



**First Congregational Church UCC – Founded 1812**

PO Box 12, 2 Church Street

Ellsworth, Maine 04605

207-667-8321 office@ellsworthucc.org

ellsworthucc.org facebook.com/fccellsworth

*Come with hope or despair, expectation, or disappointment,  
and seek God even as God seeks you.*

---

---

**ORDER OF WORSHIP  
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**September 24, 2023**

**10 a.m.**

*Hearing devices and large print hymnals are available—  
please ask an usher if you require them.*

*Thank you for turning off electronic devices before worship begins.*

*\*Please stand if you are able.*

**RINGING THE BELL**

**9:45 a.m.**

**LIGHTING THE CANDLES**

**PRELUDE**

*Brother James' Air  
Jesus Loves Me*

arr. Rodriguez  
arr. Larson

**WELCOME**

## CHORAL INTROIT

*Open our eyes, Lord*

Cull

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,  
To reach out and touch Him and say that we love Him.  
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.  
Open our eyes, we want to see Jesus.

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

One: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

**All: Challenging us to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, and to be servants in the human family.**

One: The call of God is also God's promise;

**All: A promise of forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, and eternal life in that realm which has no end. Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto God!**

## \*HYMN

*We sing your mighty power, O God*

64

## \*OPENING PRAYER (unison)

**Gracious God, we ask what we must do to be citizens of your realm, and your answer shakes us. In our secular life we live by established social law, but in Christ we are subject to and called to live by your spiritual law—a law where justice is determined not by labor or power, influence or worthiness, but by mercy and compassion. We come in our need for your mercy this day and pray to be so cleansed and filled with your Spirit that we are channels of your love and witnesses to your divine mercy in our life in the world. Amen.**

## CHILDREN'S TIME FOR ALL AGES

## THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## CHORAL ANTHEM

*The Gift of Love*

arr. Hopson

Though I may speak with bravest fire, and have the gift to all inspire,  
and have not love, my words are vain,  
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love profess,  
but not be given by love within, the profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control, our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed; by this we worship, and are freed.

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

**Generous God, you come to us again and again, no matter how late it is in the day or in our lives. Calling to us, gathering us in, you give us your good work to do, daily bread, and boundless grace. Align us with your ways and help us receive your gift of justice and mercy as good news. In Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament

Exodus 16:2-15

p. 58 OT

Epistle

Philippians 1:21-30

p.174 NT

Gospel

Matthew 20:1-16

p.19 NT

## SERMON

Rev. Keith Bowie

## \*HYMN

*Near to the Heart of God*

581

## MORNING PRAYERS

Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer for those Celebrating Birthdays:

Ben, Leah, Eleanor, Tiffany, Genevieve, Martha

Choral Response

*Dresden Amen*

Naumann

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS & TITHES

OFFERTORY

*'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus*

Kirkpatrick

\*DOXOLOGY

46

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*HYMN

*Go, my children, with my blessing*

431

## BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

*God Bless You and Keep You*

Althouse

God bless you and keep you wherever you may go;

His love be a constant companion. God lead you and guide you

And be at your side. God bless you and keep you forever.

POSTLUDE

*Wonderful Words of Life*

*Thy Word Is a Lamp*

Bliss

Smith

---

*Open our eyes*, words & music Robert Cull © 1976 Maranatha! Music  
CCLI License # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

*The Gift of Love*, adapted & arranged Hal H. Hopson © 1972 Hope Publishing Co.  
CCLI License # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

*God Bless You*, words & music Jay Althouse © 1985 GlorySound  
CCLI License # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

**THE WELCOME TABLE SERVED 90 MEALS ON SEPTEMBER 20.**

**Serving Wednesdays 2:30-4 p.m., take-out only**

The WELCOME TABLE, our free community meal, serves take-out only.

Please call the church on Wednesdays **by 1 p.m.**, 667-8321,  
to reserve a meal. Donations always gratefully received.

*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*