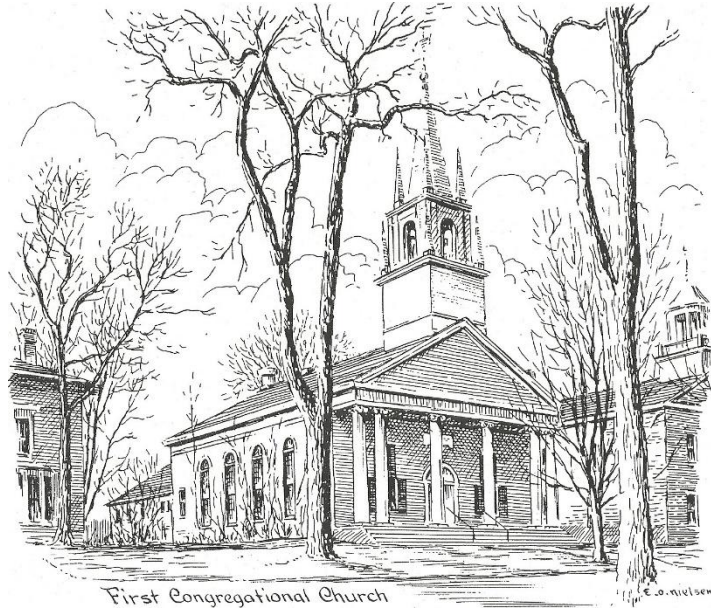


First Congregational Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Church



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.

June 7, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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:

“There are only three ways to teach a child. The first is by example, the second is by example, the third is by example.” — **Albert Schweitzer**

PRELUDE

‘Air in E-flat Major’

G. F. Handel

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHOIR INTROIT

‘Come Into His Presence’

Dan Moen

Come into His presence with thanksgiving in your heart
and give Him praise, and give Him praise

Come into His presence with thanksgiving in your heart
your voices raise, your voices raise

Give glory and honor and power unto Him: Jesus the name above all names!

* CALL TO WORSHIP

L: God calls us to move

P: But we fear the unknown.

L: God calls us to move

P: But movement can be uncomfortable.

L: God calls us to move

P: So we move, trusting that God goes with us preparing the way.

* OPENING HYMN

‘The God of Abraham Praise’

Red Hymnal No. 2

OPENING INVOCATION TO PRAYER

Holy God, you call us again and again to leave our comfort zones and follow where you lead. We resist out of uncertainty and fear because the outcome seems uncertain. We become stuck, paralyzed by the unknown before us. Help us to hear your voice still speaking, help us to see you at work in the world. Grant us courage to have faith.. Grant us the boldness to serve how you call us to serve . Walk beside us as we journey in faith to encourage and strengthen us. Amen

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

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

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE - Global Mission Partner Prayer: **Philippines**

MORNING PRAYER AND SILENT MOMENTS FOR PERSONAL PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

‘Amen’

African American

Reception of New Members

Invitation

Questions of Candidates

Affirmation of Faith

Question of Participation

Prayer

Welcome and Reception

People: We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God’s knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Genesis 12:1-9

The Call of Abram

Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of

Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak^[b] of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed on by stages towards the Negeb.

Liturgist: This is the Word of God. People: **Thanks be to God.**

* HYMN *'Guide Me O Great Jehovah'* Red Hymnal No. 102

SERMON *'Why Can't We Get Along?'*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

CHORAL OFFERTORY *'Go Light Your World'* Chris Rice

There is a candle in every soul, some brightly burning, some dark and cold
There is a Spirit who brings a fire, ignites a candle and makes His home.

Refrain: So carry your candle, run to the darkness, seek out the helpless,
confused and torn

Hold out your candle for all to see it, take your candle, and go light your world
Take your candle, and go light your world.

Frustrated brother, see how he's tried to light his own candle some other way
See now your sister, she's been robbed and lied to, still holds a candle without a
flame.

(refrain)

We are a family whose hearts are blazing, so let's raise our candles and light up
the sky

Praying to our Father, in the name of Jesus; make us a beacon in darkest times.

(refrain)

* 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

WELCOME

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

L: May the God who gives life to the dead be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Open your hearts to God's steadfast love.

P: Hoping against hope, our hearts are glad in God.

L: Let joyous melodies be offered to our God.

P: Loving righteousness and justice, we rejoice in God.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, You call us to a new land, a new birth. Yet our feet and our spirits hesitate. Forgive our laziness. Forgive our fear. Forgive our selfishness. Forgive our comfort. Be for us the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night. Lead us into the new birth of water and the Spirit.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Here is the good news: it is not up to us. God has not wavered in keeping the covenant of grace, of hope, of mercy, of life.

