

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



**October 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*

**T**here was a news story that caught my eye last week. No, it had nothing to do with the 2024 elections or politics. It had to do with Pope Francis' visit to Papua New Guinea, the second leg of his just concluded Southeast Asia tour which wrapped up in Singapore. Do you know where Papua New Guinea is? (Pause). I didn't think so. Neither did I, so I got out my world map (yes, I still use maps) and looked it up. It is located near Papua New Guinea's border with Indonesia, where the jungle meets the sea, and for the most part is only reachable by plane or boat. There are about 2.5 million Catholics in Papua New Guinea out of a population of around 10 million. It seems Pope Francis has an affinity for these far-flung places (out in the boondocks, as we would say), having previously traveled to the edge of the Arctic, the Peruvian Amazon (to draw attention to its plight), and to Ur, Iraq, to boost Christian-Muslim ties. In keeping with this view, he has largely shunned glitzy European capitals ever since he was elected Pope in 2013.

Why am I telling you all this? Because all this impresses me as being consistent with the message of Jesus and the Gospels. I may not always agree with the teachings of the Catholic Church, nor do I always agree with the views of Pope Francis, but I know a man of God when I see one. This "people's Pope" inspires! He brought to my mind last Sunday's Gospel lesson from Mark, where Jesus says, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34). It also made me think about our own neighborhoods here in Ellsworth and surrounding communities. Of course, we don't need to go to the far corners of the Earth to share the good news of Jesus Christ. The mission field is wide open right here in Maine. So, what if we applied what Pope Francis did but on a smaller scale? What if...we took ministry out beyond the four walls of the church to the "peripheries" where people need God most? What would that look like in detail? Some of that work, of course, is already being done here. But, what more can be done? What resources would we need? How would it change the way we (both minister and parishioners) currently do things and spend our time? Lots of questions to ponder. And I don't pretend to have all the answers! Food for thought this autumn. God bless and have a wonderful rest of the week.

That in all things God may be glorified,

*Keith*

**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.

## OCTOBER CHURCH MEETINGS

- Adult Forum** – Sundays, 8:15 a.m.
- Busy Bodies** – Mondays, 10:30 a.m.
- Choir** – Thursdays, 6 p.m.
- Music** – TBA
- Search Comm** – TBA
- Deacons** – Sunday, Oct 13, 11:30 a.m.
- Christian Ed** – Sunday, Oct 13, 11:30 a.m.
- Trustees** – Thursday, Oct 17, 7 p.m.
- Missions** – Sunday, Oct 27, 11:30 a.m.
- Council** – Monday, Oct 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.



## PUBLIC PRAYER VIGIL OCTOBER 7, 5-7 P.M.



On the anniversary of the attack on Israel by Hamas, our sanctuary will be open to the public for a public prayer vigil for the leaders, victims, families, and all involved in this action that continues to this day.

## OCTOBER LECTIONARY READINGS



### OCT 6 – 20<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Job 1:1, 2:1-10 & Psalm 26 OR  
Genesis 2:18-24 & Psalm 8  
Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12  
Mark 10:2-16

### OCT 13 – 21<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Job 23:1-9, 16-17 & Psalm 22:1-5 OR  
Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 & Psalm 90:12-17  
Hebrews 4:12-16  
Mark 10:17-31

### OCT 20 – 22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Job 38:1-7, (34-41) & Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c OR  
Isaiah 53:4-12 & Psalm 91:9-16  
Hebrews 5:1-10  
Mark 10:35-45

### OCT 27 – 23<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Job 42:1-6, 10-17 & Psalm 34:1-8, (19-22) OR  
Jeremiah 31:7-9 & Psalm 126  
Hebrews 7:23-28  
Mark 10:46-52

*Thank  
you*

*Thanks for the lovely and timely cards, which have conveyed over the long run since I left home. It seems a long and somewhat bumpy interval. I hope all is well in church and town. Many thanks for the recent card.*

*With love to all,  
John Van Pelt*

# DEACONS

- Oct 6 - Rev. Keith Bowie,  
Worldwide Communion
- Oct 13 - Rev. Keith Bowie  
Indigenous Peoples Weekend
- Oct 20 - Rev. John A. Lacey
- Oct 27 - Rev. Dr. David Henry
- October Deacon: John Lacey

## Deacon Musings by Katharine Schrader

My thoughts go along with the proposed ideas that Rev. Lacey shared with us on September 15. Remember to share your church-going and faith experience with others and remember to invite those individuals that you know. They may just surprise you and say yes!

(The following is an excerpt from Paul Nickerson's weekly newsletter.)

