

## IN THE BEGINNING: Sunday, January 16, 1765

On the day the church officially came into being-- "gathered" was the word in use at the time--it was called "The Church of Christ in New Gloucester." On that day the Rev. Samuel Foxcroft, of Boston, Harvard graduate and son of a prominent Boston pastor, was ordained in the blockhouse by an Ecclesiastical Council made up of representatives from the churches in Falmouth(now known as Portland), North Yarmouth(being north of Yarmouth, MA--what is now known as Yarmouth, ME), Windham, Pepperell-borough(Saco), and Biddeford. With the clergy and lay delegates of those churches present, 8 residents of New Gloucester, including Rev. Foxcroft, entered into the following covenant:

*We whose Names are hereunto subscribed, apprehending ourselves called of God into the Church state of the Gospel; do first of all confess ourselves unworthy to be so highly favor'd of the Lord; & admire that free & rich Grace of his, which triumphs over so great unworthiness & then with an humble Reliance on the aids of Grace therein promise for such as in a sense of their Inability to do any good thing, do humbly wait on him for all; we now thankfully lay hold on his Cov'nant & chuse the things that please him.*

*We declare our serious Belief of the christian Religion as contain'd in the sacred scriptures; & with such a View thereof as the Confession of Faith in our Churches has exhibited; heartily resolving to conform our Lives unto the Rules of that holy Religion as long as we live in the world.*

*We give up ourselves unto the Lord Jehovah, who is the Father & the Son & the Holy Ghost, & avouch Him this Day to be our God our Father, our Saviour & our Leader, & receive him as our Portion forever.*

*We give up ourselves unto the blessed Jesus, who is the Lord Jehovah; & adhere to him as the Head of his People in the Cov'nant of Grace, & rely on him as our Priest & our Prophet & our King, to bring us unto eternal Blessedness.*

*We acknowledge our indispensable obligations to glorify our God in all the Duties of a godly, a sober & a righteous Life, & very particularly in the Duties of a Church State, & a Body of People associated for an Obedience to Him in all the ordinances of ye Gospel, & we thereupon depend upon his gracious Assistances for our faithfull Discharge of the Duties thus incumbent on us.*

*We desire & intend & (with Dependance on his promis'd & powerful Grace) we engage to walk together as a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Faith and Order of ye Gospel, so far as we shall have the same reveal'd unto us: conscientiously attending the public Worship of God, the Sacraments of the New Testament, the Discipline of his Kingdom, & all his holy Institutions, in Communion with one another, & watchfully avoiding all sinfull stumbling Blocks & Contentions, as becomes a People whom ye Lord hath bound up together in a Bundle of Life.*

*At the same time we do also present our offspring with us, unto the Lord, purposeing with his Help, to do our Duty in the Methods of a religious Education, that they may be the Lords.*

*And all this we do, flying to the Blood of the everlasting Cov'nant for the Pardon of our many Errors, & praying that the glorious Lord who is the great Shepherd, woud prepare & strenthen us for evry good work to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight. To him be Glory for ever & ever. Amen.*

*Samuel Foxcroft, John Tufts, Jabez True, Daniel Merrill, Moses Woodbury, William Stevens, Ebenezer Mason, Peleg Chandler*

Transcribed by Rev. Linda K. Gard from the oldest of the congregation's record books, labeled Church Records, 1765-1853, New Gloucester. This volume is held in the Archives of the New Gloucester Historical Society.

© First Congregational-Christian Church, United Church of Christ, of New Gloucester, Maine