome

September 21, 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 *Prelude in B minor* JS Bach, arr. Alexander Siloti

WELCOME TO WORSHIP Rev. Alison Buttrick Patton and Rev. Stephen Savage

THRESHOLD MOMENT

CALL TO WORSHIP - *Please Remain Seated*

One: Breathe deep, inhaling the spirit that swirls
and glides throughout creation!

**ALL: May the Holy spirit fill our lungs,
and course throughout our bodies.**

One: Let's all take three slow deep breaths now...

Two: Take note of your body, of its place and its position,
Note your neighbor, and your surroundings,
and know that God is in it all!

**ALL: May we witness the scope of God's presence,
seeing God's loving eyes in all those we meet!**

Two: Look at all those gathered here today, and envision those at home,
if your eyes meet, share a smile or a wave.

One: Come and be present in this place,
to praise the God of Love and Justice!

**ALL: May our minds be snared by God,
and may all else slip away and make space for Love!**

One: Close your eyes and picture the Love of God at work in your life...

Two: Come now friends, let us worship the God of Love and Welcome!

***OPENING HYMN** *Gather Us In (Here In This Place)*

#250

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

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

God of Welcome, when we fail to consider our neighbors, or we act in ways that endanger and hold back others in an effort to further our own goals, forgive us. Help us to recognize the places where we can share Your Love, or through our words and actions, make You more accessible to those who search for You. Amen.

PRAYERFUL PAUSE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE Casting Our Burdens to The Wind

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Peace Like a River* African American Spiritual 𐄂

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul. [Repeat]

I've got joy like a fountain...

I've got love like an ocean...

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Judy Kimball

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 Exodus 2:23-25; 3:1-15; 4:10-17 *The Voice Paraphrase*, adapted
Judy Kimball and Karen Westerberg

SERMON

MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE

ANTHEM

I Am Love

Joseph M. Martin
Meetinghouse Choir

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

MUSICAL RESPONSE

Amen! Amen!

African American Spiritual

Amen! Amen! Amen, amen, amen!

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 HYMN

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

#372

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

I Believe in Miracles

John W. Peterson
(arr. Fred Bock)

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WORSHIP NOTES

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

The Globe is lighted by Deborah and Jim Rideout, In memory of their parents Eugene and Bernice Rideout and Linwood and Edithe Durrel.

Livestream: Thank you to Alex Ratta for managing our worship livestream, this week and every week!

■ **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. We are now donating funds to the **Indigo Arts Alliance**. You are invited to contribute, as well. Donate by check or online, with "Royalty for Spirituals" in the memo. Thank you.

CAN YOU HELP?

We are looking for volunteers to help us relocate the **Children's Clothes Closet** from Guptill Hall to the 5th floor. Please contact Pastor Alison if you'd be willing to assist: revalisonpatton@fccucc.org Let her know if you are available weekdays and/or weekends. We will set a move date in October, based on group availability. Thank you!

WEEKLY @ FCC UCC

Tuesday Bible Study meets from 12:30 - 1:30 pm in Davidson Lounge: whether you are a member of FCC UCC or you are simply interested in joining in the fun, you are invited to join our weekly bible study group, to enjoy fellowship and to discuss the worship and focal scripture from the past Sunday. Led by Rev. Steve Savage. All are welcome!

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 dmccclure@fccucc.org.

Handbells rehearse on Wednesdays, 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.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER @FCC UCC

TODAY: Wabanaki Allies Working Group meeting, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Laity Room. Our first planning meeting of the church year. If you're new to FCCUCC or have not yet attended our gatherings, please join us. All you need is a curiosity and a passion for justice.

Financial Check-Up, Sunday, September 28, 11:15 am, sanctuary: Following worship, come and hear from Chris Keiter, Bruce Lockwood and Rich Armstrong, for an overview of the current financial status of the church. Discuss funding sources and projected expenses for the upcoming year, and implications for the 2026 budget. We encourage questions and suggestions. This is an opportunity for us to better understand and play a part in how we raise and spend church funds.

To talk about money is to talk about ministry. How do we stay financially healthy, so we can continue to live God's love and justice? Please join us and share your creative input. Your thoughts and contributions are important!

World Communion Sunday with Guest Preacher, Rev. Marisa Laviola, Sunday, October 5: Guest preaching by our Maine Conference Minister, Rev. Laviola, and an opportunity to meet with her following worship.

Sunday, October 12, Defend our Democracy Vigil, following worship: Join us outside the front entrance of the church, facing Cottage Road, as we raise our voices and our signs in defense of democracy.

MISSION AND SOCIAL WITNESS

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

Clynk Bags are available in the narthex (inside main entrance). Did you know that you can collect your returnable cans and bottles to support our mission and outreach efforts? Fill with returnable bottles and cans 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.

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Maine Council of Churches presents: *Democracy in Crisis*, an evening with Pulitzer Prize nominee Colin Woodard, First Parish Church, Brunswick, Monday, September 22, 6:30 pm. Woodard will discuss how we got here and what we can do about it. Proceeds to benefit Maine Council of Churches (of which FCC UCC is a member). Tickets and info at www.maineCouncilofchurches.org

Community Sing, September 28 and every other Sunday, 3:30 pm at HopeGateway Church, 515 Woodford Street, Portland: A bi-weekly gathering of people from diverse congregations finding hope in singing together. Sign up to learn about future events or opt-in to the Response Team to sing at resistance and change events: Emilia Dahlin at emilia@emiliadahlin.com

What If We Get It Right? Visions of Climate Futures – A Book Study with the BTS Center, 5 Tuesdays in October and November, beginning September 30, 4-6 pm: Author Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, marine biologist and advocate, interviews a host of people in diverse fields who are working toward a future of collective flourishing, focusing on what is possible even in the darkest times. Event includes discussion *with the author* on November 4. Details and registration at: <https://thebtscenter.org/event/what-if-we-get-it-right-book-study-2/>

BTS Center Convocation - *Flipping the Script: Claiming our Voices, Telling Our Stories*, October 16 (10 am) – October 17 (3:30 pm) 2025, Maple Hill Farm Inn and Conference Center, Hallowell, ME + Online Companions. Details and registration at <https://thebtscenter.org/convocation-2025/>

Our Maine Conference UCC Annual Meeting, October 17-18, at Pilgrim Lodge. Learn more and register at: <https://www.maineucc.org/annual-meeting/>

Youth Service Corps is back! Sunday, October 19, 12 – 2 pm – Coats and Boots for St. Elizabeth Pantry: Middle and High School youth from 12 participating churches – including FCC UCC - will gather once a month for a service project and fun time together. For more info contact Amber Burks at amber@stalbansmaine.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.”

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

on Instagram: instagram.com/fccucc_s.portland

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





CONTRIBUTE BREAD for WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY October 6, 2025

On the first Sunday in October, Christians around the globe join together in a sacred act of unity—the Lord’s Supper. Since its beginning in 1933, World Communion Sunday has reminded us that we are one body in Christ, connected through faith and love that transcend boundaries of culture, language, and nation.

We are inviting you to bring breads from around the world to adorn the communion table, to symbolize the diversity and beauty of the worldwide church. Following worship, these same breads will be shared at coffee hour, accompanied by butter, jams, and the fellowship of our community.

If you feel called to **contribute a loaf of bread, butter, or jam** for this holy occasion, simply scan the QR code with your phone camera or see the *Weekly Word* to sign up and be part of this delicious and meaningful tradition.



- The Spiritual Life and Worship Team