

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
OF ELLSWORTH, MAINE  
FOUNDED 1812**



**March 2024 THE STEEPLE NEWSLETTER**

First Congregational Church, PO Box 12, 2 Church Street, Ellsworth, Maine 04605 207-667-8321 ellsworthucc.org

From Rev. Keith Bowie, Transitional Minister



It's hard to believe that the Lenten season has just begun as I write this message. It feels like the year is barely underway, and already it is time to consider how best to approach our time as we walk with Jesus down the path of honesty, confession, and truth-telling. I have to admit, usually my preparation revolves almost exclusively around the question: "What am I giving up this year?" It's an important practical question, surely, and I do plan to devote some discernment time to answering it. But sometimes I think I start to view Lent as little more than a period of compartmentalized self-discipline.

So, this year, in addition to the traditional sacrifices and the inner transformation of our lives, I want to invite you to join me in taking a page out of Richard J. Foster's classic book *Celebration of Discipline*. You may have heard of or even read this book as I've seen copies of it in the church library. In addition to the inward disciplines of prayer, fasting, meditation, etc., Foster writes about the outward disciplines like worship and guidance and service. Let's add community to that list.

Of course, each one of us makes an individual journey through Lenten death to Easter resurrection, but we also walk together as the Body of Christ. We participate in Christ's own life and death, part of which means helping our loved ones to carry their crosses, whether through our sacrifice and service or simply by being present to them in their need. Part of this also means accompanying each other in prayer, praying *with* as well as praying *for* one another.

Whatever form this takes in your life—making time for a struggling friend, joining a family member in a particular devotion, praying together for a shared goal—I hope you find a way to invite the gifts and graces of community into your Lent. May Christ guide our footsteps and give us good companions along the way.

That in all things God may be glorified,

*Keith*

**Meet our new Treasurer,  
Assistant Treasurer, and  
Bookkeeper! See page 4.**

## MARCH CHURCH MEETINGS

- Adult Forum** – Sundays, 8:15 a.m.  
**Choir** – Thursdays, 6 p.m.  
**Busy Bodies** – Mondays, 10:30 a.m.  
**Music** – TBA  
**Search Comm** – TBA  
**Council** – no March meeting  
**Deacons** – Sunday, March 10, 11:30 a.m.  
**Christian Ed** – Sunday, March 10, 11:30 a.m.  
**Trustees** – Thursday, March 21, 7 p.m.  
**Missions** – Sunday, March 24, 11:30 a.m.

Our meetings are hybrid, in person AND Zoom, so that you may participate in the way you are comfortable. All FCC Zoom events (meetings and worship) use the same meeting number and password. Please contact the secretary in the church office (T-W-Th) for Zoom instructions.



## MARCH LECTIONARY READINGS

### MARCH 3 – 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN LENT

Exodus 20:1-17  
Psalm 19  
1 Corinthians 1:18-25  
John 2:13-22

### MARCH 10 – 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN LENT

Numbers 21:4-9  
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22  
Ephesians 2:1-10  
John 3:14-21

### MARCH 17 – 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN LENT

Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Psalm 51:1-12 OR Psalm 119:9-16  
Hebrews 5:5-10  
John 12:20-33

### MARCH 24 – PALM SUNDAY

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Mark 11:1-11  
John 12:12-16

(Lectionary readings continued)

### MARCH 28 – MAUNDY THURSDAY

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14  
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

### MARCH 29 – GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13-53:12  
Psalm 22  
Hebrews 10:16-25 OR Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9  
John 18:1-19:42

### MARCH 30 – HOLY SATURDAY

Job 14:1-14 OR Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24  
Psalm 31:1-14, 15-16  
1 Peter 4:1-8  
Matthew 27:57-66 OR John 19:38-42

### MARCH 30 – EASTER VIGIL

Genesis 1:1-2:4a & Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26  
Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13  
Psalm 46  
Genesis 22:1-18 & Psalm 16  
Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21; 15:1b-13, 17-18  
Isaiah 55:1-11; 12:2-6  
Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 & Psalm 19  
Ezekiel 36:24-28 & Psalm 42, 43  
Ezekiel 37:1-14 & Psalm 143  
Zephaniah 3:14-20 & Psalm 98  
Romans 6:3-11 & Psalm 114  
Mark 16:1-8

