

December 2020

The Foreside Community Church





Merry Christmas greetings are sent from the Terry and Erlene Skillin family who donated the wreath and swags that decorate the front of our church, this year and last.

Connecting to God

Nurturing Community

Discovering
how our Lives
Make a
Difference

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Notes from Reverend Geoff Parker

We Wait...

...in keeping with God's promise, we wait for a new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home... -2 Peter 3:13

Somewhere between 1500–1600 years ago, the church adopted the habit of a season of preparation and fasting before the celebrations and feasts that we now know as Christmas. As the tradition developed, it became the liturgical season of Advent, in which the preparation for the Nativity story mirrors preparation for Christ's second coming in the fulfillment of all time. It became a season of expectation... of waiting.

We don't think about that very often, as Advent has part- ...still waiting for a world in which tragedies like this ly become overlaid by the de facto season in which we pandemic do not impact the poor and marginalized enjoy the twinkle, rejoicing, sounds, smells, and feasts of among us most acutely. Christmas all around our lives: in work and school, with friends and family. At least, that's how it usually is for ...still waiting for justice to flow through our justice sys-

many ways: ...we are fasting from parties, from commu- ploughshares that will feed and nourish instead of denal feasts, from school holiday concerts, from embraces stroy. with neighbors and friends, and from cherished traditions of worship and fellowship here at church.

was not a practice that I took to naturally in Advent. night. We will have a pageant beamed directly into our Growing up, the Advent calendar was more of a foe than homes from our children "reporting from the field." We a friend... a series of doors that I would have very much will still sing songs (maybe louder than we might at liked to open much faster to get to all the richness of church, even!) of God's Glory. We will still hope to gath-Christmas. (And don't think I haven't noticed how many er outside, briefly, on Christmas Eve to share a candle, a Advent calendars have been adapted recently to provide prayer, and the good news for all peoples of Christ birth. treats each day, rather than focusing on the practice of Stay tuned for how you can join in those celebrations in waiting!)

Our ancestors have wisdom that they have sent us We wait... not because we are paralyzed by fear, or apathrough the years, though, like a message in a bottle, thetic to the needs of the world, but because our hungercracking and unfurling against the hard rocks of our long- ing for joy connects us and calls us as a people to be a ing. They tell us of their own struggles, and of the Spirit part of God's response to longing, to hunger, to need. We which strengthened them as they continued to wait for wait, especially this year, to show God's care and com-Christ's return, the Christmas that would fulfill all Christ- passion for all people, because while we long for our tramases. They tell us of how that practice of waiting drew ditions, our rejoicing, and the glow of this season... we their attention to where the world and their lives most refuse to let that bring pain, grief, and sorrow for others needed them to serve and to show the love they knew in in this time of pandemic. And, we wait because we have God's presence. They tell us how the assurance that, "light still shines" gave them strength to proclaim and call for the new heavens and new earth they longed for,

Advent is a season of waiting...

- ...we are waiting to worship together.
- ...we are waiting to embrace.
- ...we are waiting to sing together.
- ...we are waiting for the warm sense of rejoicing we know together in this season each year.

Even more, we are *still* waiting for justice and righteousness to be at home among us:

- ...still waiting for the blessings of food and shelter to be accessible to all.
- tem for all people, especially people of color.

Of course, this year, we are fasting for Advent, in so ...still waiting for modern day swords to be beat into

We are waiting. But we still proclaim the song that angels carried to shepherds, and that stars twinkled in a mathe-I don't know about you, but fasting (and, maybe, waiting) matics of the Spirit to wise ones who studied them in the the weeks to come.

We Wait (cont.)

the patience of those with the knowledge that God's promises have already been fulfilled: and that Christ is with us in darkness and in light.

- ...with hope.
- ...with peace.
- ...with joy.
- ...with love.

May we nurture all these gifts in one another. May you know their blessings. And, in the Christmas is still surely

coming, may you, all you love, and all of us... know the blessings of the Prince of Peace, alive and living in and among us.

From me, our staff, from all of us, I send prayers and wishes for Advent Blessings, and Merry Christmas to us all!





