

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



April 2025 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

I am really excited about Lent this year, a season of discernment and reflection and a time to re-orient our hearts and lives to the grace, presence, and call of God. Perhaps some of this is related to the fact that Lent comes almost a month later than last year. The sun is up a bit earlier now, and the days are starting to lengthen. Spring is in the air. The ice and snow are melting, helping to balance the somberness and solemnity of Lent. All of this is good news for a southern boy who is still not used to the long Maine winters!

I'm also elated for a couple of other reasons as well. One is we are doing something new this Lenten season and gathering on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 to view *The Chosen*, a multi-season show digging deeper into some of the stories and context of the people and events of the gospels. The characters have a depth of life so that you can read the scriptures and understand why biblical characters behave in the way that they do. Many thanks to those of you who brought this series to my attention! We will conclude by watching the last episode of Season 1 on Wednesday, April 16 during Holy Week. Come and be a part of it!

Another Lenten discipline that many Christians practice is Bible study. I am reading the Book of Exodus during Lent, reading one chapter a day so that I can complete the entire 40 chapters in the 40 day Lenten season. Exodus is ideally suited to study during Lent because it is a penitential narrative describing the opportunity to repent and obey God. Indeed, it is *the* central narrative of the Hebrew Bible. Much of scripture refers to Exodus, including many scenes described in the Gospels. If you really want to go all out, enroll in Hillsdale College's on-line course *The Exodus Story*. Visit their website online.hillsdale.edu for this course as well as many more. I have taken several of their courses and they are excellent. Hillsdale College is a Christian liberal arts college in Michigan, modeled on the classical learning tradition. There is no charge for any of these short, popular online courses designed for anyone who wishes to learn, but donations are gratefully accepted.

Finally, on the morning of Maundy Thursday, April 17, I along with other ordained clergy, will be participating by Zoom in a Reaffirmation of Ordination Vows, hosted by the Penn Southeast Conference of the UCC, the conference I was a member of before moving to Maine. This is a long-standing custom in liturgical traditions for clergy to gather on the same day Jesus offered "a new commandment"—to love and serve one another—for the reaffirmation of their ordination. While I have never participated in such a service before, I hope to be spiritually encouraged by it. Whatever Lenten sacrifices you make and whatever devotional guides you carry with you, try always to remember that God has not left us to travel the Way of the Cross alone. In the knowledge and comfort of knowing that God walks with us, let us try to find some small, concrete ways to accompany each other through Lent. An act of love, however small, can remind someone else of the grace of God.

That in all things God may be glorified,

Keith

APRIL 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, Apr 13, 11:30 a.m.
Christian Ed – Sunday, Apr 13, 11:30 a.m.
Trustees – Thursday, Apr 24, 7 p.m.
Missions – Sunday, Apr 27, 11:30 a.m.
Council – Monday, Apr 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.

APRIL LECTIONARY READINGS



APRIL 6 – 5TH SUNDAY IN LENT

Isaiah 43:16-21 & Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
Isaiah 43:15-21
John 12:1-8

APRIL 13 – PALM SUNDAY

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Luke 19:28-40
Isaiah 50:4-9a & Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 22:14-23:56 OR Luke 23:1-49

APRIL 17 – MAUNDY THURSDAY

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

(continued next column)

APRIL 18 – GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10:16-25 OR Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42

APRIL 19 – HOLY SATURDAY

Job 14:1-14 OR Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24
Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16
1 Peter 4:1-8
Matthew 27:27-66 OR John 19:38-42

EASTER VIGIL

Genesis 1:1-2:4a & Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26
Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 9:8-13 & Psalm 46
Genesis 22:1-18 & Psalm 16
Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21
Exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18
Isaiah 55:1-11 & Isaiah 12:2-6
Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 & Psalm 19
Ezekiel 36:24-28 & Psalm 42, 43
Ezekiel 37:1-14 & Psalm 143
Zephaniah 3:14-20 & Psalm 98
Romans 6:3-11 & Psalm 114
Luke 24:1-12

APRIL 20 - EASTER

Acts 5:27-32 & Psalm 118:14-29 OR Psalm 150
Revelation 1:4-8
John 20:19-31

APRIL 27 – 2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 5:27-32 & Psalm 118:14-29 OR Psalm 150
Revelation 1:4-8
John 20:19-31

WITH DEEPEST
sympathy

to the family & friends of

**Peggy Smith, who died
February 7, 2025**

and

**the Rev. Ross Wyman, who died
February 21, 2025**

DEACONS

- April 6 - Communion, Rev. Keith Bowie
- April 13 - Palm Sunday, Rev. Keith Bowie
- April 17 - Maundy Thursday joint service
- April 20 - Easter, Rev. Bowie
- April 27 - Andy Elliott

April Deacon: Katharine Schrader

The Deacons have been busy and we hope to roll out some new things with your help. Rev. Bowie sent a letter requesting suggestions of ways that we may improve and deepen the spirituality of our services. We hope that you return these surveys with suggestions that we can review and implement over the next few months.

