

*First Congregational Church of
Wiscasset, UCC*



*The
MEETING HOUSE CHIMES
August 2024*

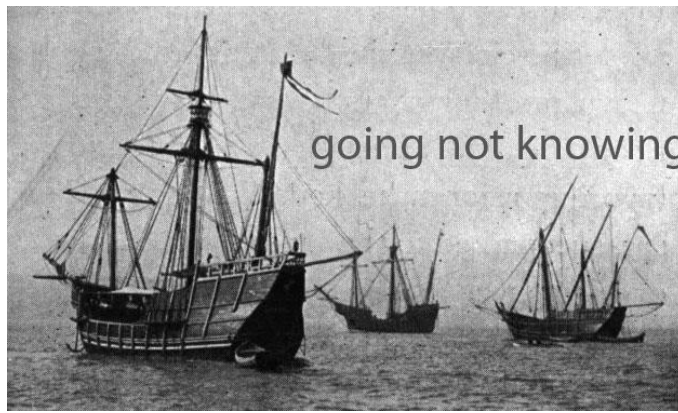
*First Congregational Church of Wiscasset, UCC
28 High Street, Wiscasset, ME 04578
(207) 882-7544*

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.

Welcome to the August edition of the monthly Chimes!

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." ...*Jeremiah 29:11*



Myers' Musings

Elephants, Assurance and Conviction, and Going out Not Knowing

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." . . . Hebrews 11:1

"By faith Abraham (and Sarah) obeyed when (they were) called to set out for a place that (they) were to receive as an inheritance; and (they) set out, not knowing where (they) were to go." . . . Hebrews 11:8

Dear church families,

As I complete 18 months of bring your interim pastor, I have noticed that in many of our discussions there is an "elephant" in the room that none of us likes to talk about – how long can we sustain ourselves?

Perhaps the better question is not one of sustaining, but one of being in mission and ministry to our communities of Wiscasset and neighboring areas. My understanding of church is that the sole purpose of the church is to provide mission and ministry to the communities it serves. Are we doing that? To some degree, yes, we are! We support with ourselves and

with our monies a wide variety of programs and missions that greatly benefit our communities, and some expand nationally and even internationally through the work of the United Church of Christ and the international organization of Church World Service. Some of those programs involve more people than others.

If it is of any comfort, we are not alone among churches of all denominations in facing this crisis of future sustainability and mission. While we contribute supporting the UCC as a “Five for Five” congregation we have also seen the decline in both attendance and financial support over the past decade or so. We have seen the aging of our congregation.

We have a By-Laws revision task force looking at how our By-Laws can more usefully service the size of the church we now are. Our Pastoral Search Committee has recommended that our next pastor not be a full-time pastor. So, the “elephant” tells us we are facing a changing and an uncertain future.

Such indicators show that we both need to and (even better) are listening to the elephant to see how we can best respond looking to the future to develop both mission and ministries that are both more sustainable and have a larger impact on the communities we serve.

As the Rev. Andrew Young once said, “I do not know what your future holds. But I know the God who holds your future.” While we may not know now where we are going, we know we are going in God’s hands. With that in mind I think we can venture forth to face our future with both **“assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen.”**

Willing to go out not knowing, led by
God’s Spirit,

Dave Myers, Interim Pastor

PS: About a year ago Deb and I decided to sign up for a Cruise to Alaska from September 6 – 19.

The Diaconate and Church Council have agreed to hold **“Homecoming Sunday” on September 22!**

(See the "Sermons and Scriptures" section below for the February Sermons)



Church World Service

Here we are again. It's August and time for all the Back-to-School Sales.

Here is a list of what you would need per kit:

- 1 ct -- pair of rounded tip scissors
- 3 ct -- 70 count notebooks
- 1 ct -- 12inch ruler
- 1 ct -- hand-held pencil sharpener
- 1 ct -- large eraser
- 6 ct -- new unsharpened pencils w/erasers
- 1 ct -- box crayons 24 pack

If you think you might be interested in the Spring to "Make School Kits" for our annual CWS Kits Program, now is a good time to stock up.

Happy Shopping!
Thanks so much!!



Feed Our Scholars

Help is Needed!

"Set For Success" Event on Sunday, August 11th, from 1:00 to 3:30pm.

Help is also needed for setup on Saturday August 10 after 2:00pm at the Wiscasset Community Center.

Set for Success (S4S) will once again throw a lively, joyful event at Wiscasset Community Center to celebrate the community and its upcoming school year.

