

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



AUGUST 2023 - THE STEEPLE NEWSLETTER

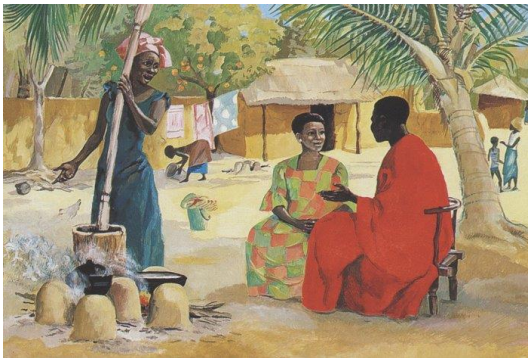
First Congregational Church, PO Box 12, 2 Church Street, Ellsworth, Maine 04605 207-667-8321 ellsworthucc.org

From Rev. Keith Bowie, Transitional Minister

An interesting discussion happened at the Council meeting this past Monday night. Without getting into particulars, like who said what, the gist of the discussion revolved around the familiar NT story of Martha and Mary (Luke 10: 38-42). This enigmatic story affirms the importance of listening to Jesus and at the same time the account shows Jesus' openness to and acceptance of women among his followers. While Luke's account (Luke is the only one of the Gospel writers to report this story) seems to favor devoted, spiritually minded Mary over pots-and-pans Martha, I have always taken the perspective that both roles are important in the life of a healthy church. Even within each individual Christian, I think most of us have some of Mary in us and some of Martha, although seemingly one or the other dominates the personality, while the other is secondary.

That said, the Council discussion raised some pertinent issues about listening and teaching as well as doing and serving, and their juxtaposition. Where do your spiritual gifts lie? Are you more inclined to the inward disciplines (meditation, prayer, preparing a lesson, for example) or to the outward disciplines (service, hospitality, making a building repair, sharing the Word, etc.)? Where do you see God using you in the life of First Congregational Church? Can both sides co-exist without unnecessary judgment of each other? (The correct answer to that is "Yes, with God's help!")

Practically speaking, opportunities abound. The Christian Ed committee could sorely use some additional members if anyone is inclined in that direction. How well versed are you in the scriptures? Adult Forum awaits you. In addition to studying the Bible, do not neglect the study of the classics in Christian literature. I can provide a reading list. There are many dangerous ideologies out there today that, unless you are well grounded in the scriptures and Christian thought, you are going to be gullible.



Martha and Mary, by Jesus Mafa, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

For the Marthas among us, consider the Welcome Table as a ministry. Talk to Ruth or Kara. Helpers are especially needed to serve and clean up after public suppers. If you have handyman skills, talk to a Trustee about ways to help. See one of the Deacons if you would like to be a liturgist, usher, or help welcome visitors to church.

Everyone's talents and skills are necessary to make the church run in an efficient manner. I'm not the first to say that. Read what Paul has to say about varieties of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. Identify and name those God-given gifts each of you has and then put them into the service of God!

Rev. Keith Bowie

Keith

AUGUST CHURCH MEETINGS

- Adult Forum** – Sundays, 8:30 a.m.
Choir – Thursdays, 6 p.m.
beginning Aug 31
Music – TBA
Search Comm – TBA
Busy Bodies – Monday, Aug 7, 10:30 a.m.
Finance – Friday, Aug 11, 10 a.m.
Deacons – Sunday, Aug 13, 11:30 a.m.
Trustees – Thursday, Aug 17, 7 p.m.
Christian Ed – Sunday, Aug 20, 11:30 a.m.
Missions – Sunday, Aug 27, 11:30 a.m.
Council – Monday, Aug 28, 6 :30 p.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.



MASKING is OPTIONAL
in the church building.

Please maintain physical distance and respect the space of those who wish to continue to wear a mask.



AUGUST LECTIONARY READINGS

AUGUST 6 – 10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Genesis 32:22-31 & Psalm 17:1-7, 15 OR
Isaiah 55:1-5 & Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21
Romans 9:1-5
Matthew 14:13-21

AUGUST 13 – 11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 &
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b OR
1 Kings 19:9-18 & Psalm 85:8-13
Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-23

AUGUST 20 – 12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Genesis 45:1-15 & Psalm 133 OR
Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 & Psalm 67
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

AUGUST 27 – 13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 1:8-2:10 & Psalm 124 OR
Isaiah 51:1-6 & Psalm 138
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16:13-20

WITH DEEPEST
Sympathy

To the families and friends of

- † *Loretta Tracy, Ernie's wife, who passed away July 8*
† *John Holt, our church secretary's husband, who died July 8*
† *Beth Van Dyk, former FCC organist, who passed away July 14*
† *Ruth McLaughlin, Gil's wife, who passed away July 16*

BLUEBERRY CRAFT FAIR

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5

8 A.M. - NOON

The Blueberry Fair takes place August 5.

The Busy Bodies are seeking items for their Attic Treasures table.

Things that usually sell well are gently used, clean household items, books, puzzles, and other appropriate items. No clothing or electronics. Donated items may be left at the church. Please mark "Attic Treasures". Homemade crafts are also welcome for this event.



If you are donating baked goods, please bring them to the church on Friday, August 4, between noon and 3 p.m., or have them here first thing Saturday morning.

We thank our church family for all your support. You help make our Fairs a success.