Worship Online

Sunday worship at **9:30 a.m.**Join us through our <u>Facebook page</u> (more interactive), or through our webpage

Morning Prayers

8:30 a.m. every Tuesday and Thursday
Join Pastor Geoff for a brief time of readings, prayer, and reflection watch weekly updates for Zoom link

Coffee hour on Sunday following Worship at 10:15 a.m.

And can be joined by accessing this link

Grab a cup and join your friends, family, and fellow members!





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? Reverend Geoff's sermons in both written and audio form from May 2019 to the present and can be viewed and/or heard on FCC's website at http://www.foresidechurch.org/index.php/category/sermons/ Or clicking on the logo to the left of this text box.



Your stewardship ministry decided that we needed a little Christmas outside because we can't be inside, so we lit the pine tree nearest the road. Here is Neils Knudsen up in the lift, cheered on by Carol Ward and Peter Cinelli. And the one string of colored lights is in memory of Sandy Holloway, who risked his life on ladders, stringing lights around our sign for the last two years.





~ Christmas Fair 2020 ~

TRIUMPH

This year our fair, Saturday Dec. 5^{th} , Noon -2 PM will be a no touch, drive-through, pick up your items and we-hope-they're-all-prepaid affair! If you are not paid up, please bring your check-book — we will not be able to access credit cards!

We all long for the days when we will be able to hug and chat

and linger over Peter's cheese strata.....

but that's not this year, folks!

Here are **three select items** you can drive through and pick up on Sat. Dec. 5th, between 12 and 2 PM. this year:





Your wreath! By now you will have ordered yours through Deb Gray. There may be a few extra, but we cannot promise. If we run out of wreathes, please trot down and patronize our friends at Skillin's.





Chili! Phil had 73(!) containers preordered and paid for, and some late-breaking orders ran the totals up to 95. There are exactly 5 extra turkey chilis. On top of that, the cooks want to retire from this gig – Anybody want to ease into this role? Phil and Lois may be available to supervise in 2021......

Deb Coyman's butter crunch! She has some preorders, but is making a few more bags, ½ lb. @ \$9 each. Order them through Deb Gray before they run out!!



<< Here's the butter crunch....

and

>>> here's the pâtissier,
Debra, hanging past lighted
trees!





~ Christmas Fair 2020 ~

(cont.)

No Cookies! This year we're having a cookie walk without the walk. Also without the cookies.





The old days – tables groaning with goodies!!

If you miss the fair and want to take a walk down memory lane at FCC, meet me on Zoom at **5:00 PM on December 5** for decades of fair photographs. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5422373728

And if any of you have photos worth sharing, please send them to me!! Let's have some fun....

Missing all of you!





UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS AT FCC

We are so pleased to announce the beginning of the "Zoom" Book

Club!" We will be meeting on the second Wednesday each month at 4:00 p.m. through and including the month of June 2021. **The first meeting is scheduled for December 9** and the first book will be <u>The Beekeeper's Apprentice</u> by Laurie King. You can join your fellow readers by <u>accessing this link</u>. By going to <u>this link</u>, you can download the upcoming meeting dates and chosen books into your calendar system. For more information, please contact Mimi Hinkel at 829-3578 or mimihinkel@gmail.com.

Sunday, After Service Coffee

Hosted by Carrie Penrose @ 10:15 a.m. each Sunday

Please join everyone

by accessing this link

Meeting ID: 815 4906 2078 ~

Passcode: 897054



The Women's Breakfast

Gathers via Zoom on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.

Please drop in and Join us!

(Meeting ID: 811 3379 8782 Passcode: 813778)



The Men's Breakfast

group meets every other Saturday. The next gathering is scheduled for November at 8:30 a.m.

Join the gents here (Zoom)

The Prayer Shawl Knitters

Meet every Tuesday, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

via Zoom through this link.

Please feel free to contact Carrie if you have any questions at 415-5513 or carriepenrose@gmail.com. This gathering is for knitters of all levels, including beginners!