School supplies are provided for all Wiscasset's students as well as a red and black backpack in which to put them in.

At the same time, students and their families can check out many community support groups' displays, get a haircut, find some new-to-you school clothes, have lunch, and check out the touch-a-truck area.

If you have some time to spare on that day to help hand out supplies, please contact Beth Maxwell at 207-882-6180 or emaxwell@myfairpoint.net.

Follow this link for more information...
<https://feedourscholars.wordpress.com/>

Free Public Pancake Breakfast



The First Congregational Church is offering to the public a free pancake breakfast.

Sunday, August 25th from 8:30am to 9:30am in Fellowship Hall.

Regular and gluten-free pancakes, juice, coffee, tea, fruit, and real Maple Syrup are on the menu.

All are welcome.

Church
Live streaming

Streaming Sunday Services

Are you good with Audio/Visual equipment? If not, would you like to learn?

The church needs a few more people to step up and stream our services on Sundays. Tom Clement, Dewey Harris, Chris Sieracki and Sarah Whitfield have made an enormous commitment to be responsible for streaming our services each Sunday.

Please contact any of our current “stream team” or Libby Mooney if you would like to become part of the team!



Would you like to bring in flowers to grace our sanctuary?

Bringing in your favorite houseplant to share would be wonderful! Would you be willing to leave your beautiful offering for more than one week?

Please sign up for two weeks in a row if you'd like. Cut flowers are always welcome too!

For Her – A small start

For Her is a new program in Wiscasset which provides pads and tampons free of charge in the public bathrooms of the Wiscasset Community Center and First Congregational Church as well as providing them to the Wiscasset Food Pantry at St. Philip's.

In initiating ***For Her***, The Ladies Organ Society of First Congo joined organizations in Maine and throughout the country which provide free menstrual products in schools and other public places, a need which has been widely recognized and even legislated in some states.

Funded initially by the Ladies Organ Society, ***For Her*** will need contributions to continue and expand its program.

Contributions may be sent to the Organ Society c/o First Congregational Church, Box 350, Wiscasset, ME 04578. Please indicate ***For Her*** in the memo line.

News from the Hospitality Committee



Hospitality committee hosted Coffee Hour for July.

The Choir will be our hosts in August.

We appreciated so many members assisting with set up, refreshments, and clean up.

Please let Jan Whitfield know if you would like to be reimbursed for half-and-half.

* * *

Also, we still need a suggestion as to who might be willing to host in October, as we no longer have a group called “Men of the Church.”



Nominating Committee

As of right now, we have several openings on committees, and we would appreciate your input and volunteering to fill those spots. They include:

- * Secretary of Council
- * 4 openings on Diaconate
- * 1 on Nominating Committee
- * 1 on Hospitality

Please contact Janet Whitfield, Margot Stiassni-Sieracki, or Nancy Roby

if you can help us.

Thank you.



One lucky person won this LL Bean hammock in the silent auction!

Summerfest Committee

We are thrilled to report that we took in over six thousand dollars again this year for Summerfest!

Thanks to everyone who participated with their time and talents, and to Rev. Dave for the glorious day!

We appreciated the help setting up and the picking up from the nine volunteers who represented the organizations we donated to last year.

The music was great, the food delicious, and it was so nice to see, not only our members, but neighbors and friends who stopped by the fair to share in the fun.

Standby to hear the date of our critique meeting.

If you have questions, please either call me (207-350-1758) or email me at steveandjanwhitfield@gmail.com

Thank you too all,
Jan Whitfield, Summerfest Chair

Scripture and Sermons for August 2024

I often have the feeling that we read the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) the wrong way. We often see God as legalistic and strick, and sometimes as a punishing God, and one who led followers into barbaric battles. But there is another side; and perhaps we ought to look at the Bible, especially the Old Testament not as a model for morality, but a mirror of identity. When we do that perhaps we can see that the Bible is where we can see who we really are in light of God's forgiveness.

August 4:

Communion Sunday (by intinction). **Sermon: "Another Chance" based on Hosea 11:1 – 11.**

In today's Scripture from Hosea we saw, a gentle and compassionate God, despite Israel's ingratitude.

August 11:

Sermon: "Harry and Grabber" based on Genesis 25:19 –34.

Isaac and Rebekah married and struggled to have children. They prayed, and God granted their wish with twins. The literal meaning of their names are Esau (Hairy) and Jacob (Grabber). But unlike the usual order of things the younger of the two was destined to serve the older and two competing nations are born as well.

