

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



**AUGUST 2021 - THE STEEPLE NEWSLETTER**

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

*From the Moderator*

In the tumult of all that has happened lately, it would be easy to presume that chaos is the order of the day. There is, however, another perspective that should attract our attention.

What if something new and different is trying to emerge from the tensions and challenges of the last several months? Are we able to be open to being reborn, to be reshaped and refocused to minister together to the world around us?

Could it be that we are being called to be our best and most faithful selves, to grow into the blessings that God has gifted us with?

I don't think that any of us are unaware of the decline of the importance of faith, church, and community in the world around us. While we all have our own perspectives on why and how this has happened, none of us would dispute its reality.

Some folks would insist that nothing can be done about the decline in the importance of faith in our lives as individuals or as a society. Some folks would suggest that we need do nothing about the dwindling importance of believing in God and aspiring to a life guided by an ongoing effort to be faithful. They might offer that it doesn't matter what we do or don't do because God will make it all right, no need for us to do anything.

I think that both perspectives, while helping to frame the question, are only a starting point. We can make a difference and it does matter what we commit ourselves to doing. There is here in our midst, in our church family, a love that is integral to who we are. We have made the choice to treat each other and the community around us as our faith has taught us to.

We are not perfect and we most likely in this life never will be. That should not discourage us, it should inspire and challenge us. After all we have the joy of sharing the good news of the Gospel. I have come to believe that as we become willing to being open to Gods plan for all of creation, our world changes in ways that sometimes escape our notice until we are able to look back and to reflect on all that has come to be.

Part of who we are and who we might yet become is to be determined by the choices that we make. Maybe the first choice that we might consider making is the choice to be grateful to God for the many blessings that we have been given. By choosing to be grateful we might just get a glimpse of the divine. What better way to grow our ability to faithfully share Gods love for all of creation as we offer and live out our witness to the grace that is offered us through Jesus.

Let's make sharing the good news of the gospel central to who we are. Let us love extravagantly, forgive as we wish to be forgiven, expand our understanding of compassion, offer hospitality, work for justice and aspire to humility.

Let us pray that together we may labor in love to build up the body of Christ in Ellsworth and the world around us. ♦

*Jack*

## AUGUST CHURCH MEETINGS (PARLOR AND ZOOM)

- Adult Forum** – Sundays, 8:30 a.m.  
**Deacons** – Sunday, Aug 8, 11:30 p.m.  
**Trustees** – Thursday, Aug 12, 7 p.m.  
**Finance** – Friday, Aug 13, 10 a.m.  
**Missions** – Thursday, Aug 19, 6:45 p.m.  
**Council** – Monday, Aug 23, 7 p.m.  
**Re-Opening** – TBA  
**Christian Ed** – TBA

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 **WHICH HAS CHANGED** in recent weeks. Call the church office (T-W-Th) for updated Zoom instructions.

### GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING USE

Effective June 20, 2021, a mask is optional for those who are 2 weeks past full vaccination. We request that you use a mask if you haven't been inoculated.

New this summer: 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month we require all worshipers to wear masks to enable "at risk" people to attend morning worship.



We thank everyone for their commitments to safety so that we may gather safely in person.

## AUGUST LECTIONARY READINGS



### AUGUST 1– 10<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a & Psalm 51:1-12  
Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15 & Psalm 78:23-29  
Ephesians 4:1-16  
John 6:24-35

### AUGUST 8 – 11<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33 & Psalm 130  
1 Kings 19:4-8 & Psalm 34:1-8  
Ephesians 4:25-5:2  
John 6:35, 41-51

### AUGUST 15 – 12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14 & Psalm 111  
Proverbs 9:1-6 & Psalm 34:9-14  
Ephesians 5:15-20  
John 6:51-58

### AUGUST 22 – 13<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

1 Kings 8:(1,6,10-11), 22-30, 41-43 & Psalm 84  
Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18 & Psalm 34:15-22  
Ephesians 6:10-20  
John 6:56-69

### AUGUST 29 – 14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 & Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9  
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9 & Psalm 15  
James 1:17-27  
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

***I will always thank the Lord;  
I will never stop praising him.***

**Psalm 34:1 Good News Translation**

## TREASURER'S



Half-year giving statements have been sent to you by email or USPS. If you have not received yours, please notify the church office.

## IN THE PULPIT DURING AUGUST

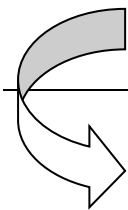
Sunday, August 1  
**Jack Lacey, Church Moderator**

Sunday, August 8  
**Rev. Keith Bowie**  
We will observe Holy Communion.