### MARCH 31 – EASTER

Acts 10:34-43 OR Isaiah 25:6-9  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11 OR Acts 10:34-43  
John 20:1-18 OR Mark 16:1-8



# DEACONS

**March 3 – Rev. Keith Bowie**

**March 10 – Rev. Matthew McDonald**

**March 17 – Hunt Gressitt**

**March 24 – Rev. Matthew MacDonald**

**March 31 – Easter, Rev. Keith Bowie**

**March Deacon: Steve Merchant**

March seems busy and we know how cranky March winter can be. Only God and meteorologists have an idea what we may be in for. My prayer is that if we have any kind of storms, that they are not too severe to wreak havoc, but will provide moisture that the earth needs.

I searched the Web to inspire me to write an interesting Lenten post. Here are a few things I found that may guide and inspire you. Please remember to read what Rev. Keith Bowie put in his monthly letter.

1. *"The more we let God take us over, the more truly ourselves we become—because He made us. He invented all the different people that you and I were intended to be."* C.S. Lewis
2. *"When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace."* Jimi Hendrix
3. *"My wish for you is that you continue to be who you are, to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness."* Maya Angelou

I know these are very diverse thoughts, but they made an impact on me when I read them. They have already made me reflect deeply and have changed how I am approaching Lent this year.

Blessings on each one of you during this season of Lent.

## Prayer Calendar names

As we attempt to pray for our entire church family over the course of a year, the Deacons ask that you please include these names in your daily prayers during March:

Julie Allen  
Victoria Church  
Jerri Holt  
Jon Rosemeier  
Lois Stevens  
Genevieve Goebel  
Christia Young  
James Fernald  
Katy Schrader Blackmer  
Eilon Zboray





**Ken Farkas, Treasurer** - Ken and his wife Sue moved to Lamoine in 2018 following his retirement from Sikorsky Aircraft, in Stratford, CT, where he served in various management positions in both Engineering and Finance. Ken has a BS in finance from the University of Connecticut, an MS in Management of Technology, and an MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In addition to his professional credentials, Ken has previously served as Treasurer for both the Sikorsky Foreman's Club and The Candlewood Heights beach club in New Milford, CT.



**Michael Fuller, Assistant Treasurer** - Michael was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. His family spent their summers in Maine and always considered it home. The family moved to upstate NY and FL briefly before moving to Lincoln, Maine, where they lived for the remainder of Michael's childhood. After graduating from Mattanawcook Academy, he earned a BS and MS in mathematics from the University of Maine at Orono. While in college he married his high school sweetheart, the former Susan Moulton. He taught high school mathematics for a year before joining the United States Air Force. After completing Officer Training School (OTS), Michael and his family moved to Eglin AFB in FL, their first duty station. He served 10 duty stations and retired from the USAF after 30 years. Upon retirement, he and Susan moved back to Maine and now live in Lamoine. They have 3 children and 6 grandchildren. Michael and Sue have attended this church since 2008.



**Jennifer Ashmore, Bookkeeper** - Jennifer lives in Lamoine with her husband, Arthur, and daughters Amelia (14) and Lucy (9). She is a member of the Union Congregational Church of Hancock where she serves as Treasurer and bookkeeper. She does bookkeeping for Arthur's electrical business and a local construction company. She's active in her community as well; leading two Girl Scout troops, she's the treasurer for the Lamoine PATRONS and participates on church committees. She enjoys playing with her two labs, Annie and Obi, being outdoors, and traveling with her family.



**MARCH MADNESS**  
**Saturday, March 9, 2024**  
**9 a.m. -1 p.m.**

Nope, this isn't at all about college playoffs. Is winter cabin fever getting to you? Have you ever wanted to learn to knit, crochet, or try felting? Join us in the Fellowship Hall. We will have yarn (very cheap) and puzzles (if you just want to be with folks but not hand craft). Come, join the fun—discover if knitting, crocheting, or felting might be your new hobby.

