



**The Foreside Community Church  
United Church of Christ**

**January 2025**

*Connecting to God ~ Nurturing Community ~ Discovering how our Lives Make a Difference*



**THE FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH, UCC**  
 340 Foreside Road  
 Falmouth, Maine 04105-1428

**Pastor:** The Reverend Geoff Parker  
**Choir Director:** Trevor Lavenbein  
**Organist/Accompanist:** David Bartoletti  
**Office Manager:** Christina Sklarz


Office: 207-781-5880  
 E-mail: [info@foresidechurch.org](mailto:info@foresidechurch.org)  
 Web: [www.foresidechurch.org](http://www.foresidechurch.org)

STAFF NOTES ~ LEAVE NOTICE ~ POSITION OPENING	2
WORSHIPPING ~ SCHEDULING W/ PASTOR GEOFF ~ SUPPORT & SERMONS	3
A 2024 CHRISTMAS FAIR WRAP-UP	4
CHRISTMAS ANGEL 2024 UPDATE	5
UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS	
January Mission Moment Announced	6
Tuesday Book Group Starting Up	6
Foreside Monthly Book Club Announces Next Read	6
State Street Shelter Updates	7
Post Election Gathering Scheduled	7
Travelogues Are Back ~ Come to Rwanda	7
January Birthdays are Shared ~ Are you listed?	8
Men's & Women's January Breakfast Dates Announced	8
February <i>Steeplenotes</i> Submission Date	8
COMMUNITY EVENTS	
Star Island Conference Center Advertising for Summer Positions	9
JANUARY 2025 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE	10
DAILY LECTIONARY READINGS FOR JANUARY 2025	11

## Pastoral Notes

The entire staff of The Foreside Community Church, UCC wishes to thank all the members and friends of the FCC for their year round support and commitment. You are the reason we are all here, and each of us remain committed to service. We know the New Year will bring challenges. It will also present continued opportunities for growth in the church, sustaining all of us in our individual and spiritual journeys. Thank you again.

**Pastor Geoff will be off on leave from  
December 25 through and including  
January 2, 2025. If you have a pastoral emergency,  
please contact The Rev. Jim Gertmenian  
at 1-612-385-4318 or 489-9373.**



Do you know someone who likes asking questions with children?


**They might be a:**

Retired Teacher	Camp Counselor/Director
Ed Tech at a local school	Nanny looking for more hours
Education student	Friend of your adult child


FCC is seeking a Youth & Families Ministry Coordinator. We are looking for a good fit for our community and the candidate, thus are willing to adjust the position (hours etc.) if needed.

---

FCC needs YOUR help!  
Please take a moment and consider who might be a good fit and email Geoff or Wendy at [wendyrtracy@gmail.com](mailto:wendyrtracy@gmail.com).



Learn More



**FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH**

*I am fully vaccinated and am available for times to visit, sit, or pray together as you would like. If you would like to schedule a meeting, [you can do so here](#), or by contacting me [by email](#).*

*Blessings of the Spirit to you ~*

*Pastor Geoff*

### *Worship in the sanctuary...*

...and attendance on Sundays is open to all with the following protocols in place:

- Mask wearing is voluntary (a supply can be located in the narthex).
- We ask households to give each other good social distance.
- Windows will be opened enough to increase ventilation.
- Worship continues to also be live-streamed for attending convenience by going to:

<https://www.youtube.com/ForesideCommunityChurch>

Bulletins for each service, including words to that day's hymns are also posted at the above website address.



On the road and missing a sermon? Want to go back and revisit any one sermon? Want to share a sermon with a friend or family member? Pastor Geoff's sermons in both written and audio form from May 2019 and including Easter services (minus "Prayers on the Patio") can be viewed and/or heard on FCC's website at:

<http://www.foresidechurch.org/index.php/category/sermons/>

### **Supporting the Ministry of FCC**

As we work to continue to offer ministry inside and out of our congregation in a time of so much instability, we would invite you consider how you can continue to support our work in the world. Please know that if you would like to mail a gift or regular pledge payment to the church office, the office will be open to receive that gift.

**If you would like to make a one time gift online, or if you would like create an account for a monthly recurring gift**, you may do so through PayPal by going to our [giving page](#) and clicking the "Donate" button.

Thank you for the ways you share from your lives and empower the ministry of the church, offering connection, nurturing, and support here and in the wider world!

