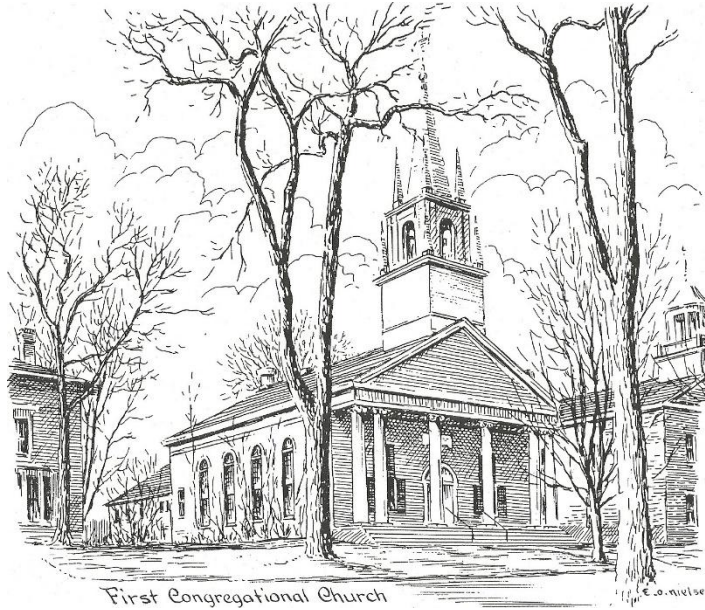


First Congregational Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Church



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.

May 31, 2026

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE

Global Mission Partner Prayer this week: **East Timor**

MORNING PRAYER, FOLLOWED BY SILENT 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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

'Amen'

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 8 and Matthew 28:16-20

Psalm 8

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Matthew 28: 16-20

The Commissioning of the Disciples

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

L: The Word of God

P: THANKS BE to GOD

* HYMN *'For The Beauty Of The Earth'* Red Hymnal No.54

SERMON **'When Heaven Whispers Our Name'**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

OFFERTORY *'Eternal Father Strong to Save'* William Whiting

* 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

* CLOSING HYM *'God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand'* Red Hymnal No.537

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 *'A Love Song for America'* Samuel Francis Smith

You are invited to sit for the postlude.

* * * * *

"Our worship ends, let our service begin"

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Those serving you today:

Usher: Cindy Clement

Reader: Becky Lenz

Flowers: Ron Sanchez

Online Streaming: Raegan Eddy

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 May Birthday to Ann Dunlevy, Angie Eddy, Sally Flesher, Jackie Lowell, Steve Whitfield

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

May 31st- We will uplift Memorial Day on this Sunday

Thank you to Roger Whitney for providing music this Sunday.

Special congregational meeting after worship

June 4th Wiscasset Garden Club Annual Appreciation Luncheon 11:30am

June 7th- Worship will receive new members into the life of the Church

-Midcoast Association meeting at Edgecomb UCC 2:30pm

June 14th- **Music Sunday**, choir's last performance before summer recess

-General Mission Offering

-James Weldon Johnson Event, Wiscasset Female Charitable Society,
2:00pm-4:00pm

Coming Up This Week

Monday, June 1

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

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Mah Jongg 6:00 – 8:30pm

Tuesday, June 2

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

Office Hours 9:30am – 1:30pm

Wednesday, June 3

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

Office Hours 10:00am – 2:00pm

Feed Our Scholars packing 10:30am

Thursday, June 4

Wiscasset Garden Club Annual Appreciation Luncheon 11:30am-3:30pm

Sunday, June 7

Sunday Worship 10:00am-New member service

Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following Worship

Midcoast Association Meeting Edgecomb UCC 2:30pm

What A Wonderful World

I see trees of green
Red roses too
I see them bloom
For me and you
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
I see skies of blue
And clouds of white
The bright blessed day
The dark sacred night
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
The colors of the rainbow
So pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces
Of people going by
I see friends shaking hands
Saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying
I love you
I hear babies cry
I watch them grow
They'll learn much more
Than I'll ever know
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
Yes, I think to myself
What a wonderful world
Ooh, yes

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 – fcw@myfairpoint.net
Church Office Phone – 207 882-7544
Church Website – www.uccwiscasset.org

Shining the Light of Christ
FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH
in the Heart of Wiscasset

Psalm 8, Matthew 28:16-20 May 31, 2026

‘When Heaven whispers our name..’