**Easter Morning**

**7 am – Sunrise service on the front steps; then breakfast**

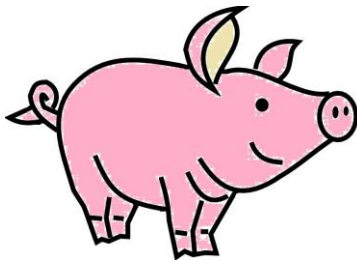
**10 am – Resurrection worship in the sanctuary.**

**We can't wait to see you that joyous morning!**

# Ham Supper

**First Congregational Church  
of Ellsworth, UCC**  
2 Church Street

**Saturday, March 23, 2024**  
**5:00 to 6:30 pm**



Baked ham, mashed potatoes, glazed carrots,  
green beans, salad, rolls, beverages (coffee,  
tea, lemonade)  
and homemade pies

**\$10 per person ~ \$25 per family**

*Great food ~ Great company ~ Great fun*



When I was growing up, many of my Catholic friends would "give up" something for Lent. Often it was ice cream or some other sweet, as well as not eating meat on Friday. I suppose today's equivalent would be giving up internet time.

This is a list suggesting things you can "give up" for Lent that will help you reach new people. So here goes....

- Give up saying, "Everyone I know goes to church" (in fact, less than 20% of people go anywhere).
- Give up saying, "I am too busy to pray today" (this is how we remember who we are and Whose we are)
- Give up your fear of talking about your church and faith to someone you know who doesn't go to church.
- Give up thinking the public is unspiritual. Over 70% of all age generations are spiritual.
- Give up saying, "When my kids were young they always came to Sunday School, why can't parents today?" It is a far-different culture and world today with many different Sunday morning schedules and impossible choices for parents.
- Give up on the notion that you will "die" if you invite someone. You won't die and a friend will be so thankful you did invite them.
- Give up criticizing your Pastor and other lay leaders and get busy meeting someone new.

If you need to stop eating fatty foods or limit your caffeine intake as a Lenten discipline, please do so. But more importantly please "give up" anything that is keeping you from sharing the Good News, and helping another person experience the Risen Christ.

Paul Nickerson  
[Church Vitality Coaching](#)





# PILGRIM LODGE Summer 2024

April 26 - 28  
**JUMP START  
WORK DAYS**  
Grades 6 & up

May 3-4  
**CONFIRMATION  
RETREAT**  
Grades 8-12 w/ Sponsors

May 24 - May 27  
**SABBATH, STORIES,  
& S'MORE!**  
All Ages!

May 31 - June 2  
**WOMEN'S  
SPRING WKND**  
Ages 18 & older

June 1 - June 2  
**CIT  
TRAINING**  
Ages 16-18

June 3 - June 5  
**CLERGY  
PRAYCATION**  
Ages 21 +

June 7-9  
**ME. SCHOOL  
OF MINISTRY**  
Adult Retreat

June 14 - June 16  
**LIFEGUARD  
TRAINING**  
Ages 15 +

June 19 - June 22  
**PATHFINDERS: HALF WEEK**  
Grades 3-5

June 23 - June 29  
**CAMP PRIDE / ISLAND CAMP**  
Grades 7-12 & Post Grad    Grades 7-9

July 3 - 6  
**EXPEDITION EVERYONE**  
All Ages!

July 7 - 13  
**ELEMENTARY ADVENTURES /  
ARTS ALIVE**  
Grades 4-12 & Post Grad

July 14 - 20  
**MIDDLER SPIRIT /  
SENIOR HIGH**  
Grades 6-12 & Post Grad

July 21 - 27  
**MAGICAL MYTHICAL  
ADVENTURES**  
Grades 4-9

**NEW!** July 21 - 27  
**CLIMATE JUSTICE CAMP**  
Grades 9-12 & Post Grad

July 28 - 30  
**GRANDPARENTS AND  
GRANDCHILDREN**  
Ages 5 & older

July 31 - Aug 4  
**LIGHTEN UP  
LOOSEN UP**  
Ages 18 +

Aug 9 - Aug 11  
**PRIDE ACROSS  
THE AGES**  
All Ages!

Aug 30 - Sept 2  
**FAMILY  
CAMP**  
All Ages!