Sunday, August 15  
**Rev. Jonna Jensen**  
**Transitional Conference Minister, Maine UCC**  
The Simpson Family, special music

Sunday, August 22  
**Rev. Keith Bowie**  
Mask Sunday – All worshipers must wear masks  
so that “at risk” persons may attend safely.  
Thank you for your extra care.

Sunday, August 29  
**Rev. Keith Bowie**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Summer Hymn Sing



**3<sup>RD</sup> HYMN SING THEME**  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 29**  
**“ADORATION & PRAISE OF GOD”**



Please call the church office or email suggested hymns for the theme by Tuesday, August 24, and show up on the 29<sup>th</sup> to make a joyful noise.

Deacons and the Music Committee sponsor Hymn Sing Sundays. Let Bonnie and Kathy know how much you like this!



The Deacons continue to hold our congregation in prayer. We reach out to individuals asking them to participate as greeters, ushers, and liturgists on Sunday mornings. **Fellowship Hour begins Sunday, August 1.** Please, when able and comfortable, join us downstairs after worship.

While we are without a permanent minister, Rev. John L. is willing to help in areas of pastoral care or emergencies. You may also call on Deacon Kathy S.

If you have any needs, the Deacons would like to support you. Please let one of us know if you have a hospitalization. During this time without a minister, the Deacons are the caregivers of the congregation. Please help us do our job by keeping us and the church office informed.



## **LOAVES & FISHES FOOD PANTRY PIE BOOTH AT THE BLUE HILL FAIR**

Members of FCC will staff the booth on Friday, September 3, from 1- 5 p.m. We need two people from 1-3 p.m. and two more to cover 3-5 p.m. We also need five non-refrigerated pies (i.e. no custard fillings).

Contact Missions Chairperson Ginny D. to volunteer as a staffer or pie baker.



# Congratulations!

The Town of Hancock Historical Society awarded FCC church member Bob C. the Boston Post Gold Headed Cane on July 9 as the eldest citizen of that town.

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Dear Friends,

*I want to thank everyone for their prayers, phone calls, cards, flowers, kind thoughts, emails, and other wonderful things you sent to me after my hip surgery. I truly felt all your care. I regret that I was gone for three months —that was not the original plan. My recovery did not go according to script. (How's that for a tidy euphemism?) Countless Sudokus and NYT crosswords landed in the recycle bin as I passed the time.*

*I am **very happy** to be back at work in the office. The best part is seeing all the wonderful folks here at the church.*

Joyce C.  
Your secretary



## THE REV. JONNA JENSEN PREACHES SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

We are pleased to welcome The Rev. Jonna Jensen, Transitional Conference Minister to our pulpit on Sunday, August 15.

She is a graduate of the University of Iowa School of Religion and Andover Newton Theological School. Jonna was a parish pastor for 26 years before serving as an Associate Conference Minister for 12 years in the Midwest. She began her service as Transitional Conference Minister for the Maine Conference in September 2020.

This native Iowan enjoys writing and learning about writing and cheering for writers.

Please join us for worship on the 15<sup>th</sup> to warmly welcome Jonna to our church.




**ADULT FORUM**  
Sundays at 8:30 a.m., Zoom & Parlor

Tom M. leads this discussion group that welcomes all people to join via computer, phone or in-person in the Parlor. Contact the office to get Zoom information.



# AUGUST 2021 EVENTS AT FIRST CONGO UCC

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11 am Fellowship	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3	4 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	5 9 am Bulletin deadline	6 OFFICE CLOSED	7
8 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Holy Communion 11 am Fellowship 11:30 am Deacons	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10	11 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	12 9 am Bulletin deadline 7 pm Trustees	13 OFFICE CLOSED 10 am Finance	14
15 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11 am Fellowship	16 OFFICE CLOSED	17	18 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	19 9 am Bulletin deadline 9 am Steeple deadline 6:45 pm Missions	20 OFFICE CLOSED	21
22 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service Mask Sunday 11 am Fellowship	23 OFFICE CLOSED 7 pm Council	24	25 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	26 9 am Bulletin deadline	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28
29 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service Hymn Sing 11 am Fellowship	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31				

**Busy Bodies**  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
**September 13**

The **Busy Bodies** will meet on Monday, September 13. We hope to see everyone there after a busy summer of catching up with friends and families. Question? Contact Sue F..

## Handbells

Bell Choir is interested in starting up again, but we need to know who would like to continue playing. Please consider your abilities. (Everyone can play, the bells make the noise!) If you are interested, please call Joyce in the church office or Kathy S. and put your name on the list so we can contact you when we get started in September. Let's provide some joyful noise for our church!