Finley Peter Dunne, in 1902, said: *"The Gospel should comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable"*

So, as we start this new church year, I have a couple of questions for you:

- Are you content to go to church this Sunday, see your friends, and not even think about inviting someone (98% of church-goers do this every Sunday).
- Are you concerned about the fact that less than 20% of people in your community are going anywhere to church or is your focus on maintaining the current congregation?
- Do you like to say that your faith is "private" and not share your story with anyone?

If you answer "yes" to these questions, then maybe YOU ARE TOO COMFORTABLE.

(continued next column)

I hope the Gospel with "afflict" you to do the following:

- Stop wishing for new people to come to your church, take the leap and actually invite someone. I can promise you, I have never seen a member die doing this, even though we think we might die inviting.
- Tell someone you know well why your faith and your church are important to you. Over 70% of unchurched people have spiritual interest and questions. They will benefit from your sharing.
- Have the next meeting of your Team, Board or Committee out in the community and meet some new people.

If you are going through a difficult season in your life right now, I hope the Gospel will comfort and remind you that *"nothing can separate you from the love of God in Jesus Christ"*.

But if you are feeling a little too "comfortable", it is my prayer that the Spirit will afflict and convict you to get out of your comfort zone, take a leap of faith and know that God will be there right beside you. Someone in your community will be grateful that you did.

## 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 September:**

Karen Blaisdell & John Van Pelt  
Mike & Sue Fuller  
Lillian Katsiaficas  
Gil McLaughlin  
Mary Smith  
John Whitcomb  
Jane Alley  
Nate Stephenson  
John Lacey III  
Erik Tainter

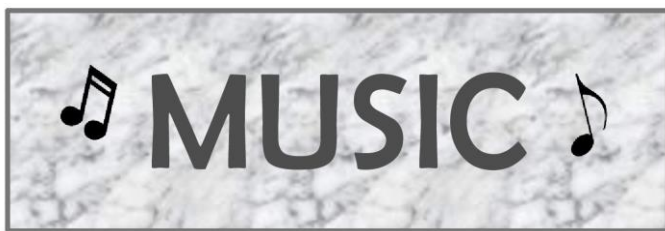


Stewardship's theme is **IMAGINE TOGETHER**. Now that we have become a small church, we are like a family together, the church family. We all should know all about the church family business. So, as we **IMAGINE TOGETHER** about church finances, we plan to have the Church family budget ready for all the family to see and know what is in it and the cost of each expense. We will all know what the dollars we promise when we pledge do. We will all know how important our giving is as we see the costs item for item.

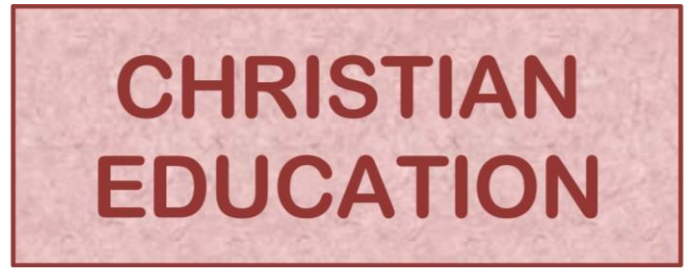
This is different from the past, but the time has come because we are now a small church and a family together.

We are the church, the worshipping serving congregation of Jesus's disciples here in Ellsworth. Our church is about a lot more than money, but it takes money to be and do it all as in everything else, the money you and I provide. Think about it. Let's **IMAGINE TOGETHER** the possibilities.

John Lacey, Stewardship Committee



- ♪ Choir is back in the loft during Sunday worship! We always welcome new voices, rehearsing on Thursdays at 6 p.m. We will rest one Sunday a month.
- ♪ Looking ahead, we expect to have the McIntyres join us in November and for our Christmas Eve service.



Pastor Keith will offer a 3-week book study on November 6, 13, & 20 (Wednesdays) at 6:30 p.m. in the parlor. We will study Simon Wiesenthal's **The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness**.

While imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, Wiesenthal was taken one day from his work detail to the bedside of a dying member of the SS. Haunted by the crimes in which he had participated, the soldier wanted to confess to—and obtain absolution from—a Jew. I won't spoil it by telling you what Wiesenthal did, but even years after the war had ended, he wondered: Had he done the right thing? What would you have done in his place? That's the question we will discuss in the book study.

SAVE THE DATES and let Keith or Bonnie Carter know you're coming so a book can be pre-ordered for you.

And Bonnie Carter recommends **The Quilt**, a short book by T. Davis Bunn:

"**The Quilt** is a short story about an elderly woman of faith who is a light to all those around her. God has put on her heart the need to make one more quilt despite her arthritic hands and poor eye sight. All that come to help are to pray and give thanks to God for things in their lives as they sew. When she falls ill, the rest of the group band together to finish the quilt."