Maundy Thursday is the evening of the Last Supper. We will try something new this year with our friends from the Ellsworth Falls Church. We will come forward for communion served by both ministers. We will offer wine and grape juice. It will be a very obvious separation so that you may choose which you would prefer as we observe this important event in our life at the church.

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 April:

- Bruce Becque
- Bob Clement
- Kara Iburguen & Brendan Minear
- Charlie & Cindy Sargent
- Ruth & Troy Tainter
- Belva Scott, Caleb & Cameron
- Jacqueline Goebel
- Catherine Engel
- Barbara Rolleston
- Kristin Kimball



We have been supporting Christian Ed during the viewing of **The Chosen**, Wednesday evenings at 5:30 in the Parlor. Bring your supper, watch, and join the discussion afterwards.

Katharine Schrader has been attending the Inter-Faith Council. This group is working to get local churches to come together to provide opportunities for the community, and to support each other. We want to combine efforts to have events that each church might host, to bring together so the whole Ellsworth community may participate. With that thought we will participate in a Community Sunrise Service at Harbor Park on Easter Sunday at 7 a.m. We hope all our hardy individuals will join us there for a joyful celebration of the Resurrection.



Lord, the resurrection of Your Son has given us new life and renewed hope. Help us to live as new people in pursuit of the Christian ideal. Grant us wisdom to know what we must do, the will to want to do it, the courage to undertake it, the perseverance to continue to do it, and the strength to complete it. Amen.

— *New Saint Joseph People's Prayer Book*


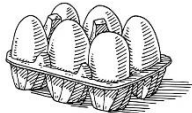


**Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.
Watch THE CHOSEN**

We continue to watch **The Chosen** in the Parlor. Bring your lunch/supper and we will eat and watch together. Season 1 has 9 episodes that will run through April 23.



On Communion Sundays (the first Sunday of each month), we ask for donations to the Loaves & Fishes Food pantry. Your donation may be non-perishable food items or monetary gifts. There are donation and collection boxes at the State Street entrance.

 **Loaves & Fishes needs eggs and butter.** They are not receiving them at all. If you have any extra, they can use these two items. 

MASKING is OPTIONAL 
in the church building.

Please maintain physical distance and respect the space of those who wish to wear a mask. Thank you kindly for your cooperation and understanding.

**WELCOME
TABLE**

**We served 460 meals
In February.**

**Serving take-out meals
from 2 – 3:30 pm
on Wednesdays.
Call by 11 a.m.
(Note time changes.)**



**COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT & PARTY
SATURDAY, APRIL 12 AT 10 A.M.**

Please join us here at FCC for a community event for all elementary children. This is a family activity. It will be outside if possible and inside if there is inclement weather.



HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2025 AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



PALM SUNDAY, April 13, 10 a.m. – Palm Sunday is considered the Gateway to Holy Week. As we remember Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we will bless and distribute palm leaves to everyone. We will sing our hosannas and wave palms in praise of the One who came that we might have life and have it abundantly.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 17, 7 p.m. – Every first Sunday of the month when we celebrate Holy Communion, we remember this night—the night that Jesus shared his last supper with his closest friends. Following the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, we will close with a Tenebrae Service consisting of hymns and scripture readings pertaining to the last hours of Jesus’ earthly life. Friends from the Ellsworth Falls UCC will share this service with us here at FCC.



EASTER SUNRISE, April 20, 7 a.m. – We will join the Community Easter Sunrise Service at Harbor Park off Water Street.

RESURRECTION WORSHIP, April 20, 10 a.m. – Join us as we continue our celebration of the Easter good news! The choir is preparing special music, we’ll sing Easter hymns, and the sanctuary will be decorated with lilies and tulips. Rejoice with us and be glad!



2025 EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM

Easter is April 20. Take care of your Easter flowers now and order with this form!
Or see Katharine Schrader after church at coffee hour on Sundays through Palm Sunday, April 13.

Flowers are \$8 per plant. Indicate preference and dedication. Please print.