*Dear Members and Friends -*

## A 2024 Christmas Fair Wrap-Up

Where to start?? The fair, so recognizable in so many ways, seems to change just enough to be fresh every year! This year I believe we had more input from more members than ever - the baking table was groaning with the weight of many new additions encouraged by Claudia and Margaret, and Deb Reifsnnyder at the candy table had more variety than ever. Under John Goodrich the patio was manned and womaned all morning, despite the cold, and Pete

Ventre's scones and coffee steadily flew out the door. Knitted goods and sewing by Carrie and Jill and Co. anchored the fellowship hall beautifully, and Dana did a brisk business in recycled Christmas decorations - even though too late a whole BIG drawer of them was found under the stage that we totally missed putting out this year! The stage was partially walled off with two pieces of lattice - which provided a beautiful wall for scarves to be displayed and sold by Polly in record numbers. Jewelry (Susan Blethen) and Timeless Treasures (Liz and Co.) were out in force, and the silent auction items won't close until noon next Sunday. The church was the beneficiary of some significant downsizing - we sold a bunch of lovely lamps and furniture. Finally, Christina and her trusty cashiers were fabulous, and I am told as of December 31st we have netted over \$17,500.00 with final numbers coming within the week. And of course we think we have the prettiest fair in town...

Thanks also to Adey Wrona who helped dozens of kids shop for their parents (and themselves!). And finally, thanks to all of you who brought your reliable charge cards and checkbooks, important variables to be sure.

Cleaning up has almost taken longer than setting up did, in that we decided to open a few bins, boxes and bags marked "ready for 2023" and "ready for 2022", etc., that have been shoved to the back of the closets, and it's real archaeology! Every year well meaning people have bought more tags, pins, scissors and we are now overflowing with every sort of Christmas ribbon. But now they are organized, and we won't have to buy more for 20 years.

Many thanks to the many hands that made the work light! You all made it a lot of fun! ***Please pencil in December 6th, 2025 - it's not too soon to plan for next year!***

*All the best,*



**A big thanks to Polly Burke, who sold epic numbers of scarves from the front of the stage.**



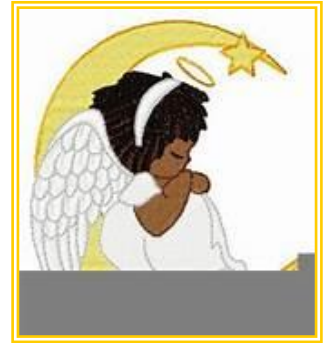
**A warm thanks to Rev. Jim Gertmenian for helping to hang saplings and lights from the ceiling!**

### Christmas Pie Sale Success!

**Thanks!** to all of you who baked delicious pies, and **thank you** to all who bought them to enjoy. Without you, this would not have been a great success. We kicked off the church fair with a \$250.00 donation.



### Christmas Angel 2024 Update



Because of the generous support of everyone at FCC, each child on the Angel Tree has received warm clothing as winter comes to Maine. Some of the “parents” wanted to hide the gifts to save for Christmas and others were very anxious to have the children be able to use their new items immediately. Just as all of us are more concerned that the children we love are safe and well provided for, the adults in the lives of the Christmas Angels feel just as we feel. Some of the adults are the grandparents of the children, one is a foster child, several are the children of single parents. But your expressions of concern and love has touched the hearts and lives of all.

Thank you.  
*Dotty*

A special thanks to Corey and John Goodrich who supplied delicious appetizers for the all too important “Friday Nite Preview Party.” What a great kick-off!



The Christian hearts of the members and friends of The Foreside Community Church were once again evident by the smiles on the “Angels.”

## UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### *The Hope Squad*

Our first Mission Moment of the new year, facilitated by the Justice & Outreach Ministry, and scheduled for Sunday, January 12 is from the "Hope Squad" which is a small, local, nonprofit agency that works with the unhoused population in Portland. The Hope Squad works out of a donated ambulance and provides support to unhoused people in Portland. The group began with Matt Brown and his wife; Nancy Helm who saw a need and wanted to do something. In the last 5 years the group has grown to approximately 15 volunteers who spend each Friday providing food, clothing, beverages and HOPE to members of the unhoused community. This is a group that cares deeply about others who are struggling; often with substance abuse disorder and mental health challenges.

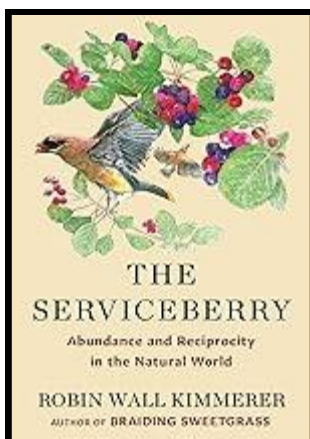
The goal of the organization is to provide resources to these people but more importantly to connect with individuals and to let them know that they matter. Over time relationships grow and opportunities arise to assist individuals in a variety of ways. This is work that matters and makes a difference.