Used copies are available online for as little as a dollar, and new books cost around \$6. Available on YouTube are videos of a woman reading the book aloud in two parts ([part 1](#), [part 2](#)).

*Happy reading!*







# MAINE CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## **ANNUAL MEETING 2024** **at Pilgrim Lodge in West Gardiner** **Friday & Saturday, October 18 & 19**

Click this [link](#) to access lodgings and documents options

### **Friday, October 18**

- 8:00 – 5:00 Registration
- 7:30 – 8:30 Breakfast
- 8:30 – 9:00 Gathering for the Mini-Retreat
- 9:00 – noon [Mini-Retreat for authorized ministers](#)
- Noon – 1:30 Lunch/Celebrations & Observances
- 1:45 – 3:00 Workshop #1
- 3:15 – 4:30 Workshop #2
- 5:00 – 5:30 Social Time with Swing Low
- 5:30 – 7:00 Dinner with entertainment over dessert
- 7:00 – 7:30 Break
- 7:30 – 9:00 Evening Activity : Loony Tunes and Tales

### **Saturday, October 19**

- 7:00 – 8:00 Breakfast
- 7:30 – 8:30 Registration/Gathering
- 8:30 – 8:50 Opening Worship
- 8:50 – 10:30 Plenary #1
- 10:30 – 10:45 Break
- 10:45 – noon Workshops
- 12:15 – 1:45 [Lunch with Keynote Speaker](#)
- 2:00 – 3:00 Conference Scramble
- 3:10 – 4:10 Plenary #2
- 4:10 – 4:40 Closing Worship with communion

**Conference Minister  
Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola  
invites YOU to the  
Maine Conference  
93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting**



**Keynote Speaker  
Rev. Dr. Jodi Cohen Hayashida**

The Rev. Dr. Jodi Cohen Hayashida is a Unitarian Universalist minister. After serving in the parish for 23 years, she moved to a community-based ministry, organizing the statewide movement Multifaith Justice Maine under the auspices of the Maine People's Alliance.



## ONA CONVERSATIONS

*From the purpose statement of First Congregational Church of Ellsworth:  
we "...strive to build on commonalities while seeking to understand,  
accept, and celebrate our differences."*

### WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Open and Affirming (ONA) Committee has begun giving presentations as part of our charge to learn more about what it means to be an ONA church, and to inform the congregation. There is so much to talk about! We want to stress how critically important it is to engage in conversations and discussions about open and affirming, especially as it relates to our church, with each and every one of our members and friends.

Silence can be interpreted in many ways—often leading to wrong assumptions and misinformation—so please let us hear from you. What particular questions or concerns do you have about ONA?

It can be very helpful to share our thoughts in a group, but if you would feel more comfortable talking about the subject one-on-one, please talk to one of the ONA Committee members.

In peace,

John Lacey, Steve Merchant, Mary Turner, Myrna Vallette, Chris Wilson, Rev. Bowie

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# Roast Turkey Supper

**Saturday, October 26, 2024**

**Serving 5:00 to 6:30 pm**



*Roast turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, rolls,  
glazed carrots, green beans, salad, homemade pies,  
and beverages (coffee, tea, lemonade)*


**\$10 per person**

**\$25 per family (2 adults, 2 children)**

***Great food ~ Great company ~ Great fun***

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

# October 2024

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 6 pm Choir	4 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	5
6 <b>Green</b> 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Communion Luncheon	7 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities 5 pm Prayer Vigil	8	9 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 6:30 pm ONA presentation	10 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	11 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	12
13 <b>Green</b> 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Deacons 11:30 am Christian Ed	14 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	15	16 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	17 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir 7 pm Trustees	18 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Maine Conference Annual Meeting</div>	19
20 <b>Green</b> 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service	21 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	22	23 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	24 9 am Bulletin & Steeple deadlines 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	25 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	26 5:30 pm Roast turkey supper
27 <b>Green</b> 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Missions	28 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities 6:30 pm Council	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		



- We would like to offer Halloween Trick or Treat again. If you are interested in helping, please talk to Kathy or Bonnie.
- There will be a short Bible Study in November prior to Thanksgiving. See Christian Education column on page 4.
- Looking ahead: View and discuss the first season of “The Chosen” during Lent in 2025.

## Shades of Gold

So many shades of gold  
Autumn  
Another miracle we take for granted  
Another expression of the artist's vision  
The blending of the autumn hues  
with the setting sun  
Warm  
Comforting  
Perfect  
Thank you for autumn, Lord.

*- Author Unknown*

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### 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

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### First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

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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.