In Memory of: _____

OR

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____



TULIPS



LILIES

Other options: contact the church office, 667-8321, or, send a check and this form to:
Katharine Schrader, 149 Oak Street, Ellsworth ME 04605



PILGRIM LODGE Summer 2025



April 25 - 27
**JUMP START
WORK DAYS**
WITH SOLAR INSTALLATION!
Grades 6 +

May 2-3
**CONFIRMATION
RETREAT**
8th-12th grade

May 23-26
**SABBATH, STORIES,
& S'MORE!**
All Ages!

May 30 - June 1
**WOMEN'S
SPRING WKND**
Ages 18 +

May 31 - June 1
**CIT
TRAINING**
Ages 16-18

June 3 - June 5
**CLERGY
PRAYCATION**
Ages 21 +

June 13 - June 15
**LIFEGUARD
TRAINING**
Ages 15 +

June 18 - June 21
PATHFINDERS: HALF WEEK
Grades 3-5

June 22 - June 28
CAMP PRIDE 
Grades 7-12 & Post Grad

July 2 - 5
EXPEDITION EVERYONE
All Ages!

July 6 - 12
**ELEMENTARY ADVENTURES &
ARTS ALIVE**
Grades 4-12 & Post Grad

July 13 - 19
**MIDDLER SPIRIT &
SENIOR HIGH**
Grades 6-12 & Post Grad

July 20 - 26
**MAGICAL MYTHICAL
ADVENTURES**
Grades 4-9

July 20 - 26
**JUSTICE TOGETHER: CLIMATE,
IDENTITY, COMMUNITY**
Grades 9-12 & Post Grad

July 27 - August 2
MIDDLER ISLAND CAMP
Grades 7-9

July 27 - 29
**GRANDPARENTS AND
GRANDCHILDREN**
Ages 5 +

July 30 - Aug 3
**LIGHTEN UP
LOOSEN UP**
Ages 18 +

Aug 8 - Aug 10
**PRIDE ACROSS
THE AGES**
All Ages!

Aug 29 - Sept 1
**FRIENDS &
FAMILY CAMP**
FEATURING ALUMNI DAY! All Ages!

Sept 12 - 14
**WOMEN'S
FALL WKND**
Ages 18 +

Oct 17 - 19
**FALL
HOMECOMING**
Grades 6-12

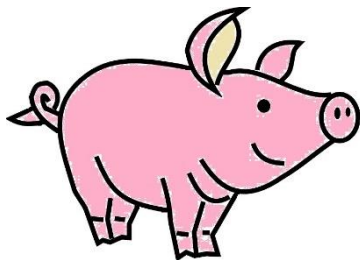



**VISIT PILGRIMLODGE.ORG
AND REGISTER FOR CAMP TODAY!**




Baked Ham Supper

**Saturday, April 26, 2025
Serving 5:00 to 6:30 pm**




Baked ham, mashed potatoes, glazed carrots, green beans, salad, rolls, homemade pies, and beverages (coffee, tea, lemonade)

\$12 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 Lois Stevens immediately about the ways you can help.**

April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!</i>		1 10:30 am Meditation group 6 pm Boy Scouts	2 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 5:30 pm The Chosen	3 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5
6 LENT V Violet 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Deacons 11:30 am Christian Ed	7 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	8 10:30 am Meditation group 6 pm Boy Scouts	9 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 5:30 pm The Chosen	10 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12 10 am Easter Egg Hunt 
13 PALM SUNDAY Violet 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Missions	14 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	15 10:30 am Meditation group 6 pm Boy Scouts	16 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 5:30 pm The Chosen	17 MAUNDY THURSDAY 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 7 pm SERVICE	18 GOOD FRIDAY OFFICE CLOSED	19
H O L Y W E E K						
20 EASTER White 7 am Community Sunrise Service 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service	21 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	22 9 am Steeple deadline 10:30 am Meditation group 6 pm Boy Scouts	23 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out 5:30 pm The Chosen	24 9 am Bulletin Deadline 6 pm Choir 7 pm Trustees	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 5 pm Ham supper
27 White 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Missions	28 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities 6:30 pm Council	29 10:30 am Meditation group 6 pm Boy Scouts	30 1-4 pm Bowie office 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	1 9 am Bulletin Deadline 6 pm Choir	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3

Looking ahead in May: QUARTERLY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Sunday, May 4, 2025, at 11:30 a.m.

It will be a hybrid meeting & luncheon, in-person and on Zoom,
Questions? Contact the Moderator.

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



First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

PO Box 12

Ellsworth, Maine 04605

207-667-8321 office@ellsworthucc.org ellsworthucc.org

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.