Our church has supported the Hope Squad with a donation of socks and underwear. In January we will be accepting donations for the items listed below. There will be a collection box in the narthex and all donations will be gratefully received. Thank you for your support.

- \* Soft granola bars
- \* peanut butter crackers
- \* Pop Tarts
- \* hot cocoa canisters
- \* oatmeal packets

### *Tuesday Book Group Starting in January*

Beginning on Tuesday January 7<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m., please join us while we read *The Service Berry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Amazon says this new book is "a bold and inspiring vision for how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity and community, based on the lessons of the natural world." She focuses on serviceberries and how its relationship with the world is one of "reciprocity, interconnectedness, and gratitude." She suggests that this

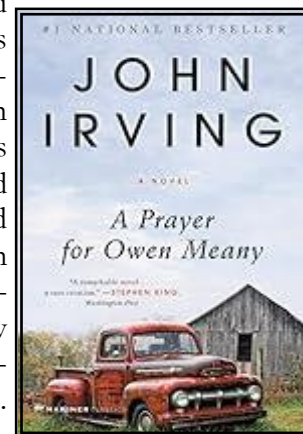


might be the better model than what we practice today. Her quote is "*All flourishing is mutual.*"

We will read *The Serviceberry* slowly over several weeks and have a discussion around what we have read. As we get closer to the date, we will let everyone know exactly how much to read for January 7<sup>th</sup>. I suspect the discussion will be lively based upon the discussions we had around *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Please join us. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Liz Ventre at [eventrel@maine.rr.com](mailto:eventrel@maine.rr.com).

### *Foreside Book Club Updates*

The monthly book club will start off the new year discussing the thought provoking book *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving. This long novel follows John Wheelwright as he comes of age in a small fictional town in New Hampshire with his best friend Owen Meany. Owen, despite being physically small and having a unique high-pitched voice, possesses spiritual strength and wisdom beyond his years. His childhood friend, John Wheelwright, provides a perspective on Owen's life, starting from their shared childhood in the late 1950's. The book explores themes of friendship, destiny, and the relationship between faith and doubt. It describes how Owen Meany's life and death provide evidence of God's existence, and how this evidence can help people resolve their doubts about faith. Summary follows:



"Eleven-year-old Owen Meany, playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire, hits a foul ball and kills his best friend's mother. Owen doesn't believe in accidents; he believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen after that 1953 foul ball is both extraordinary and terrifying. At moments a comic, self-deluded victim, but in the end the principal, tragic actor in a divine plan, Owen Meany is the most heartbreaking hero John Irving has yet created." Quoted from Goodreads. Please feel free to join us in the upstairs classroom of the church on Wednesday January 15 at 4:00 for what is sure to be an enlightening discussion. All are welcome and encouraged to come and share an hour of friendly discussion. Hope to see you then. Happy New Year! FMI: [mimihinkel@gmail.com](mailto:mimihinkel@gmail.com)

**UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)**

***State Street Shelter Updates***

We are looking for volunteers to take shifts hosting families. Like last year, we will team up with Falmouth Congregational Church to staff a particular week. (January 12-18, though volunteers are welcome at other times.) The volunteer need is simply one person to be a greeter, from 6pm to 8:30pm, supported by staff person who speaks many languages. Then there is a need for two people to spend the night from 8pm to 7:30am. Each person will have a “private” room to sleep in. Since we host children in the shelter, a background check is required of all volunteers.

A new addition this year is to keep the shelter open on Sundays and holidays. The morning shift is from 7:30am to 12:30pm, and the afternoon shift is 12:30pm to 5:30pm. To learn more about volunteering and sign up, visit: [www.statestreetchurch.galaxydigital.com](http://www.statestreetchurch.galaxydigital.com) FMI: contact either [Pastor Geoff](#) or [Carrie Penrose](#). Thank you in advance for your consideration of this great need.

***Post Election Gathering***

For people wanting to share their responses to the 2024 Election and to think about the challenges of the years ahead, an informal group will gather at the church at **3:30 pm on Tuesday, January 7 downstairs in the Fellowship Hall**. The 3rd in a series, and facilitated by FCC member Jim Gertmenian, this non-partisan conversation will provide an opportunity to discuss personal feelings about the election and the ways in which individuals and groups can be involved in public issues during the next administration. All are welcome, including non-church members. Feel free to bring a friend. Reservations are not required.