Rev. John Hogue

Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," had an unusual picture hanging on his office wall. It was a picture of a turtle on top of a fence post. When asked, "Why is that there?" Alex Haley answered, "Every time I write something significant, every time I read my words and think that they are wonderful, and begin to feel proud of myself, I look at the turtle on top of the fence post and remember that he didn't get there on his own. He had help."

That is the image I have in my head now when I think of how wondrous this creation by God. When the Psalmist proclaims: "O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" There are some nights here in Maine and elsewhere when the sky preaches better than ministers do. You know the kind of night I mean. The lake is still. The lobster boats are tied up. The tourists have gone home. The air smells like pine and salt water. You look up over Boothbay Harbor or out near Wiscasset, and suddenly the stars seem so close you feel like you could reach up and stir them with a canoe paddle.

In moments like that, something holy happens: we remember how small we are...and somehow, at the same time, how deeply loved we are. I believe that is Psalm 8. David stands beneath the nighttime sky overwhelmed by wonder: "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars you established—?" David is struck by imagination and wonder. Sometimes I personally am concerned about the younger generation not having enough imagination and

wonder. I grew up wandering the woods of Pennsylvania and would stir imagination with the creation around me. I mean, I ate mud pies. I am still here. I am certain microbes in my youth help build resistance to things around me. It was natural to go poking and giggling with slightest things. Today, I'm afraid that the whining was the response of kids nurtured in a media-saturated culture. Silence is torture to a person brought up with constant visual and auditory stimulation. Most Americans lack the ability to listen to "silence" and to imagine that which is not paraded before our eyes, but these skills are necessary to unfold our scriptures and our spiritual journey. A wise man once said, "There are two ways to live: one, to live as though nothing is a miracle, and the other way to live is as if everything is a miracle." Now, in an age of science and technology where there are materialistic explanations for everything, certainly a lot of people can live as though nothing is a miracle. Many people perceive that if you think there's a miracle, you're just misperceiving natural processes and are just naive about science. That's why it's so important to me that the man who said, "You actually can live as though everything is a miracle," that naive scientist is known as Albert Einstein.

Being Trinity Sunday, one of the best Trinitarian arguments still stands in the language of Tertullian from 220 AD. Tertullian said that there are three personas to the presence of God. He would apply it to one's human personality. Let me apply this analogy to myself. I have several different personas. That is, you know me primarily as John Hogue, the pastor and Teacher of First Congregational Church of Wiscasset UCC. There is a certain persona to that. You know me as a person who preaches, teaches, cares for you, counsels you, and a friend to you, a leader of this congregation. Essentially, when you know me, you know me as John Hogue, the

pastor and teacher. There are several other dimensions to me that you don't know about me. I am a husband to my wife Veronica. We have been happily married for a long time- 33 years. Our relationship is between the two of us, and you are not part of the core of our feelings towards each other. You can observe our relationship, but the intimacies of that relationship are known only to the two of us. We have a knowledge of each other and you do not share in that knowledge. So the second person is - I am a husband to my wife. A third part of me that you really don't know is "little Johnny from Golden Oaks Park, Rogersville, PA." Veronica knows some of these stories but mostly my cousins call me 'Johnny'. Now, I tell all kinds of apocryphal legends about Rogersville , PA. Some of those legends are true and some of them aren't. I don't know where fact, fiction begins and ends with some of those stories. I have told those stories so often that I actually begin to believe some of the legendary aspects of them. You know the legends but you don't know the stories as my mother and father, aunts and uncles and cousins know those stories. These people know John Hogue from Golden Oaks Park, Rogersville, but you don't. There is a child inside of me that you will never know. All in all, there is a wonderful complexity to me as a human being, *and to you also*. There is the persona of a pastor. There is the persona of a husband. There is a persona of a child. To know me in all my complexity and fullness is to know me in all my personas. So it is with God. To know God in all of God's wonderful complexity and personas, you need to know God the Creator who at the same time is the loving God. You need to know God the Son who loved you so much that he died on the cross to forgive us our sins. You need to know God the Holy Spirit who is in you at this moment. It is only when you know the full persona of God that you know God. So in short there is the complexity and mystery behind the Trinity. Being Trinity Sunday, the trinitarian

idea is to be able to see God from three different angles – in three different manifestations. However, with imaginations we have learned that people of other faith traditions have ways of seeing God that are wholesome and life-giving.