Sept 12 - 15  
**WOMEN'S  
FALL WKND**  
Ages 18 +

Oct 18 - 20  
**FALL  
HOMECOMING**  
Grades 6-12

**VISIT [PILGRIMLODGE.ORG](http://PILGRIMLODGE.ORG)  
AND REGISTER FOR CAMP TODAY!**

## 2024 EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

Easter is March 31. Take care of your Easter flowers now and order with this form!  
Or see Katharine Schrader after church at coffee hour on Sundays through Palm Sunday, March 24.

**Flowers are \$7 per plant. Indicate preference and dedication. Please print.**

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_


☐

TULIPS


☐

LILIES

Other options: contact the church office, 667-8321, or, send a check and this form to:  
Katharine Schrader, 149 Oak Street, Ellsworth ME 04605

# You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.

*Matthew 5:14-15 (The Message)*

*"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it  
shine...Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine..."*

If Jesus had a playlist of music, surely this  
familiar hymn would be among the Top Five.

Jesus teaches that faith calls for action.  
Sharing our light, as the diverse and colorful  
expression of God's love here on earth,  
leads to making blankets, staffing food  
pantries, cooking meals, building houses  
and schools, signing petitions for worthy  
causes, and protesting injustices. A simple  
song with a simple message—our light is on  
a light stand, for all to see—shine and share.  
On any given day, light is shining because  
we are there through our gifts to OGHS.

Your contributions make a difference.  
Your dollars count. Give generously.

**Share the light.**

**One Great  
HOUR**  
OF SHARING

**75**  
YEARS



[ucc.org/oghs](http://ucc.org/oghs)

SCS24B

Photo: @disciplephoto



**FCC will receive gifts for the One Great Hour of Sharing  
offering through the month of March.**



# March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>MASKING is OPTIONAL</b> in the church building. Please maintain physical distance and respect the space of those who wish to continue to wear a mask.					1 OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 <b>Lent III</b> Violet 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11 am Communion luncheon	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5	6 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 6:30 pm Bible study	7 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	8 OFFICE CLOSED	9 9 am March Madness craft day
10 <b>Lent IV</b> Violet <b>DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Deacons 11:30 am Christian Ed	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12	13 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 6:30 pm Bible study	14 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	15 OFFICE CLOSED	16
17 <b>Lent V</b> Violet 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service	18 OFFICE CLOSED	19	20 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 6:30 pm Bible study	21 9 am Steeple & Bulletin deadlines 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir 7 pm Trustees	22 OFFICE CLOSED	23 5:30 Ham supper
24 <b>Palm Sunday</b> Violet 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Missions	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26	27 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 6:30 pm Bible study	28 <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	29 <b>Good Friday</b> OFFICE CLOSED	30
<div>H O L Y W E E K</div>						
31 <b>Easter</b> White 7 am Sunrise service & breakfast 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service						



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS MARCH 10.** This is a friendly reminder of the not-so-very-friendly time change coming soon! When we go to bed Saturday evening, March 9, we advance our clocks by an hour and lose an hour of sleep the next morning. (More caffeine...)

## **Sunday Worship Service 10 a.m.**

**Church office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

Rev. Keith Bowie, Transitional Minister  
Joyce B. Cornwell, Secretary  
Lynn Hall, Organist  
Nancy Sargent, Choir Director  
Sue Fuller, Moderator 610-1626  
Tom MacDonald, Vice Moderator  
Myrna Vallette, Clerk  
Ken Farkas, Treasurer  
Mike Fuller, Asst Treasurer  
Jennifer Ashmore, Bookkeeper

Sidney Emerson & Lynn Hall,  
Financial Secretaries  
Troy Tainter, Building Maintenance Director  
Katharine Schrader, Deacons 266-2541  
Ginny Davis, Missions  
Bonnie Carter, Music & Christian Education  
Council Members at Large:  
Joyce Johnston  
Rhyne Robidoux



**First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ**

PO Box 12

Ellsworth, Maine 04605

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[facebook.com/fccellsworth/](https://facebook.com/fccellsworth/)

Our street address is 2 Church Street, but that is not our mailing address. The Post Office no longer automatically gives us our mail with the street address. You must use the Post Office Box number.