



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.*

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

Thank you for silencing electronic devices before worship begins.

****Please stand as you are able.***

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
HOLY COMMUNION**

September 13, 2026

10 a.m.

PRELUDE

*They'll Know We Are Christians
Blessed Assurance*

arr. Leatherman
arr. Lau

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

One: God makes a way where we cannot yet see a way.

All: God leads us from fear into freedom.

One: We come carrying stories of joy and struggle, forgiveness and hurt, hope and uncertainty.

All: And still, God meets us here with grace.

One: Today, we remember that we are not defined by what lies behind us.

All: We are a people called forward by love.

One: So come, with open hearts and expectant spirits.

All: Let us worship the God who sets us free and leads us into new life!

*HYMN *God of grace and God of glory* (vs 1,3,5) 464

*GATHERING PRAYER (unison)

God of freedom and grace, meet us here today. Quiet what pulls us backward and open our hearts to the life ahead. Give us courage to release what weighs us down and grace to walk the path you open before us. Lead us forward in hope and love. Amen.

CHORAL ANTHEM *A Gentle Alleluia* Sorenson

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

God of wisdom and grace, open our hearts and minds as we hear your Word. Speak to us through these ancient stories and help us hear what you are saying to us today. Give us courage to follow where you lead and faith to embrace the freedom you offer. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament	Exodus 14:19-31	pew Bible p.57 OT
Gospel	Matthew 18:21-35	pew Bible p.17 NT

SERMON **Leave Pharaoh in the Water**

HOLY COMMUNION

*Hymn *Come, Share the Lord*

408

Invitation to Communion

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Bread & Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Dedication (unison)

Gracious God, we give thanks for the many gifts you have placed in our lives and for the grace that always makes room for us at your table. Bless these gifts we offer and use them to bring hope, healing, and love into our community and beyond. As we gather at this table, remind us that all we have and all we are belong to you. May our giving and our living reflect the generous love we have received. Amen.

*HYMN *Blest be the tie that binds*

433

MORNING PRAYERS

Joys & Concerns

Prayer for those Celebrating Birthdays: Louise, Ben Andy

Silent Prayer & Pastoral Prayer

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 Response

Dresden Amen

Naumann

OFFERING OUR GIFTS & TITHES

OFFERTORY

Healing Spirit

Hopson

*DOXOLOGY		46
*DEDICATION		
*HYMN	<i>My hope is built (vs 1&4)</i>	537
*BENEDICTION		
POSTLUDE	<i>Enter His Courts with Praise</i>	Mason

Lynn Hall, *Organist*
 Nancy Sargent, *Choral Director*
 Myrna Vallette, *Liturgist*
 Andy Elliott, *Pastor*
 Donna Shea & Kathy Silsby, *Ushers*
 Lois Stevens, *Greeter*
 Ruth & Troy Tainter, *Facebook, WDEA & Zoom*
 Cindy Sargent, *September Deacon*

Thank you for sitting in the front half of the sanctuary today.

**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.



*Walk in love, as Christ loved us
Ephesians 5:2*

Advocating for Change

In 1999, General Synod affirmed four Special Mission Offerings for the United Church of Christ. Out of the four, the Neighbors in Need offering was highlighted as the offering for justice and compassion. The offering was tasked to help the church “advocate for a society where all people have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.”

Today, this legacy continues as we follow the mandate for the offering to create justice not only through direct aid, but also through advocating for change. These advocacy efforts take place in partnership with the Washington, D.C. Office of Public Policy and Advocacy, the Education for Faithful Action Team, and recipients of the Neighbors in Need grants. Together, folks across the UCC work together to affect policy change guided by our faith.

When you give to Neighbors in Need, you make sure the United Church of Christ continues to be a leader for justice. Two-thirds of the offering supports justice projects across the church, and one-third supports the Council for American Indian Ministries.

Thank you for your gifts!

There is an inherent connection between the Gospel call to respond to the hungry – the thirsty, the stranger, those in prison, and those who are sick – and the policy decisions that determine funding for issues such as school meal programs, global peacebuilding programs, standards for clean air, sentencing for nonviolent offenders, and health care access for all. Advocacy is essential to participating in God's mission in the world.

-From Building A Just World For All: A Toolkit For Faithful Advocacy

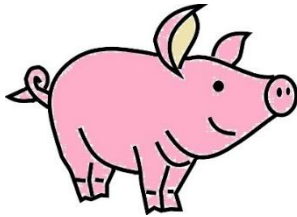
www.ucc.org/nin  UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

First Church will accept gifts to the NIN Offering through the month of September. Please use a pew envelope and write NIN in the memo.

Roast Pork Supper

Saturday, September 26, 2026

Serving 5:00 to 6:30 pm



Roast pork, 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)

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

THE WELCOME TABLE SERVED 126 MEALS ON SEPTEMBER 9.

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.**, 207-667-8321, 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