

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



October 2026 THE STEEPLE NEWSLETTER

First Congregational Church, PO Box 12, 2 Church Street, Ellsworth, Maine 04605 207-667-8321 ellsworthucc.org

From our Pastor



A Year Together

October has always felt like a season of change. The leaves turn, the air cools, the days grow shorter, and creation reminds us that nothing stays exactly the same.

But this October feels especially meaningful to me. It has been one full year since we began doing ministry together.



A year of worship and wondering. A year of laughter and tears. A year of gathering around tables, asking hard questions, sharing stories, trying new things, and discovering together what God might be calling us to become. And what a year it has been. When I think back to that first Sunday, I'm reminded that ministry is never something a pastor simply *does for* a congregation. Ministry is something we create together.

Over this past year, you have welcomed my family and me into this community. You have trusted me with your stories, your celebrations, your grief, your questions, and your hopes for this church. For that, I am deeply grateful. But an anniversary isn't only a time to look backward.

It is also an invitation to look ahead. The trees around us are about to remind us that letting go can make room for something new. And I believe God is still doing something new among us. There are more people to welcome. More tables to open. More questions to ask. More love to give. More neighbors to serve. And more of God's wonderfully surprising grace to discover.

I hope this next year is one where we become even more courageous about being the church God is calling us to be. A church where there is room for questions. Room for different stories and different people. Room for laughter and messiness. Room for those who have known the church their entire lives and those who aren't quite sure what they believe anymore. A church where people know they don't have to become someone else before they are welcome at the table.

And I hope we never become so comfortable with where we are that we stop wondering where God might be leading us next. Because I believe some of the most exciting chapters of our ministry together haven't been written yet. There are people we haven't met, ideas we haven't imagined, ministries we haven't begun, and moments of grace we cannot possibly see coming.

One year down—and I believe we are only getting started.

Thank you for an incredible first year of ministry together. Thank you for taking a chance on me, for walking alongside me, and most importantly, for continuing to show up for one another and for this community.

I cannot wait to see where God takes us next.

Peace & Love,
Pastor Andy

OCTOBER CHURCH MEETINGS

Adult Forum	- Sundays, 8:15 a.m.
Choir	- Thursdays, 6 p.m.
Music	- TBA
Christian Ed	- TBA
Trustees	- Thursday, Oct 15, 7 p.m.
Deacons	- Sunday, Oct 18, 6 p.m.
Stewardship	- Monday, Oct 19, 6 p.m.
Pastoral Care	- Tuesday, Oct 20, 11:30 a.m.
Missions	- Sunday, Oct 25, 11:30 a.m.
Council	- Monday, Oct 26, 6:30 p.m.

Our meetings are hybrid, in person AND Zoom. All FCC Zoom events (meetings and worship) use the same meeting number and password. Contact the secretary in the church office (T-W-Th) for Zoom instructions.



Join us for our monthly meal, *Seats Open: Meet & Eat*. We share food, conversation, and the simple joy of being together. No agenda, no program. Just good food, fellowship, and *a lot* of laughter. Bring a friend.

This month it takes place at Fogtown Brewery, 25 Pine Street in Ellsworth, on Friday, October 16, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

HISTORICAL ROOM RENOVATED

Please go into the room at the back of the sanctuary, pull out a picture album, sit on the sofa, and take a trip down memory lane.

Cindy Sargent has done beautiful work, giving the room a lovely facelift. She cleaned, refinished, and buffed the vintage linoleum floor. She gave texture to the walls so that the room has an old European feel. The space is very restful (except for when she was assembling the filing cabinet...)

Thank you, Cindy!

OCTOBER LECTIONARY READINGS

Oct 4 – 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 & Psalm 19
Isaiah 5:1-7 and Psalm 80:7-15
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46

Oct 11 – 20th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32:1-14 & Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Isaiah 25:1-9 & Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

Oct 18 – 21st Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 33:12-23 & Psalm 99
Isaiah 45:1-7 & Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13)
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22

Oct 25 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 & Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 & Psalm 1
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46



We will dedicate our new church sign on Sunday, October 18, after morning worship. Please join us! We have needed a new sign for a long time. Thank you to everyone who has helped make this happen.

DEACONS

Oct 4 – Pastor Andy Elliott, Communion

Oct 11 – Anna Phillips

Oct 18 – Pastor Andy Elliott

Oct 25 – Pastor Andy Elliott

Church sign dedication

October Deacon: Anne Bancroft

IF YOU HAD 30 MINUTES IN YOUR BUSY WEEK

Paul Nickerson

For many churches, the Fall is a time to recruit new leaders and fill nomination slots for committees and officers. Yes, I can hear the collective groan from churches, as I often hear comments such as:

- "We just don't have enough people who want to lead"
- "20% of the people are doing 80% of the work"
- "Nobody wants to be on the Nominating Committee"
- "Our people are tired"

Sound familiar? Here are a few suggestions for finding and developing leaders for your ministry.

- Spend some time in conversation with people to discover their gifts and passions. A great question to ask is: "If you had 30 minutes in your busy week and could do one thing of significance, what is it?" Then help people utilize those precious minutes.
- Make it part of your church culture that every leader is mentoring someone in their team/group. This will provide a pipeline of leaders.
- Break down major events and ministries into bit-sized pieces. Many people can do smaller tasks that will lead to more involvement long-term.