**ALL: By God's grace, we are forgiven; by God's healing, we are made whole; by God's constant love, we are restored to life. Thanks be to God.
Amen**

EUCHARIST PRAYER-

REV. JOHN

'Mystery of that faith which is ours:'

Trusting God's faithfulness, Christ died on the cross.

Giving God the glory, Christ was raised from the grave.

Calling us to follow, Christ leads us into God's kingdom.

Continued Eucharist Prayer Rev. John and Lord's Prayer

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Sharing of the Bread and Juice #311 (v.1 in distribution of Bread and v. 2 in 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

'Gavotte'

G. F. Handel

We welcome New members: Harriet Matthey; transfer of membership via letter to FCCW: Alice Vita, Rev. John and Veronica Hogue

We wish to acknowledge new folks who have been supportive in so many ways and are in covenant with FCCW:

Abbi Beckford; Judi Coombe; Meg and Carl Skidmore; Alice Smith-Duncan

You are invited to sit for the postlude.

* * * * *

“Our worship ends, let our service begin”

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Those serving you today:

Ushers: Susan & Deane Attwood

Reader: Veronica Hogue

Flowers: Nancy Roby

Online Streaming: Dewey Harris

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

Please take note of the colored paper prayer slips in the pew rack. These are for you to write a word or phrase of prayer or concerns. Fold it and place it in the offering plate. It will only be shared with Rev. John.

Happy June Birthday to Deane Attwood, Brenden Joyce, Sarah Joyce, Nancy Roby and Jan Shaw

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

This Coming Weekend- 6/12-6/14 Wiscasset Wormfest- FCCW Food Booth
Saturday 11am-3pm

Friday June 12-Feed Our Scholars Baked Goods Drop-off @ St. Philip's in the
afternoon

Sunday June 14- Music Sunday & General mission offering

Tuesday June 16-Council Meeting 6:30pm

Sunday June 21- Father's Day

Saturday June 27- Pride Parade Damariscotta

Coming Up This Week

Monday, June 8

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

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Mah Jongg 6:00pm – 8:30pm

Tuesday, June 9

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

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Wednesday, June 10

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

Office Hours 10:00am – 2:00pm

Feed Our Scholars packing 10:30am

Saturday, June 13

Wormfest Sale-Food & Drinks

Sunday, June 14

Sunday Worship 10:00am

Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following worship

First Congregational Church UCC

PO Box 350, 28 High Street, Wiscasset, ME 04578

Minister and Teacher: Rev. John Hogue

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

The God of Abraham Praise

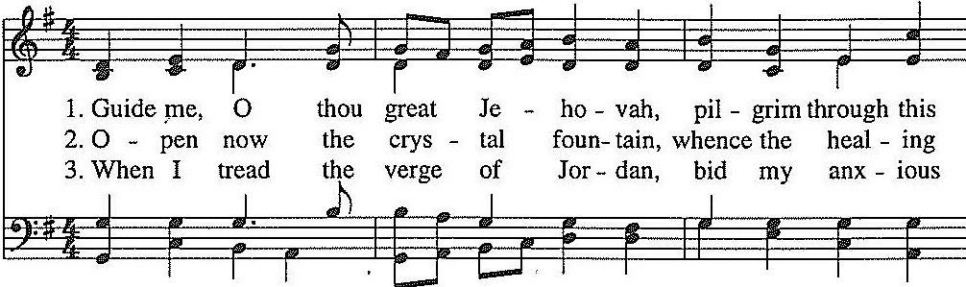
1. The God of A-braham praise, all praise the e-ter-nal name,
 2. God's spir-it flow-eth free, high surg-ing where it will;
 3. We have e-ter-nal life im-plant-ed in our soul;

who was, and is, and is to be, for aye the same!
 in proph-et's word God spoke of old and speak-eth still.
 God's love shall be our strength and stay, while a-ges roll.

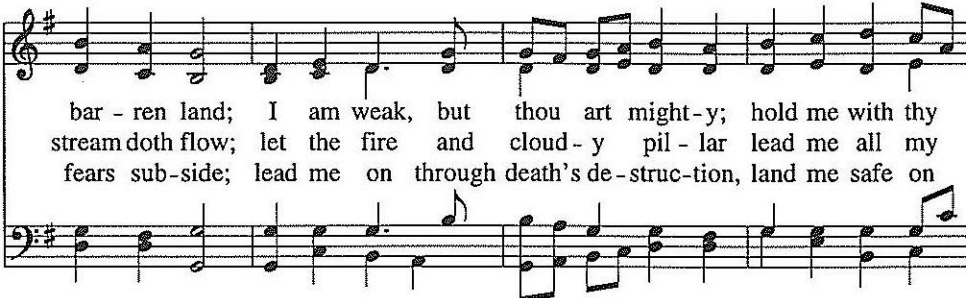
Our God, the great I AM, ere aught that now ap-pears;
 Es-tab-lished is God's law, and change-less it shall stand,
 Praise to the liv-ing God! All praise the e-ter-nal name,

the First, the Last: be-yond all thought, through time-less years!
 deep writ up-on the hu-man heart, on sea or land.
 who was, and is, and is to be, for aye the same!

