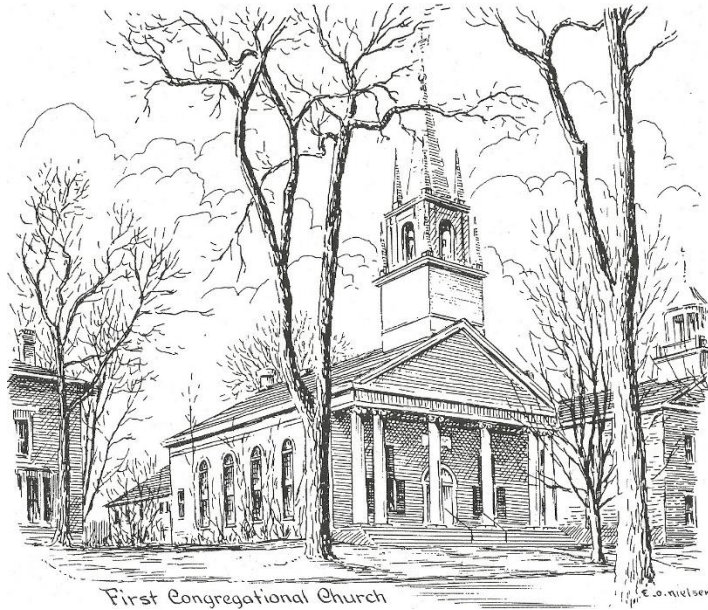


First Congregational Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Church



We welcome you to the First Congregational Church of Wiscasset.

VISION: We are on a journey to reflect God's love, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of all.

MISSION: Together we strive to praise God, grow in faith, cultivate love, spread joy, care for all people and God's creation, promote peace, and do justice.

September 13, 2026

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST & FAITH FORMATION SUNDAY

We welcome all to our worship service, whether present in the sanctuary, joining us on streaming video, or watching our service in the future.

Spiritual Contemplation Quotes for the week:

‘Faith is an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one's hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions.’ James Fowler

PRELUDE ‘*My Faith Looks Up to Thee*’ Lowell Mason / Lloyd Larson

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT ‘*Gathered Here*’ Phil Porter

CHORAL BLESSING ‘*Almighty Father (or God), Hear Our Prayer*’ Felix Mendelssohn

* CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We come before the God whose mercy is greater than our failures.

P: We come with grateful hearts, knowing that God has forgiven us again and again.

L: Jesus asks us, “How many times must I forgive?”

P: We confess that we sometimes want forgiveness for ourselves more than we want to offer it to others.

L: God calls us to release resentment, bitterness, and the desire for revenge.

P: Teach us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

L: Come, let us worship the God of mercy, grace, and new beginnings.

All: We come with open hearts. We come ready to receive grace and ready to become people of grace. Amen.

* OPENING HYMN

‘*Not My Brother nor My Sister*’

NCH No.519

OPENING INVOCATION TO PRAYER

Gracious and merciful God, we gather today knowing that every one of us has needed forgiveness.

We have carried wounds. We have spoken words we wish we could take back. We have held onto disappointments. We have remembered what someone did to us long after we have forgotten what we have done to others. Yet you meet us with mercy. As we worship today, soften our hearts.

Where there is resentment, bring healing. Where there is anger, bring peace. Where there is guilt, bring forgiveness. Where there is brokenness, bring restoration. Open our hearts to the words of Jesus and help us understand that forgiveness is not weakness. It is one of the ways your love becomes visible in the world. Through Christ, we pray. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS: After each Joy or Concern, please respond:

Pastor: “God,” Congregation: **“Hear our prayer.”**

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE

‘Let Peace Prevail on Earth’

Global Mission Partner Prayer: Palestine

MORNING PRAYER AND SILENT MOMENTS FOR PERSONAL PRAYER

SEPTEMBER 11TH REMEMBRANCE

Silent Prayer

RESPONSE

‘Amen’

ANTHEM

Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona (*Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises*)

South African traditional song — Sesotho

English text:

*Hallelujah! We sing your praises,
all our hearts are filled with gladness.*

Christ the Lord to us said:

*“I am wine, I am bread;
I am wine, I am bread,
give to all who thirst and hunger.”*

Forgiveness

Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church^[a] sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ ²² Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven^[b] times.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?” And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’

Liturgist: This is the Word of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

'The Heart of The Matter'

OFFERTORY PRAYER

CHORAL OFFERTORY

'Meditation in C'

John S. Dixon

* DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.**

DEDICATION PRAYER

SACRAMENT OF EUCHARIST

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

L: May the God of hope be with you!