- Personally ask people to serve with you. The general announcement from the pulpit that, "We need help with X" is **the least effective way** of gathering support.
- If your church has a Nominating Committee, come to that meeting with a list of people who have already said they would serve, rather than trying to brainstorm who might be a good leader. Avoid the public meetings, asking people "Who would like to do this?" (You may get stuck with someone who is ill-equipped to serve.)
- If no one wants to do an activity, consider whether it is really essential. Outside of some financial and property issues (which can be outsourced if needed), many parts of our church life are negotiable. Try taking a "sabbatical" for a year from a particular event and see if it is missed or not.
- Ask every member to pray about what they need to grow in faith in the year ahead and how they are called to use their God-given gifts. Out of these conversations come opportunities to serve.

Our churches need faithful leadership to live out the vision and mission God has called them to do. Have a year-round process that puts the most called leaders in the best positions to serve and lead. ♦

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 in October:

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

Maine Conference UCC Annual Meeting October 2-3, 2026



at Pilgrim Lodge
103 Pilgrim Lodge Lane
West Gardiner, Maine

[Annual Meeting Registration](#)

Online Registration Closes September 29

Everyone is invited.
Pastors and Delegates.
Church members and friends.

Click for the meeting schedule,
overnight lodging options, and
meeting documents.



SUNRISE ASSOCIATION MAINE CONFERENCE UCC ANNUAL MEETING

**Saturday, October 24, 2026
9 AM to Noon**

Hosts: [United Christian Church UCC](#)
18 Searsmont Road / PO Box 288
Lincolnton Center, ME 04850

We will hear reports, transact business,
approve a budget, worship, and eat
together. **Lunch is provided by the church.**
**A freewill offering for your lunch will be
appreciated.**

ZOOM LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88491045770?pwd=BpmdELW3OC5yHiv9PhgrP7JOyLcf1n.1>

Meeting ID: 884 9104 5770

Passcode: 836207





INTO THE WOODS

Let's go together to The Grand's "Pay What You Wish Dress Rehearsal" on Thursday, October 8, at 7 p.m. **Into the Woods**, by James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim, takes favorite fairytale characters and brings them together for a timeless, yet relevant, piece. The Tony Award-winning book and score are both enchanting and touching.

TRUNK OR TREAT, OCTOBER 31 4 P.M. AT THE YMCA PARKING LOT

We are doing something different this year. We Are the Church That Feeds People—we will prep hot dogs in buns and keep them in roasters and add a bag of chips and a bottle of water. We will also to give candy, so please start bringing Halloween candy to the church for this event. Andy is excited to do this again and others are willing to help. We hope that you can help us with this fun outreach.



Would you like to sing with our Choir for the Community Choir Concert on December 6? Contact Nancy Sargent or

Bonnie Carter. The Choir would love some extra voices for the concert. Rehearsals are Thursdays at 6 p.m. If you only want to sing for the Holiday season or just the Concert, you can choose to do that.

QUARTERLY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

November 1, 2026

**After worship at 11 a.m.
during a luncheon.**

**These meetings are for members to
bring questions or issues
to the Council in a public forum.**

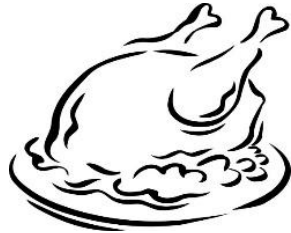


Bring a friend to worship and stay for our **Friendsgiving potluck meal on Sunday, November 22**, after the service. The Deacons will provide ham, turkey, homemade macaroni-and-cheese, and beverages. Please bring side dishes and desserts to share. Let's open our table and celebrate!

Roast Turkey Supper

Saturday, October 24, 2026

5:00 to 6:30 pm



Roast turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, rolls, glazed carrots, green beans, salad, 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.

Psalm 23

Contemporary English Version

You, Lord, are my shepherd. I will never be in need.
You let me rest in fields of green grass.
You lead me to streams of peaceful water,
and you refresh my life.

You are true to your name, and you lead me along the right paths.
I may walk through valleys as dark as death, but I won't be afraid.
You are with me, and your shepherd's rod makes me feel safe.

You treat me to a feast, while my enemies watch.
You honor me as your guest, and you fill my cup until it overflows.
Your kindness and love will always be with me each day of my life,
and I will live forever in your house, Lord.

Contemporary English Version, Second Edition (CEV®) © 2006 American Bible Society

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 Maine Conference UCC ANNUAL MEETING
4 Green 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Communion	5 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	6 6 pm Boy Scouts	7 2-3:30 pm Welcome Table take-out	8 9 am Bulletin deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10
11 Green 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service	12 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities	13 6 pm Boy Scouts	14 2-3:30 pm Welcome Table take-out	15 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir 7 pm Trustees	16 OFFICE CLOSED 5:30 pm Seats Open at Fogtown Brewery	17
18 Green 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Sign Dedication 11:30 am Deacons	19 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities 6 pm Stewardship	20 5:30 pm GSME 6 pm Boy Scouts 6 pm Pastoral Care	21 2-3:30 pm Welcome Table take-out	22 9 am Bulletin Deadline 9 am Steeple deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24 Sunrise Assn Fall Mtg 5 pm Turkey supper
25 Green 8:15 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service 11:30 am Missions	26 OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 am Busy Bodies activities 6:30 pm Council	27 6 pm Boy Scouts	28 2-3:30 pm Welcome Table take-out	29 9 am Bulletin Deadline 4 pm Chess Club 6 pm Choir	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31 4 pm Trunk or Treat

HELP NEEDED

The Busy Bodies will hold a **SILENT AUCTION** on Saturday, December 5, during their Christmas Fair. The auction will benefit the upgrade to our kitchen. The whole church is requested to help us to make the auction a success.

Please contact Sue Fuller to receive instructions and obtain the official request form and to make sure no one has already chosen your favorite businesses.

BUSY BODIES

Sunday Worship Service 10 a.m.
Church office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.



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.