



## The Power of Words

### Sunday Worship September 7, 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** *Sonata in C Major, I. Allegro* Jean-Baptiste Breval  
Hannah Long-Higgins, Cello

**WORDS OF WELCOME** Rev. Alison Buttrick Patton and Rev. Stephen Savage

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Take a deep breath! Today is a new day, created fresh by God's own hand.

**All: Because God spoke, it is good, very good!**

One: Look around! Here we gather: a patchwork of people, all inspired by God's own breath.

**All: Because God spoke, it is good, very good!**

One: Take it all in! This sacred space and the land around us, teeming with life let loose by God's own word.

**All: Because God spoke, it is good, very good!**

One: Give thanks! Sing Praise! From the word, 'Go!' we and this whole, astonishing creation have been cherished by God's own heart.

**All: Because God spoke, it is good, very good!**

**\*OPENING HYMN** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* #7

**PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS**

Creator God, you spoke, and sunflowers bloomed, estuaries flowed, and hummingbirds took flight. From the beginning, you taught us that words are powerful. When we use our words to dismiss or diminish, when we lash out or shut others down, forgive us, we pray. When we fall silent in the face of injustice, or when the words we choose exclude our neighbors or obscure the truth, teach us the language of compassion. Let our speech be like yours, truth-telling, life-giving and full of love.

**PRAYERFUL PAUSE**

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

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

## **\*SUNG RESPONSE**

*Peace Like a River* 𐄂

**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 love like an ocean...  
I've got joy like a fountain...**

## **BLESSING OF THE BACKBACKS**

## **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Deb Sandler

**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 READING**

Genesis 1

Craig Patton and Deb Sandler

## **SERMON**

*The Power of Words*

Rev. Alison J. Buttrick Patton

## **MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE**

## **PASTORAL PRAYER**

## **SUNG RESPONSE**

**Amen! Amen! Amen, amen, amen!** African American Spiritual 𐄂

## **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](https://fccucc.org/donate), or by adding your contribution to the box at the back of the sanctuary. Thank you!



## **CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION**

### **Invitation to the Table**

### **Prayer of Preparation**

### **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.**

### **The Story is Told**

## The Gifts are Blessed

## The Meal is Shared

You are invited to come forward by the center aisle to receive communion. All bread is gluten free. The juice is non-alcoholic. There are pre-wrapped communion elements for those who prefer, on the communion table.

### Communion Anthem

*Simple Gifts*

arr. Marie Pooler

*We're Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table*

African American Spiritual<sup>☞</sup>

## Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

**God of Grace, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table, by granting us the presence of Christ. Now, strengthen our faith; increase our love for one another and send us out to live the love and justice of Jesus. Amen.**

### CLOSING HYMN

*Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*

#316

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BENEDICTION

### POSTLUDE

*Toccata In G*

Dennis Eliot

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## WORSHIP NOTES

**Thank you** to this morning's ushers: Team A, Terry Dallaire, captain.

**The flowers on the altar** are given in honor of loved ones by Peter and Linda Foss.

**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.

**Communion:** Thank you to FCC UCC member Jennifer Goode for designing and setting up our communion table this week and every first Sunday.

## GRATITUDES

Thanks to the following volunteers for stepping up to help us out during staffing transitions this summer:

Sue Farris – The *Weekly Word* and summer *Beacon*

Scott Thatcher – The *Weekly Word*

Aaron Scifres – Website updates

Nancy Irving and Nancy Hawes – Business office support

## 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 [dmcclure@fccucc.org](mailto:dmcclure@fccucc.org).

**Handbells rehearse on Wednesdays, 4:45 pm in Wright Pavilion.** Questions? Contact bell choir director Sharon Potter: [handbells@fccucc.org](mailto:handbells@fccucc.org).

## SEPTEMBER@FCC UCC

**Welcome Sunday Picnic, Sunday, September 7, after worship:** Join us for a BBQ hosted by the Fellowship Club and the Education, Growth, and Fellowship Committee in the parking lot after our Welcome Sunday Worship.

**Music Sunday *and* Farewell Reception for Terry Foster, Sunday, September 14:** Join us for a worship service that celebrates the many ways music expresses and inspires our faith. Then, stay for a **special reception**, as we thank Terry Foster for his years as our Co-Director of Music and wish him well upon his retirement from this position.

**Game Night, Tuesday, September 16, 7 pm in Wright Pavilion:** Bring your favorite board game or learn to play one of the games we have on hand. All welcome! Questions: [outreach@fccucc.org](mailto:outreach@fccucc.org)

**Sunday, September 21: Wabinaki-led Worship** with Passamaquoddy citizens Lisa Sockabasin and Lauren Stevens; Second Hour conversation with Lisa and Lauren.

## 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](mailto: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. It's easy!

**Backpacks and Supplies:** *Thanks* to all who have donated supplies for our annual backpack drive. We've given away 12 bags so far! It's not too late to contribute. There are donation boxes in the office and the narthex; please scan the QR code at right with the camera on your phone *or* click the link in the *Weekly Word* to review the requested items and select items to contribute. Many thanks for continuing to support our local students!



**THE WIDER COMMUNITY** - Consider attending with an FCC UCC friend!

**Community Sing, September 14 and every other Sunday, 3:30 pm at HopeGateway Church, 515 Woodford Street, Portland** (2:45pm for anyone looking to get organized around singing at demonstrations and public events): A bi-weekly gathering of people to find hope in singing together. Sign up to learn about future events or to opt-in to the Response Team to sing at resistance and change events:

- To register or ask questions, email Emilia Dahlin at: [emilia@emiliadahlin.com](mailto:emilia@emiliadahlin.com)

**2025 Walks for Historical and Ecological Recovery (WHERE): *Memoryscape Walk*, Freeport, Saturday, September 13, 9 am – 3:30 pm.** A scavenger hunt-style event where small teams will span out across Freeport to examine the commemorative landscape before regrouping to share our findings over a community meal. Details and registration at <https://www.walkwhere.org/freeport> . Organized by Freeport residents with Atlantic Black Box and The BTS Center and with funding from the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership.

- About WHERE: Partners committed to surfacing the truths of colonization and oppression in the place known for millennia by the Wabanaki people as the Dawnland are engaging with local communities on a journey across land and water, and across time.

**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](http://www.maineCouncilofchurches.org)

***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/>

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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](http://fccucc.org) and select “Contact Us” then select “Contact Info Update Form.”

Also, look for us on Facebook: [facebook.com/fccucc](https://facebook.com/fccucc)  
on Instagram: [instagram.com/fccucc\\_s.portland](https://instagram.com/fccucc_s.portland)  
and on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/@FCCUCCSouthPortland](https://youtube.com/@FCCUCCSouthPortland)



*Doodles, Notes and Reflections...*