P: And also with you!

L: God, our God, leads us through the flood of fears into the future of wonder and hope.

P: We open our hearts to the One who journeys with us, in the past, in the present, into tomorrow.

L: God goes before us, preparing the Table piled high with grace and peace.

P: We sing songs of glad thanksgiving to the One who fills us with goodness and mercy.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

It is never easy for us to confess, but deep down inside, we know that grace, we have trouble being grace-full to others; forgiven, we are eager to judge and punish all who hurt us, we find ways to put restrictions on people we fear. Forgive us, Servant God. You show mercy more often than we deserve; you pardon us more times than we can count. And why? Because we are the God's - siblings of Jesus Christ, who died and lived again, so we might live beyond death with you. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

EUCHARIST PRAYER- Rev . John

Trust in the mystery in that we call faith:

**P: Baptized in Christ, we would live for him; forgiven through Christ, we would emulate him;
putting on Christ, we wait for his return. Alleluia! Amen!**

Continued Eucharist Prayer Rev. John

LORD’S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN *‘Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether v. 1’* Red Hymnal No. 318

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Sharing of the Bread and Juice (as the Bread is Distributed we will sing v.2 of #318
‘Draw us in the Spirit’s Tether and v. 3 of #318 distribution of Juice)

**Prayer of Thanksgiving
Commissioning**

* CLOSING HYMN *‘Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ’* Red Hymnal No.316

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTORY RESPONSE

Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day. Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

POSTLUDE

‘Festival Voluntary on “Nettleton”’

David Lasky

You are invited to sit for the postlude.

* * * * *

“Our worship ends, let our service begin”

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Those serving you today:

Ushers: Becky & David Lenz

Reader: TBD

Flowers: Rev. John Hogue

Online Streaming: Dewey Harris

Communion: Jenny Surgenor, Becky Lenz

Please join us for fellowship, coffee or tea, and refreshments in Fellowship Hall following worship.

Happy August Birthdays to Abbie Beckford, Gail Burke, Diane Davis, Sherri Dunbar, Pam Frenier, Laurie LaBar & Ron Sanchez

Help Yourself Shelf Wish List

* jarred spaghetti sauce * 1lb. white rice * drink mixes * canned chicken * tuna * * cereal * SPAM * mayo * baked beans * toothpaste * dish soap * cat litter *

Announcements

Today on this Mission Offering Sunday, we offer a warm welcome to **Bradley Krueger!**

We thank **Nancy Shaw** for Rev. John's new handmade communion vestibule!

FYI- Communion bread is gluten free and we use juice, not wine.

September 20- 'Ben Franklin Speak's at church

September 26- Lumos Coldplay concerts in the sanctuary, 6:00pm & 8:00pm

September 27- Congregational meeting after church

Coming Up This Week

Monday, September 14

Rev. John's Office Hours 9:00am-12:00pm

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Mah Jongg 6:00pm – 8:30pm

Tuesday, September 14

Rev. John's Office Hours 9:00am-12:00pm

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Wednesday, September 15

Rev. John's Office Hours 9:00am-12:00pm

Office Hours 10:00am – 2:00p

Sunday, September 20

Sunday Worship 10:00am

Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following worship

Global Mission Partner this week: Palestine

There are too many organizations to list individually for a mission statement this week. Rather a listing of all the organizations are posted here for your reading and engagement.

- Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees; YWCA of Palestine (Palestine); Tantur Ecumenical Institute
- Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center (Jerusalem); Rawdat el-Zuhur (Palestine)
- Kairos Palestine; Friends Meeting in Ramallah; Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land; Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem; Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI); East Jerusalem YMCA (Palestine)

Diyar Consortium; Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem; B'Tselem

First Congregational Church UCC

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revjohnwiscassetucc@gmail.com

Pastoral Care – 207 955-0055

Music Director: Joel Pierce

Sexton: Mary McKinney

Office Administrator: Hilary Atwood

Church Office Email – fccw@myfairpoint.net

Church Office Phone – 207 882-7544

Church Website – www.uccwiscasset.org

Not My Brother, nor My Sister

(Standing in the Need of Prayer)

African-American spiritual; alt.