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah



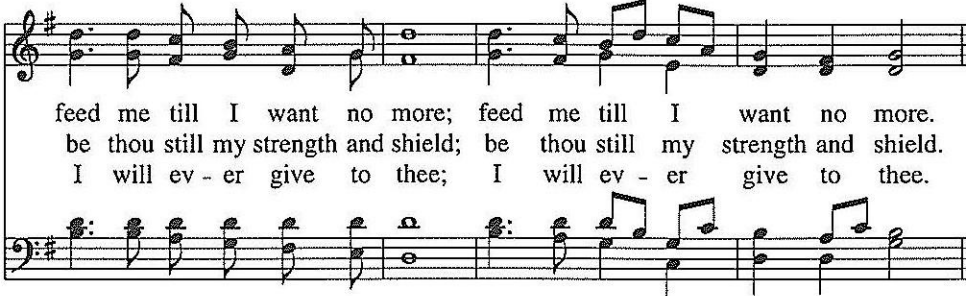
1. Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim through this
 2. O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, whence the heal - ing
 3. When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land; I am weak, but thou art might - y; hold me with thy
 stream doth flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me all my
 fears sub - side; lead me on through death's de - struc - tion, land me safe on



power - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - erer, strong de - liv - erer,
 Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es,



feed me till I want no more; feed me till I want no more.
 be thou still my strength and shield; be thou still my strength and shield.
 I will ev - er give to thee; I will ev - er give to thee.

WORDS: William Williams, 1745; st. 1, tr. Peter Williams, 1771; sts. 2,3, tr. William Williams, 1772, alt.
 MUSIC: John Hughes, 1907

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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June 7, 2026

‘Why Can’t We Get Along?’

Rev. John Hogue

In the book ABRAHAM: A JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF THREE FAITHS by Bruce Feiler, Bruce persistently asks a perplexing question. If Abraham is the father of the Jews, Christians and Muslims, why can’t the Jews, Christians and Muslims get along better? Especially when one realizes that all three religions are from the same seed, the same family tree? All three founders trace their roots to Father Abraham; there is something in the life, faith and piety of Abraham that could inspire a greater harmony and peace between these three religions.

Bruce Feiler talks about the division and conflicts among the three religions. Right now, the Jews have sent Jewish families to live in the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, e.g. the West Bank, occupied since the war of 1965. In the Roadmap to Peace, the Jews are to give up several of their Jewish settlements. What is the response to such an idea among the fanatical Jewish rabbis? Give up our Jewish settlements? Our newest Jewish villages? Absolutely not!!! Assassinate our President who betrays our country by having such outlandish ideas!!! Invoke a curse on his name. All in the name of religion, the Jewish religion.

The following is a second example of fanaticism that inflames the conflict. From Christian clergy, in the recent past, we have read in our newspapers quotations about evangelical Christian pastors that say “Islam is a very evil and wicked religion, “ that Islam is a “religion of violence,” and that “Christianity and Islam are locked in a classic struggle that will end at the second coming of Jesus Christ.” In other words, the conflict between Christians and Muslims is bad and will only get worse and blow up in the next century or at the end of the world when Christ comes again. Yes, I believe that

Bruce Feiler is on the right track when he suggests that we look to Father Abraham as a symbol of being the father of three world religions, as a symbol of being a father of a family which learns to live and love together in the same household called Earth.

From Abraham, we can learn what it means to believe the promises of God, to believe in Christ, to have genuine faith and lead a devout godly life, putting our love for nation, family and home in perspective. I wish to focus on the phrase: “By you, all the families of the earth will be blessed.” Circle the word, “**all**.” All the families of the earth will be blessed. Not just Jewish families. Not just Christian families. Not just Muslim families. Not just Protestant families or Catholic families. Notice that all the families of the earth are to be blessed through the life of Abraham. This is part of God’s persistent universal love; that is, love for all people and all humanity and all the earth. You and I are to be the instruments for God’s blessings on all the world around us, regardless of race, color, creed, gender or political persuasion.