August 18: Sermon:

"Madame Rehab" based on Joshua 2:1 – 21; 6:22 – 25 and Hebrews 11:1–3, 8–16, 29–31.

In this story we see the compassion and sometimes baffling creativity of God, as God uses a woman of ill-repute as an instrument to save God's servants so that God's purpose can be worked out.

August 25:

Sermon: "Fear" based on I Samuel 17:1a, 4–11, 19–23, 32–49

and Mark 4:35–41.

The stories of David facing Goliath and the disciples being tossed about on a small boat while Jesus slept are great stories of helpin us to address what we fear in life.

Sept. 1:

Communion (by intinction): Sermon: “Picking the Wrong Business” based on II Samuel 23:1–7 and John 6:55–69.

The story of David taking a reluctant band of soldiers to defeat the Philistines, and the disciples saying to Jesus “This teaching is difficult, who can accept it.” To which Jesus replied, “Does this offend you?” are stories that we all must face if we are to be followers of Christ. We have to face our fears. Jesus and God help us when Jesus says, “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” We believe and yet we need to pray, “Help us, O Lord, with our unbelief.”

September 8 and 15 Rev. Myers and Deb will be enjoying an Alaska cruise.

September 22: HOMECOMING SUNDAY!!!!

A Message from the Trustees:

Please practice of closing **all** doors when we're not in the building.

Closed doors make a huge difference in the event of a fire.

Thank you,
Your Trustees

CLYNK Reminder

CLYNK bags, in which you put your returnable bottles and cans, are available in the church office. The tags that must be put on these bags are in Fellowship Hall tacked on the CIS bulletin board near the kitchen; there are also pre-tagged



bags there.

Take the tagged filled bags (no more than 20 pounds) to any local Hannaford CLYNK station or bring it to church and notify Beth Maxwell who will take the bag to Hannaford. There is a bag in the kitchen if you want to bring in bottles and cans and deposit them there instead of collecting them at home.

The money collected by using these bags is used to support the Feed Our Scholars program.

Many thanks for participating in this effort.

What's in Season?

::: AUGUST :::

POPULAR FLOWERS



Lisianthus



Hydrangea



Astrantia



Carnation



Clematis



Dried Lunaria



Calla Lily



Freesia



Allium



Rose



Nerine



Dahlia



Classic Hydrangea



Eucalyptus



Flocked Monstera



Delphinium Elatum



Alchemilla



Eryngium



Lily



Celosia



Lathyrus



Dyed Ruscus



Helleborus



Waxflower



Campanula Medium



Agapanthus



Tanacetum



Cosmos



Dyed Gypsophila



Spray Rose



Iris



Aloë



Lepidium



Ornithogalum



Dyed Asparagus



Veronica



Dyed Craspedia



Dyed Limonium



Scabiosa



Hypericum



Gentiana



Astilbe



Brassica



Delphinium Belladonna



Panicum



Delphinium Ajacis



Dyed Carnation



Symphoricarpos



Viburnum



Alstroemeria



Spray Chrysanthemum



Pittosporum



Oxypetalum

Pastoral Care

In case of a pastoral emergency please use Rev. Dave's cell phone 202-302-6903. Office hours are T, W, Th 9:00am - 12:00pm. Please continue to use the church number (297-882-7544) for all other church business.

Cindy Clemet
Church Council President

Directories!

If you have moved, new phone number, new email address, please let the office know so we can update the directory with any changes.

The 2024 directory are now available. Please pick one up in Fellowship Hall or in the Narthex. If you are away, Ted is happy to put one in the mail to you, or Email to it to you.

Please keep the office posted when phone numbers or addresses change. It is easy to update the database so the next time the directory is printed, your change will be included.



Thank you for reading the August issue of The Chimes!

If you have news, you'd like to share for the *SEPTEMBER* issue, please send in your article by August 20th to fccw@myfairpoint.com.

[>> Click here for the July Chimes](#)

First Congregational Church of Wiscasset, UCC

Mailing address: P.O. Box 350

www.uccwiscasset.org ~ fccw@myfairpoint.net

Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday, 9am-12pm

Worship: Sunday 10 a.m.

Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. David C. Myers

Music Director: Joel Pierce

Office Administrator: Ted Gilbert

Sexton: Mary McKinney



First Congregational Church, Wiscasset | 28 High Street P.O. Box 350 | Wiscasset, ME 04578
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