Leader



1 Not my broth - er, nor my sis - ter, but it's me, O God,
 2 Not the preach - er, nor the dea - con, but it's me, O God,
 3 Not my fa - ther, nor my moth - er, but it's me, O God,
 4 Not the strang - er, nor my neigh - bor, but it's me, O God,



All *Leader*



stand - ing in the need of prayer; Not my broth - er, nor my sis - ter, but it's
 stand - ing in the need of prayer; Not the preach - er, nor the dea - con, but it's
 stand - ing in the need of prayer; Not my fa - ther, nor my moth - er, but it's
 stand - ing in the need of prayer; Not the strang - er, nor my neigh - bor, but it's



All *Refrain*



me, O God, stand - ing in the need of prayer.
 me, O God, stand - ing in the need of prayer. It's
 me, O God, stand - ing in the need of prayer.
 me, O God, stand - ing in the need of prayer.



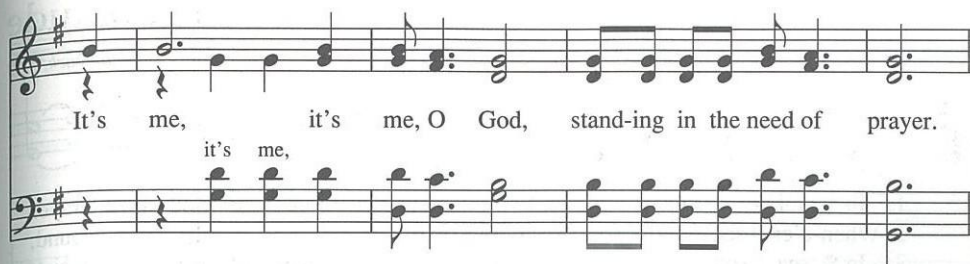

me, it's me, O God, stand - ing in the need of prayer;
 it's me,



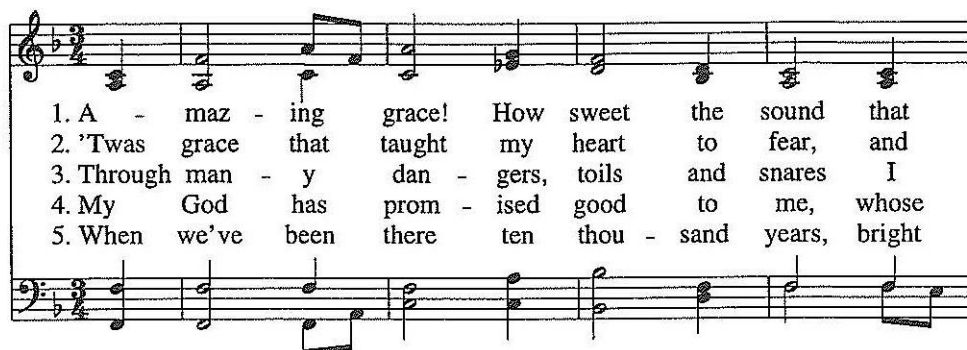
James Weldon Johnson included this African-American spiritual in his historic collection of 1925, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*. It was popularized by Mahalia Jackson, who specialized in such spirituals when she began her public singing career.

Tune: NEED OF PRAYER 13.7.13.7, with refrain
African-American spiritual

PRAYER



Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound 401



1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound that
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3. Through man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I
 4. My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved and set me free! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

WORDS: St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779, alt.; St. 5, *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790
 MUSIC: Shaw and Spilman's *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1829; harm. FCC, 1997

NEW BRITAIN
 CM

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

1. Draw us in the Spir-it's te - ther, for when hum - bly,
 2. As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of
 3. All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -

in your name, two or three are met to - geth - er, you are
 Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the giv - er break the
 ments of you, that by car - ing, help - ing, giv - ing, we may

in the midst of them; Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 bread and bless the cup, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 be dis - ci - ples true. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

lu - ia! Touch we now your gar - ment's hem.
 lu - ia! So now bind our friend - ship up.
 lu - ia! We will serve with faith a - new.

WORDS: Percy Dearmer, *Enlarged Songs of Praise*, 1931, alt.
 MUSIC: Harold Friedell, 1957; adapt. Jet Turner, 1967, alt.

British hymnal editor Dearmer provides the words about the
 'community' of communion. The tune is named for Union
 Seminary, New York City, a training ground for clergy of
 many Protestant denominations, including the UCC.

UNION SEMINARY
 87.87.44.7

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 admin. Warner Bros. Publications U.S. Inc.
 Adapt. © 1967 Chalice Press

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ 316

Unison

1. Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
 2. Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,
 3. Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,

bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
 teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
 gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - ery - where!

Refrain (first time p, second time f)

Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

WORDS: Fred Kaan, 1975

MUSIC: Jamaican folk melody, adapt. Doreen Potter, 1975

LINSTEAD
LM w. refrain

Jamaican folk rhythms meet the spirit of ecumenist Fred Kaan in this 'communion calypso' hymn, first sung at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Nairobi, 1975.

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