**First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC**

**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 16, 2023**

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

Call to Worship

One: Dawning light and ringing alarm clocks call us to awaken to each

new day.  
**Many: CB radios call us to emergencies, and leaders of meetings call us to**

**order. Birds call from the treetops, and children call to one another**

**on the beach and among the spruces.**

One: Phone calls punctuate our time, and house calls by visiting friends

mark moments of companionship. Our lives abound with calls of

many kinds.  
**Many: The most persistent of these is the call of our God––inviting us into**

**relationship, calling us to new life, calling us to worship.  
All: Hearing God’s call, heeding God's call, we respond with our**

**presence and our praise! Amen!** Glenn E. Rainsley, *adapted*

*\**Hymn #316 NCH “*We Limit Not the Truth of God”*

We limit not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind,

To notions of our day and place, crude, partial, and confined;

No, let a new and better hope within our hearts be stirred:

O God grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

Who dares to bind to one’s own sense the oracles of heaven,

For all the nations, tongues, and climes and all the ages given?

That universe, how much unknown! That ocean unexplored!

O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

Eternal God, Incarnate Word, Spirit of flame and dove:

Enlarge, expand all living souls to comprehend your love;

And help us all to seek your will with wiser powers conferred:

O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.

Unison Prayer of Invocation

**O God, our joy and comfort, we gather in your name to give thanks for all the gifts of this day. Our spirits are lightened with your gift of joy. Of all the many things we receive from your hand, the flame of joy is most precious. We have also come to this hour bearing in our consciousness the sorrows of our world, as well as those carried silently in our hearts. Comfort us with your presence, that we may be strengthened to continue to proclaim your goodness and deliverance in all the earth. In the name of Jesus, our Christ, we pray. Amen.** Margaret Gay MacKinnon Godfrey, *adapted*

Children’s Message

p. 703 NCH Psalm 119: 105 - 112

A Reading from the Hebrew Bible Genesis 25: 19 - 34

A Reading from the Gospels Matthew 13: 1 - 9, 18 - 23.

Message *“A Word of the Kingdom”* Allen Myers

*\**Hymn *#*433 NCH “*In the Bulb There Is a Flower”*

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;

In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!

In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There’s a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;

There’s a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.

From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;

In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity;

In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Prayers of the People *(sharing of joys and concerns)*

The Lord's Prayer *(debts and debtors)*

Choral Response

Invitation to Give

Offertory

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, you heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen**

Prayer of Dedication

**O God, use our offerings of money, time, and talents to enliven your church; to enhearten a world prone to discouragement; to enable a spreading of the love of Christ. May all**

**our gifts and our giving amplify your Presence, our Rock and our Redeemer.** Glenn E. Rainsley, *alt.*

*\**Hymn #465 NCH *“Teach Me, O Lord, Your Holy Way”*

Teach Me, O Lord, your holy way,

And give me an obedient mind,

That in your service I may find

My heart’s delight from day to day.

Help me, O Savior, here to trace

The sacred footsteps you have trod;

and fully trusting in my God,

To grow in goodness, truth and grace.

Guard me, O Christ, that I may ne’er

Forsake the right, or do the wrong;

Against temptation make me strong,

And keep me in your sheltering care.

Bless me in every task I face,

Begun, continued, done for you;

Fulfill your will in all I do,

And grant me your abundant grace.

Benediction

Benedictory Response

Postlude

\* indicates where the congregation may stand as they are able