First and foremost, Father Abraham was and is a model of faith. A model of what it means to be a believing person. Secondly, Father Abraham was enormously blessed by God and realized that God wanted him to share his blessings with all the families of the earth. The third reason that Father Abraham is so very important to us is that Father Abraham is the first patriarch of the Jewish, the Christian and the Muslim religions. All three world religions trace their origins to him. In other words, that we are all cousins and spiritually connected. Despite the contrast of religious division, many folks are revealing the love commandment and pursuing kindness. We need to take the Blessings from Abraham seriously. When cruelty becomes normal, kindness looks radical. Today, I Rev. John chose to be kind. I can choose to be generous. I choose to be inclusive. I can choose not to demean or shame. I love this true train story adapted from the book, From Field Notes on the Compassionate Life, by Marc Ian Barasch. It

is about a woman traveling alone—by train—who arrived in a new city. There was time until her next train connection. She struck up a conversation with another traveler, a woman also making a stopover, in the midst of a very long journey. The traveler was tired, and the woman unthinkingly handed her a sandwich that she'd been saving for later. It began as a conversation, and became a friendship that lasted for twenty years. After the woman died, her son happened upon a packet of his mother's correspondence. One thing particularly struck him. "There were so many letters from this woman she had met in the train station. They all ended with the same words: 'I'll never forget that you fed me.'" Today in a world that weighs and measures, we think, "But those are such small gestures." Or, "After all, it's 'just a' sandwich." Ahhh yes. But, as Jon Kabat-Zinn reminds us, "The little things? The little moments? They aren't little." *They are difference makers.* They are the building blocks for healing. They are the building blocks for "re-humanizing". They are the building blocks for restoring dignity.

I love the phrase, "choosing to heal". It would be a great book title. And an even better life mission. "What do you do?" "I choose to create moments that heal." As Ashley Judd noted when talking about her mother, "You can pretend to care. But you can't pretend to show up." Here's the deal: I believe that this good book (Bible) reveals the power of love and kindness and we witness daily stories of love, kindness that nourish, replenish and enrich our tired souls. More than ever, we need gifts of kindness in a world that honors cruelty as the new normal. We live in a world that can be merciless—with violence and hatred perpetrated by people in power. Yes, there are a heap plenty of people and systems to blame. Yet it is always some other people, and some other system just like the division of religions. However, the truth is that we wound one another. We wound with real wars, and real bullets. We wound with words, with hatred and resentment. We wound with intolerance, small-mindedness and some

of it in the name of “love” and God. “If we have no peace,” Mother Teresa reminded us, “it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” We do belong to one another, then “they”—the “least of these” and those without voices—are indeed, our children. Ours to care for. Ours to listen to. Ours to see. Yes. Think of kindness, as resistance. I can hear my hero’s—Mr. Rogers—voice. “Imagine if we all walked into the world with the belief that each person was inherently worthy. Imagine if our goal was to help each other recognize that we are worthy of being loved. Imagine if we sought to listen more than we spoke. I imagine if this was the case, that our conversation would change, our understanding of those around us would shift, and our national conversations would be more civil.”

If you recall from my weekly **Musings** in the *Chimes*, from the Jewish tradition we learn our job title; *Tikkun olam*. It literally means “repairing the world”. The word *olam* also means hidden. We need to repair the world so that its Creator is no longer hidden within, but shines through each thing in magnificent, harmonious beauty. To me as a gardener this makes perfect sense. It’s all about the dirt. Nutritious or nutritive soil creates and generates life. Toxic soil does not. Fertility is stifled, because the nutrients have been leached.

Tikkun, to repair the soil of the world with nutrients: kindness, a balm of generosity, a capacity to accommodate fragility, and a softness of spirit. What Eve Ensler called, “The daily subtle simple gathering of kindness.” Choosing by working to heal *Tikkun olam* isn’t only for the spiritually or intellectually inclined. Choosing to heal is in our DNA. As children of our creator, we are healers. In kindness, we affirm dignity. In empathy, we see value and build connections. With compassion and justice, we right wrongs and create sanctuaries. I think we lose sight of the fact that kindness is a form of strength, not weakness. It takes courage to remain gentle in a world that often celebrates harshness. It requires bravery to keep our hearts open when it might feel

safer to close them. Each act of kindness is a quiet rebellion against cynicism and indifference, a statement of faith in our shared humanity. Here is our paradigm shift: Who you are makes a difference. Let us make our decisions—as individuals, as organizations—with kindness and empathy as our core values. Let us take this to heart: Those who cannot feel the pain of others should never be trusted with their fate. Power without compassion walks a crooked trail, and leaves too many wounded.

Let us practice empathy loudly, with the current society marked by such malice ,cruelty, let us multiply compassion and kindness as bold acts of resistance. Step out into your local community, alone or with other like-hearted people. Offer acts of service, especially for those who are often overlooked, excluded, or silenced. These are the same communities ignored or targeted at the current time, and we will need to make sure that no one is rendered invisible and that everyone is cared for. Thank you all for your acts of kindness in your communities. Let us not forget the healing and tender necessity of self-kindness. It matters. Be gentle with yourself.