



First Congregational Church UCC - Founded 1812
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Ellsworth, Maine 04605
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*Come with hope or despair, expectation, or disappointment,
and seek God even as God seeks you.*

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT**

March 23, 2025

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 *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*
 There is a Balm in Gilead

arr. Page
arr. Lau

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT *The Lord is in his holy temple* Paxton
The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him.

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively) Psalm 63

One: You God, are my God! Earnestly I seek you.

All: I thirst for You, my whole being longs for you in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

One: I have seen You in the sanctuary and beheld Your power and glory.

All: Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You.

One: I will praise You as long as I love and in Your name I will lift up my hands.

All: I will be fully satisfied with the richest of food . With singing on my lips, I will praise You.

One: On my bed I will remember You. I think of You through the watches of the night.

All: Because You are my help, I sing in the shadow of Your wings. I cling to You, Your right hand upholds me.

*HYMN *Holy, holy, holy! Lord, God Almighty!* 4

*GATHERING PRAYER (unison)

Oh God, You have made us in Your image and when we sinned that image, You redeemed us through Your son, Jesus. We thank You Jesus, for being our redemption! Now, Father, we pray that You continue Your compassion on all humanity. Tear down the walls that divide us so we may honor Your son's wish for us to remain unified. May love be stronger in us than any arrogance or hate. Help us Lord, to accomplish Your purposes on Earth, that in time all humanity may serve you and one day gather together on harmony around Your throne of grace. 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 *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* arr. Raney

Listen, Lord, listen to your children! Listen to your children praying,
Send your Spirit in this place. Send us love, send us power, send us grace.
Sweet hour of prayer that calls me from a world of care.
Lord, send your spirit in this place. Hear your children, Lord.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (all)

Lord, we desire to know You! We don't always understand how the God of the universe could care about us and the tiny details of our lives, but we know that You do. As we read Your scriptures today, reveal more of yourself to us and help us further develop our relationship with you! Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament

Isaiah 55:1-9

pew Bible p.645 OT

Gospel

Luke 13:1-9

pew Bible p.66 NT

SERMON

The Gift of Lent

Rev. McDonald

***HYMN**

When I survey the wondrous cross

195

MORNING PRAYERS

Joys & Concerns

Silent Prayer & Pastoral Prayer

Prayer for those Celebrating Birthdays: John, Troy

Choral Response *Hear our prayer*

Almighty Father, hear our prayer,
and bless all souls that wait before thee. Amen.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS & TITHES

OFFERTORY *As the Deer* Nystrom

*DOXOLOGY 46

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Lord, we testify to Your goodness in our lives! We thank You for Your provision of everything we need and we trust You to provide the things we are still waiting for. We thank You for the opportunities in our lives to be Your hands and feet to share Your goodness with others. It is with joyful hearts that we bring You a portion of what You have given us. Please bless and use this offering to Your glory! Amen.

*HYMN *Rock of Ages, cleft for me* 214

BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE *Shalom Chaverim* White

Shalom chaverim. Lehitraot.

Farewell, dear friends, stay safe dear friends, have peace.

We'll see you again, have peace.

POSTLUDE *Herzliebster Jesu* arr. Lasky

The Lord is in his temple, text Habakuk 2:20 | Public Domain

Lord, listen to your children, text Ken Medema © 1973 Hope Publishing Co. | CCLI # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

Sweet hour of prayer, words William Walford 1845, tune SWEET HOUR William B. Bradbury 1861 | Public Domain

Almighty Father, words Anonymous | Public Domain

Shalom chaverim, trad. Hebrew blessing, trans. Roger Deschner, tune Israeli melody
Tr. © 1982 The United Methodist Publishing House | CCLI # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

Lynn Hall, *Organist*

Nancy Sargent, *Choir Director*

Myrna Vallette, *Liturgist*

Rev. Cassandra McDonald, *Guest Minister*

Cindy & Charlie Sargent, *Ushers*

Lois Stevens, *Greeter*

Steve Merchant, *March Deacon*

**Worship is broadcast live through
WDEA AM 1370, Facebook, and Zoom.**

MASKING IS OPTIONAL IN THE CHURCH BUILDING.

We suggest physical distancing. Thank you for respecting the space of those who choose to mask.





SHINING THE LIGHT ON FOOD SECURITY.

Olefinia works with families in the northern regions of Honduras to help them understand how to transform their families and communities through agriculture. The list of things she does is mindboggling: checking on local farmers' harvests, monitoring water projects, teaching the women in the community how to prepare more nutritious meals, chatting up community leaders for support, running workshops for things like creating organic fertilizers and sprays.

But Olefinia doesn't just *work* with farmers and their families, she supports and encourages them. Visiting them in their homes. Bringing God's light to everyone she meets. And all of this is made possible through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing. Because of your giving, projects like these and thousands more around the world are changing lives. Transforming communities. And spreading God's light. Be the Light. Give to One Great Hour of Sharing.



**THE WELCOME TABLE SERVED 120 MEALS ON MARCH 19.
Serving Wednesdays 2 – 3:30 p.m., take-out only**

WELCOME TABLE, our free community meal, serves take-out only.
Please call the church on Wednesdays **before 11 a.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