***Travelogues are back!!!  
January 22 at 6:30 p.m.  
“The Land of a Thousand Hills”***

Join us either by Zoom or in person in the upstairs classroom for a chance to hear about FCC member Autumn Storteboom’s trip to Rwanda last August. Learn about the food (in person you may even get a sample), the landscape, the weather... maybe even pick up a few phrases in Kinyarwanda! A month in Rwanda lends itself to many topics including wedding customs, religious ceremonies, infrastructure, safari animals, reflections on the genocide and the scars remaining, and how the country is branding itself for the future.



Several of the beautiful photographs from Autumn’s (pictured far left) Rwanda’s presentation. Reservations not required.

***Please help us acknowledge the following January Birthdays!***

**Rev. Geoff Parker ~ 5**

**Susan Gilpin ~ 9**

**Beth Penrose ~ 10**

**Nancy Mallory ~ 10**

**Diane Goddard ~ 13**

**Kathy Hillman Reed ~ 13**

**Sandy Panenka ~ 15**

**Bill Maynard ~ 16**

**Aiden Lacombe ~ 20**

**David Clark ~ 21**

**Janet Clough ~ 28**

**Eric Tracy ~ 29**

**Let's do (a continental)**

**Breakfast Ladies!**

Women of the church, members and friends are invited to breakfast on

**Wednesday, January 15 @ 8:30 a.m.**

in the FCC coffee area,

we'll provide the food,

you bring your appetite.

~ good food, good conversation ~

it's a great way to start your day!

**Please RSVP to Deb Gray**

**by Monday January 13**

**([deborah.gray48@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.gray48@gmail.com) / 952-4041)**

**so we can plan accordingly.**

**See you there!**

***The Men's Breakfast...***

will be held

**Saturday, January 11 @ 8:30 a.m.**

**downstairs at the church.**

An enjoyable repast and

lively discussions are always on the menu!

**FMI John Bischof**

**[jegbischof@gmail.com](mailto:jegbischof@gmail.com) or 781-2391**

**Your church family would love to help you celebrate your special day! If you haven't seen your birthday listed in the monthly newsletter, that means the office does not have it. How about special anniversaries? We will gladly print those as well.**

**Please consider sharing your days**

**and months by emailing**

**[info@foresidechurch.com](mailto:info@foresidechurch.com).**

**Who knows,**

**maybe you might even be "gifted!?"**

**You can also call 781-5880.**

**The February edition of *Steeplenotes* material submittal deadline is January 23, 2025**

**Submitted articles should be final and print ready, pictures complete with captions in jpeg format can be included. Thank you.**



## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Star Island  
Isles of Shoals, NH



# JOIN OUR TEAM!

**Live on an island for the summer!**

*Working on Star Island will be an unforgettable summer job. Gain valuable experience, new skills, make friends, and create lasting memories. **It's a summer you'll remember forever!***



**LEARN MORE AND APPLY HERE:**



Star Island is looking for applicants for seasonal employment opportunities. If you are not already familiar with Star Island, we run a seasonal religious and educational conference center, rooted in the UU and UCC faiths, off the New Hampshire coast and hire approximately 100 people (18 or older) to work from mid-June to mid-September.

[Working on Star Island offers a unique employment opportunity in a beautiful location. Staff enjoy an enriching learning experience that, in many cases, shapes future careers. The words "best job ever" are often used to describe working on Star Island.](#)

**The priority deadline to apply is January 27. For more information about working on Star Island, please visit our [website](#) or feel free to contact us with questions. Kate Brady, Office Manager, Star Island Corporation (603) 430-6272**

# January 2025

Be sure to check the calendar at The Foreside Community Church's website  
[www.foresidechurch.org](http://www.foresidechurch.org) for any updates or changes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
<b>5</b> 9:30am hybrid service & Communion <b>2pm MOW Mtg.</b> via Zoom	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 9am book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 3:30pm post election w/ Rev Jim <i>See Pg 7 for details.</i> 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	<b>8</b> <b>6:30pm</b> Green Team classroom	<b>9</b> 9am Bells <b>6pm</b> AA-Fellowship	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Men's Monthly Breakfast <i>See Pg 8 for details.</i>
<b>12</b> 9:30am hybrid service Mission Moment "Hope Squad"	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 9am book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	<b>15</b> <b>8:30 am</b> Women's Breakfast <i>See Pg 8 for details.</i> <b>4pm</b> Book Club <b>7pm</b> Finance Ministry Mtg.	<b>16</b> 9am Bells <b>6pm</b> AA-Fellowship <b>7:30pm</b> Grounds & Maintenance Ministry Mtg.	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 9:30am hybrid service		<b>21</b> 9am book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	<b>22</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> Travelogue <i>See Pg 7 for details.</i>	<b>23</b> 9am Bells <b>6pm</b> AA-Fellowship <i>February</i> <i>Steeplnotes</i> <i>deadline</i>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:30am hybrid service	<b>27</b> 7 p.m. Governing Board Mtg.	<b>28</b> 9am book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 9am Bells <b>6pm</b> AA-Fellowship	<b>31</b>	