Matthew's aim was not to convey a fully developed Trinitarian theology but to spread the good news about Jesus. Part of that good news is that Jesus fully shares the authority of God and the Spirit. He is a powerful healer, judge, and teacher, because his power is the same divine power known throughout the stories of the Old Testament. Through this power, those who become disciples may experience his mercy and learn to live by his teachings. I love it when an old war film is revisited from a fresh perspective—such as George Clooney's WW 2 film. He not only directs and stars in it, but also co-wrote the script with Grant Heslov. Their script is based on the book by Robert M. Edsel. Although the film opens with Clooney's character rounding up his crew for a special mission, just as Lee Marvin's character did in The Dirty Dozen, the objective this time is not to kill and blow up. Instead the goal of what came to be called "The Monuments Men" is to preserve and save. The Nazis have stolen millions of paintings, statues, and such for display in a Hitler art museum the dictator plans to build when he has won the war. In the event that he should lose, his orders are to destroy all of the treasures. Thus, with the war at last moving toward a German defeat, there is a sense of urgency, and as we soon see, also great danger. Clooney is an art historian named Frank Stokes that is based on the real life Harvard art conservationist George Stout. He convinces Army brass that his proposed mission is worth supporting, and they in turn have convinced President Roosevelt. The six people with the needed skills that he selects are—James Granger, a curator of medieval art at the Metropolitan Museum (Matt Damon); Richard

Campbell, an architect (Bill Murray); Walter Garfield, a sculptor (John Goodman); Jean Claude Clermont, a French art dealer (Jean Dujardin); Preston Savitz, a historian (Bob Balaban); Donald Jefferies, a British art expert (Hugh Bonneville of Downton Abbey fame); and Sam Epstein, a young German Jew who serves as their driver and translator (Dimitri Leonidas). Except for Sam, all of the recruits are a bit old for boot camp, but they gamely give it a go. One of the several moments of humor is the somewhat overweight Garfield's initial assumption that the bullets fired just above their heads as he worms his way through a barbed wire barrier are blanks. A longer running gag is the reaction of several characters to James Granger's bad French: he had assured his superior that he was fluent in the language. The Parisian partisan tells him to switch to English, and when Granger tells him he had learned the language in Montreal, the Frenchman shudders disapprovingly, seeming to say, "That explains it!" Another humorous moment, which I hope is true, is when, pressed by time because of the advancing Russians, our heroes try to figure out where the missing wing of the Ghent Altarpiece is located. There are numerous tense moments as well, including a standoff at gunpoint with a German straggler; an anxious moment when Garfield discovers he is standing on top of a landmine; and a tragic scene when one of them is hiding in a Belgian cathedral and sees the Nazis preparing to steal a Michelangelo statue of Madonna and Child.

In Paris Claire Simone (Cate Blanchett), serving as secretary to Hermann Goering, enters into a ledger the name of each stolen art treasure and its destination. After the liberation of Paris, she fears that the Americans will not keep their word to restore the artifacts to their original owners, so she refuses to cooperate with James Granger because he is a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Only as she is drawn to

him romantically and begins to trust him does she at last reveal the whereabouts of the vast trove of over 15,000 pieces hidden in a mine in Germany. The hint of romance (Granger remains faithful to his wife) is fictionalized, probably to add drama this tale, but the woman and her ledger that enabled the team to locate the treasure are not make believe. How the team found the art pieces, as well as virtually all of the gold ingots of the Reich treasury, just as the Russians are about to arrive at the mine adds an additional note of suspense.