On Communion Sundays, we are asking folks to bring donations for the Loaves & Fishes Food pantry. Donations may be non-perishable food items or monetary gifts. Look for the donations and collection boxes in the front of the sanctuary.

You may also bring your donations to the church during regular office hours, Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

If you have questions, please contact Ginny Davis or Lois Stevens.

Loaves & Fishes is at its new location on Route 1: 137 US-1, Ellsworth, ME 04605

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Everyone is welcome to attend the Adult Forum on Sundays at 8:30 a.m. in the Parlor. Questions about the group? Speak with Tom MacDonald.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

- ♫ If you know of musicians who might provide special music during summer Sundays, please contact Bonnie Carter.
- ♫ Can someone help to fashion and install a shelf over the rod in the choir robe closet? Contact Bonnie Carter or Sid Emerson.

Thank you for your kindness

Dear FCC friends,

Thank you for all your kindness and compassion shown to me upon the unexpected death of my husband. I appreciate being a part of this community during this shocking and difficult time.

*Joyce Cornwell
Church Secretary*

DEACONS

August 6 – Communion, Rev. Keith Bowie

August 13 – Rev. Keith Bowie

August 20 – Rev. David Henry

August 27 – Rev. Keith Bowie

August Deacon: John Lacey

DEACON MUSINGS

The Deacons have continued to work throughout the summer. We have determined that with the loss of so many of our dear members over the last few years, our Prayer Chain has been depleted of people interested in praying for someone or something in urgent need of prayer. The Prayer Chain was organized and led by Pat Jordan. We have a few people left, but I'm not completely sure who is even on this list. Usually someone would call the minister, Joyce in the church office, or Pat and ask for prayers for a situation or person that we needed to hold up in prayer. After Pat received the information, she would call the people on the list and provide the information. Each person had a group of individuals to call, or Pat would call them all.

We all know the power of PRAYER and what it can do for a situation. Please consider this as an outreach to the church if you would be willing to be added to this list. If you feel the call to be part of this very important group, contact either Katharine Schrader at 207-266-2541 or Joyce in the church office. You can make a difference.



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 August:

- Lorraine & Jon Foss
- Becky Leamon & Andy Stephenson
- Beth Van Dyk
- Amy Zenke, Hope & Joy
- David & Brenda Keep
- Lisa & Steven Salsbury
- Daniel Lacey
- Emily Cambridge
- Myrna & Bob Vallette

TRAIL OF HOPE

Painted rocks are popular right now and we want to propose a project that First Congregational Church initiates and invites the whole community to participate. We have started start a "Trail of Hope" whereby each of us adds a rock with a word or image painted on it. The rock trail would surround the church. How far, how long can we make a Trail of Hope grow?

Encourage your friends to add a rock to our Trail. Remember, this is a Community Project. **This event will continue through the summer and fall.**



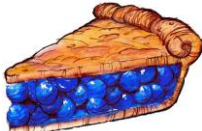
Questions? Speak with Katharine Schrader.



CHURCH VEGGIE GARDEN

We have planters in the church courtyard. Can you please help us tend them? Please contact Ginny Davis or Katharine Schrader with your interest.

AUGUST 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	3 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club	4 OFFICE CLOSED 12-3 pm Fair setup	5 Blueberry Fair 8 am-noon  3 pm Dunn service
6 Green 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Communion 11 am Luncheon	7 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	8	9 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	10 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club	11 OFFICE CLOSED 10 am Finance	12
13 Green 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Deacons	14 OFFICE CLOSED	15	16 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	17 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 7 pm Trustees	18 OFFICE CLOSED	19
20 Green 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Christian Ed	21 OFFICE CLOSED 6:30 pm Council	22	23 9 am Steeple deadline 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	24 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 5:30 pm Church Supper
27 Green 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service	28 OFFICE CLOSED	29	30 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	31 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir		

Pot Roast Supper

Saturday, August 26, serving 5:00 to 6:30 pm

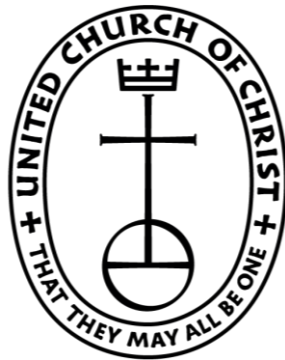


*Beef pot roast, mashed potatoes, green beans,
carrots, salad, rolls, homemade pies
And beverages (coffee, tea, lemonade)*

\$10 per person ~ \$25 per family

**We need volunteers to set up, cook, serve, wash dishes, and bake pies.
Please contact Ruth Tainter immediately about the ways you can help.**

Our purpose,
First Congregational Church, UCC, Ellsworth, Maine:
To embrace the life, ministry and teachings of Jesus Christ
In meaningful and dynamic ways through
creative worship,
supportive fellowship,
compassionate outreach, and
stimulating Christian education for all ages;
To be a faithful community which, led by the Holy Spirit,
expresses hospitality,
nurtures spiritual growth, and
promotes a deep sense of belonging;
To strive to build on commonalities while seeking to
understand, accept, and
celebrate our differences;
To stand as a beacon of hope in a hurting and troubled world by
sharing the Good News of the Gospel, and
practicing God's love as embodied by Jesus Christ.
We welcome all to walk with us on the journey of faith.
As adopted by the Congregation at its Annual Meeting – January 22, 2012



First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
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