## Daily Lectionary Readings for January 2025

**Wed., Jan. 1**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13  
Psalm 8  
Revelation 21:1-6a  
Matthew 25:31-46

**Thurs., Jan. 2**

Psalm 147:12-20  
Proverbs 1:1-7  
James 3:13-18

**Fri., Jan. 3**

Psalm 72  
Job 42:10-17  
Luke 8:16-21

**Sat., Jan. 4**

Psalm 72  
Isaiah 6:1-5  
Acts 7:44-53

**Sun., Jan. 5**

Jeremiah 31:7-14 or  
Sirach 24:1-12  
Psalm 147:12-20 or  
Wisdom 10:15-21  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
John 1:[1-9] 10-18

**Mon., Jan. 6**

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

**Tues., Jan. 7**

Psalm 72  
Daniel 2:1-19  
Ephesians 4:17—5:1

**Wed., Jan. 8**

Psalm 72  
Daniel 2:24-49  
Ephesians 5:15-20

**Thurs., Jan. 9**

Psalm 29  
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11  
1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**Fri., Jan. 10**

Psalm 29  
Ecclesiastes 2:1-11  
1 Corinthians 2:1-10

**Sat., Jan. 11**

Psalm 29  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15  
1 Corinthians 2:11-16

**Sun., Jan. 12**

Isaiah 43:1-7  
Psalm 29  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Mon., Jan. 13**

Psalm 106:1-12  
Judges 4:1-16  
Ephesians 6:10-17

**Tues., Jan. 14**

Psalm 106:1-12  
Judges 5:12-21  
1 John 5:13-21

**Wed., Jan. 15**

Psalm 106:1-12  
Numbers 27:1-11  
Luke 11:33-36

**Thurs., Jan. 16**

Psalm 36:5-10  
Jeremiah 3:1-5  
Acts 8:18-24

**Fri., Jan. 17**

Psalm 36:5-10  
Jeremiah 3:19-25  
1 Corinthians 7:1-7

**Sat., Jan. 18**

Psalm 36:5-10  
Jeremiah 4:1-4  
Luke 11:14-23

**Sun., Jan. 19**

Isaiah 62:1-5  
Psalm 36:5-10  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11  
John 2:1-11

**Mon., Jan. 20**

Psalm 145  
Isaiah 54:1-8  
Romans 12:9-21

**Tues., Jan. 21**

Psalm 145  
Song of Solomon 4:1-8  
1 Corinthians 1:3-17

**Wed., Jan. 22**

Psalm 145  
Song of Solomon 4:9—5:1  
Luke 5:33-39

**Thurs., Jan. 23**

Psalm 19  
Isaiah 61:1-7  
Romans 7:1-6

**Fri., Jan. 24**

Psalm 19  
Nehemiah 2:1-10  
Romans 12:1-8

**Sat., Jan. 25**

Psalm 19  
Nehemiah 5:1-13  
Luke 2:39-52

**Sun., Jan. 26**

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10  
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a  
Psalm 19  
Luke 4:14-21

**Mon., Jan. 27**

Psalm 119:89-96  
Jeremiah 36:1-10  
1 Corinthians 14:1-12

**Tues., Jan. 28**

Psalm 119:89-96  
Jeremiah 36:11-26  
2 Corinthians 7:2-12

**Wed., Jan. 29**

Psalm 119:89-96  
Jeremiah 36:27-32  
Luke 4:38-44

**Thurs., Jan. 30**

Psalm 71:1-6  
2 Chronicles 34:1-7  
Acts 10:44-48

**Fri., Jan. 31**

Psalm 71:1-6  
2 Chronicles 35  
Acts 19:1-10



**S**TEEPLENOTES

A Newsletter of

**The Foreside Community Church, UCC**

**General Office Hours:**  
Monday through Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

or unless otherwise posted

**Office: 207-781-5880**

**E-mail: [info@foresidechurch.org](mailto:info@foresidechurch.org) Web: [www.foresidechurch.org](http://www.foresidechurch.org)**

*The Foreside Community Church, UCC*

*340 Foreside Road*

*Falmouth, ME 04105- 1428*