

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Ellsworth, Maine



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

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

Thank you for silencing electronic devices before worship begins.

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT – MESOM SUNDAY**

February 22, 2026

10 a.m.

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

PRELUDE	<i>Forty Days and Forty Nights</i> <i>Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley</i>	arr. Page arr. Page
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WELCOME

INTROIT	<i>Surely the presence of the Lord</i>	Wolfe
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CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

One: In the beginning, God placed humanity in a garden, a place of abundance, purpose, and care.

All: **Yet even in the garden, we were tempted to trust our own voices over the voice of God.**

One: In the wilderness, Jesus was tested, hungry, weary, and alone.

All: **Yet he chose trust over power, faithfulness over fear.**

One: We gather today as people who know both garden and wilderness, both longing and grace.

All: **We come seeking God's presence, listening again for the voice that leads us to life.**

One: Come, let us worship the One who meets us in temptation, walks with us in the wilderness, and calls us toward wholeness.

All: **Let us worship God.**

*GATHERING PRAYER (unison)

Faithful and gracious God, you meet us in places of abundance and in seasons of testing. When many voices pull at our attention, teach us again to listen for yours. Ground us in your presence, strengthen us for the journey ahead, and shape us into people who choose trust, love, and life. As we gather now, be near to us. Amen.

SPECIAL MOMENTS

Something New

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.

SOLO

Amazing Grace

Tomlin & Giglio

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Holy God, as we turn to your Word, open our hearts to hear what gives life. When the scriptures challenge us, give us courage. When they comfort us, give us rest. By your Spirit, illuminate our understanding, that we may trust your truth and follow where you lead. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament

Genesis 2:15-17

pew Bible p.2 OT

Gospel

Matthew 4:1-11

pew Bible p.3 NT

SERMON

Whose Voice Are You Listening To?
Between the garden and wilderness.

*HYMN

Jesus walked this lonesome valley

211

MORNING PRAYERS

Joys & Concerns

Silent Prayer & Pastoral Prayer

Prayer for those Celebrating Birthdays: Katharine, Megan, Gil

Response *Amen*

Stainer

MESOM (Maine School of Ministry)

OFFERING OUR GIFTS & TITHES

OFFERTORY

Lord, I Lift Your Name on High

Found

*DOXOLOGY

46

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN

It Is Well with My Soul

561

BENEDICTION

RESPONSE

Shalom Chaverim

Israeli melody

POSTLUDE

Herzliebster Jesu

arr. Lasky

Surely the presence, words & music Lanny Wolfe © 1977 Lanny Wolfe Music
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Amazing Grace, by Chris Tomlin, John Newton, Louie Giglio
© 2006 Rising Springs Music | CCLI License # 11546442 Streaming # 20543232

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

Lynn Hall, *Organist*

Katharine Schrader, *Soloist*

Andrew Elliott, *Pastor*

Mary Turner, *Liturgist*

Donna Shea & Myrna Vallette, *Ushers*

Lois Stevens, *Greeter*

Ruth & Troy Tainter, *Facebook, WDEA & Zoom*

Anne Bancroft, *February Deacon*

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

VISITORS, GUESTS, AND SEEKERS ARE WELCOME

We pray that your experience of worship enriches and sustains you in the week ahead. If you are visiting, we hope you will introduce yourself to those around you and to the Pastor. Please join us for coffee after the service. If you have any questions, please ask an usher.

THE WELCOME TABLE SERVED 126 MEALS ON FEBRUARY 18.

WELCOME TABLE, our free community meal, serves take-out only on Wednesdays from 2-3:30 p.m. Please call the church on Wednesdays **before 11 a.m.**, 667-8321, to reserve a meal.

Donations always gratefully received.

(When Ellsworth public schools are closed for inclement weather, there is no Welcome Table that day.)

MESOM SUNDAY

Maine School of Ministry



Wisdom Calls

An Invitation from the Maine School of Ministry

Are you one whose heart is aching for the unknown to be made known?

The root of wisdom – to whom has it been revealed?

Wisdom was created before all other things, and prudent understanding from eternity.

Her subtleties – who knows them?

Let us study and meditate on the law of the Most High God.

Let us seek out the wisdom of the ancients and be occupied in prophecies.

Let us seek out the secrets of grave sentences and the wisdom of deep parables.

There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed.

Let the seeker find, and be troubled by, wisdom.

Let the troubled marvel at the ways of God.

Let us gather together for learning, friendship, argument, and enlightenment.

Holy Spirit, deepen our belonging in the realm of divine wisdom.

(Bob Evans, inspired by *Sirach*, the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *New Testament*)

Words from a Student – Sarah Mills

“If someone were to ask me what MESOM means to me, I could sum it up in one word: opportunity. MESOM offered me a great opportunity to continue my education in all things *our faith!* ... I found it accessible, affordable, highly challenging, and growing my capability. I hope more and more people join us!”

Giving: <https://www.maineucc.org/giving/>



Thank you for your contribution!



UPCOMING COURSE / WORKSHOP: ORGANIZING FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND REPAIR

Spring 2026 – Online by Zoom

Two-part workshop led by Wabanaki REACH: "De-colonizing and the Role of Faith Communities." For all church participants, Feb 28 & Mar 7.

Semester class continues with Malcolm Himschoot and Chrissy Cataldo for MESOM certificate credit (CHURCH HISTORY or ETHICS). Using "Sacred Reckonings" we will draw on prior models for faith communities addressing issues of historic injustice.



Saturdays:

WORKSHOP

Feb 28 & Mar 7

9:00-12:00

\$50

FULL COURSE

includes

Mar 21, Apr 25, May 16

9:00-3:30

\$400

For lay leaders,
church members,
MIDs and pastors

**Scholarships
available**

**MAINE SCHOOL OF
MINISTRY**

Maine Conference,
United Church of Christ

www.maineucc.org/MESOM/

mhimschoot@maineucc.org

Roast Turkey Supper

Saturday, February 28, 2026

Serving 5:00 to 6:30 pm



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

\$12 per person

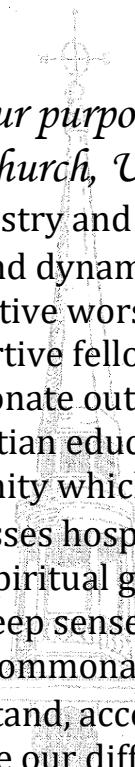
\$25 per family (2 adults, 2 children)

Great food ~ Great company ~ Great fun

Take-out available

*Handicap accessible at the State Street entrance
For more info, call Lois at 207-669-2028*

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



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 UCC – Founded 1812

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Ellsworth, Maine 04605

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