The story is one of great courage as well as sleuthing, two of the team members losing their lives during the mission. The death of one of them is redeeming, making up for a past failure that had brought shame to his father. This unique film—well not quite so, as there is John Frankenheimer's 1964 The Train about a group of Resistance fighters thwarting a Nazi colonel's plan to ship out all the French paintings he could gather from a Paris museum, also based on a true story—is a thrilling tribute to the men and a woman who deserve to be remembered for what they risked so much to accomplish.

Can you imagine the world without Jan van Eyck's masterful Ghent Altarpiece? Or the beautiful Michelangelo statue of the Madonna and Child? I know that Jesus warned about laying up treasures on earth, but I think he would understand mission leader Frank Stokes' courageously held belief that saving some of the great achievements of European artists was a worthy goal. Their contributions to the art world thanks to saving the images and imaginations of renown artists would be lost forever had it not been for their bravery and courage. Of course, seeing wonder around you in the world is not just reserved for scientists and mathematicians. Songwriters can see it too. In Psalm 8 we hear mention of babies and in lyrics, I am

thinking of a man who lived through a period of tremendous poverty, horrible racism, segregation and still had a remarkably positive outlook on our world- Louis Armstrong, who sings 'What a Wonderful World.' Will you Join me?

What A Wonderful World

I see trees of green
Red roses too
I see them bloom
For me and you
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
I see skies of blue
And clouds of white
The bright blessed day
The dark sacred night
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
The colors of the rainbow
So pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces
Of people going by
I see friends shaking hands
Saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying
I love you
I hear babies cry
I watch them grow
They'll learn much more
Than I'll ever know
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world
Yes, I think to myself
What a wonderful world
Ooh, yes

O Beautiful for Spacious Skies

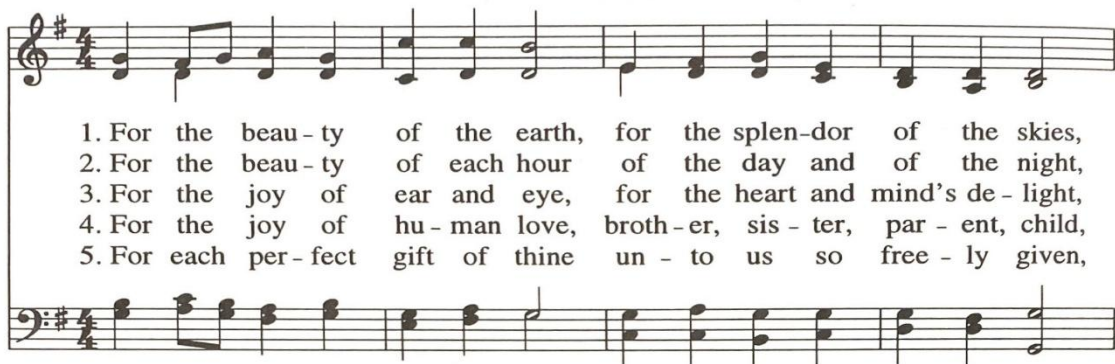
1. O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, for am - ber waves of grain,
 2. O beau - ti - ful for pil - grim feet, whose stern, im - pas - sioned stress
 3. O beau - ti - ful for he - roes proved in lib - er - at - ing strife,
 4. O beau - ti - ful for pa - triot dream that sees be - yond the years

for pur - ple moun - tain maj - es - ties a - bove the fruit - ed plain!
 a thor - ough - fare for free - dom beat a - cross the wil - der - ness!
 who more than self their coun - try loved, and mer - cy more than life!
 thine al - a - bas - ter cit - ies gleam, un - dimmed by hu - man tears!

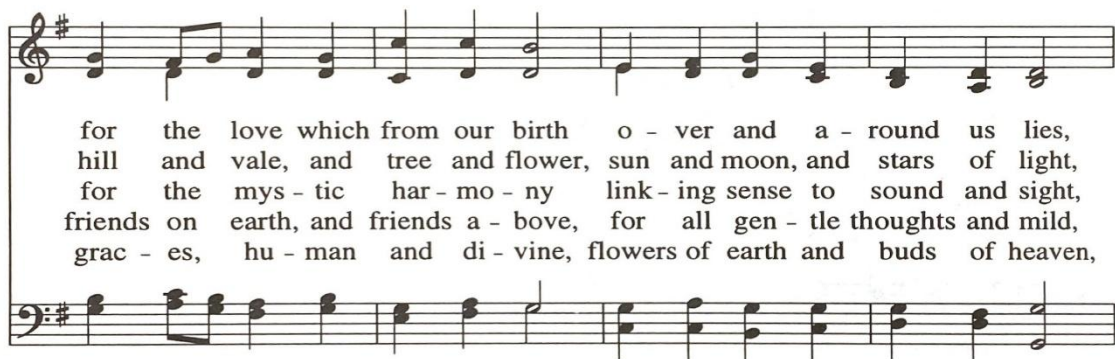
A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed all grace on thee,
 A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God mend thine ev - ery flaw,
 A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! May God thy gold re - fine,
 A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed all grace on thee,

and crown thy good with broth - er - hood from sea to shin - ing sea.
 con - firm thy soul in self - con - trol, thy lib - er - ty in law.
 till all suc - cess be no - ble - ness, and ev - ery gain di - vine.
 and crown thy good with broth - er - hood from sea to shin - ing sea.

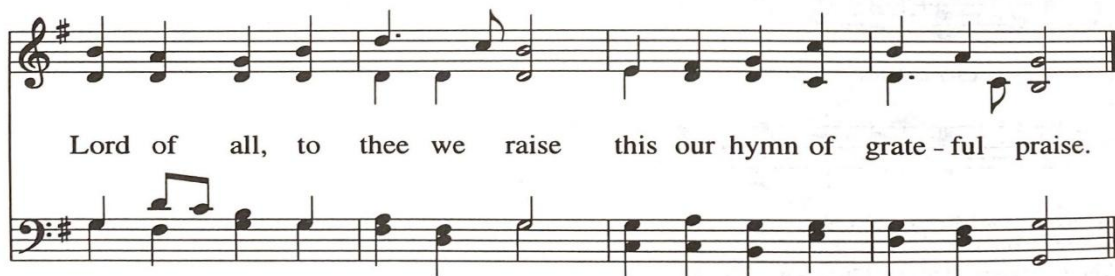
For the Beauty of the Earth



1. For the beau - ty of the earth, for the splen - dor of the skies,
 2. For the beau - ty of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4. For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5. For each per - fect gift of thine un - to us so free - ly given,



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies,
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight,
 friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild,
 grac - es, hu - man and di - vine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven,



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

WORDS: Folliot S. Pierpoint, 1864, alt.
 MUSIC: Conrad Kocher, 1838; adapt. William H. Monk, 1861

DIX
 77.77.77

Originally written as a joyful communion hymn, Pierpoint's text had as its refrain, 'Christ, our God, to thee we raise, this our sacrifice of praise.'

537 God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand

Trumpets, before each stanza (optional)

1. God of the a - ges, whose al-might-y hand
 2. Thy love di-vine hath led us in the past;
 3. From war's a - larms, from dead-ly pes - ti - lence,
 4. Re - fresh thy peo - ple on life's toil-some way;

leads forth in beau - ty all the star - ry band
 in this free land with thee our lot is cast;
 be thy strong arm our ev - er sure de - fense;
 lead us from night to nev - er - end - ing day;

of shin - ing worlds in splen - dor through the skies,
 be thou our rul - er, guard-ian, guide, and stay,
 thy true re - li - gion in our hearts in - crease;
 fill all our lives with love and grace di - vine,

our grate - ful songs be - fore thy throne a - rise.
 thy word our law, thy paths our cho - sen way.
 thy boun - teous good - ness nour - ish us in peace.
 and glo - ry, laud, and praise be ev - er thine.

WORDS: Daniel C. Roberts, 1876, alt.
 MUSIC: George W. Warren, 1894

NATIONAL HYMN
 10.10.10

Episcopalian minister Roberts wrote this hymn for Brandon, Vermont's celebration of the Centennial of American Independence.