(Meeting ID: 957 287 7496 and Passcode: 985716)



Are you missing the aroma of scones at the Church Fair? Perhaps you are missing Pete's scones at your zoom meeting? Fellowship and the Ventre's wants to bring them back into your life. Take a deep breath with us between the holidays and join Pete and Liz on Sunday December 6th at 5 p.m. for an online Zoom Scone lesson by accessing this link. We have provided the recipe (see link below, or contact office for hard copy or an email to your house), all you have to do is choose your favorite flavor, gather the ingredients and follow along. After the lesson, join us for a cup of tea while your scones bake for a little social time while the aroma of freshly baked scones fills your kitchen. We can all share what flavor we chose. Be creative and we all may leave with the an idea for our next batch. Pete's Scone Recipe

UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS AT FCC (cont.)



For more than two decades through a program called "Christmas Angels" the Foreside Community Church has generously provided of needy children. have worked with a variety of organizations including the Root Cellar, the Family Shelter, and the Maine Youth Center. But for the past several years all the children who

received gifts were from the families who depended on the Falmouth Food Pantry for food assistance. Because all the families from the Pantry are well known by the Pantry managers, the needs and sizes of the children could be personalized and assessed. Unfortunately, the pandemic has caused financial and emotional stress to a wide variety of people and has closed the FCC building and inperson services. Justice & Outreach continues to invite our congregation to help the "angels" in a different way. Starting in October the Pantry parents were contacted to give us information on the size coats needed by their children. J&O kick-started the fund with a donation of \$400 in the name of the congregation. Through weekly updates we invited the congregation to help with this project. Because of your generosity J&O has been able to provide 69 warm winter coats to kids in need. Because we are still receiving requests for children's jackets, J&O will continue to welcome donations for coats at this time.

If you would like to help, please get a check to the Foreside Community Church office with "Angels" marked in the memo line. As you consider this request think of Aseel, age 12, who's need for surgery this year left her parents struggling with new bills. Or Shekinnah, age 9, who is growing like "a weed" but her parents could not buy her a coat because they have both had cuts in work hours and may not be able to stay in their apartment.

As we further work on this version of Christmas Angels it is comforting to remember the generosity and kindness of so many in the church. You have contributed from your hearts for many years and we pray that you are all remaining healthy during this time. Thank you. For information contact Dorothy- dorothyb@maine.rr.com

Get to Know Our Youth!

Christmas gifts to dozens Members had expressed that they miss seeing (and hearing) our youngest community members at church, and suggested we feature some kids in Steeplenotes. We thought this was a great idea, and so invited participation from our children. The initial two interviews come to us from volunteers, Skye and Lindy Hayhurst Glover. This month we will hear from Skye, you can find her profile on page 10, and in January's Steeplenotes, we will read about Lindy. It was just the luck of the draw who is going first!

> January Steeplenotes **Deadline** Is FRIDAY, December 18

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Ideas to Bring some Holiday Cheer in the time of COVID

Finding it hard to get into the spirit of the Holiday? We understand. The Ministry of Fellowship wants to share some ideas of ways to get into the spirit of the season even when we cannot have in person fellowship. Below are a list of several COVID safe activities for each of you to consider as you have to give up some of your time honored traditions. While most of us resist change, particularly around the holidays, perhaps one of these will become a new tradition in the future. We hope you enjoy one of more of these ideas and then come to coffee hours and share your thoughts so perhaps a more reluctant member will try one of the choices you has enjoyed. Or better yet, come and share an idea that is not on this list. We will continue to share ideas during the Wednesday updates.

- Maine Narrow Gauge Railway- Holiday Express Tickets \$30.00- \$45.00/ Mainenarrowgauge.org
- Freeport Sparkle Weekend- December 4-13. Visit Freeport.com
- Kennebunk Christmas Prelude- TBD-Livestream-December 3rd/ ChristmsPrelude.com

- Coastal Maine Botanical Garden- Drive Thru. Tickets \$30.00 members/ \$40.00- nonmembers/ Mainegardens.org
- Trans-Siberian Orchestra- Livestream- December 18th 8 pm. Ticket price \$30.00/ Trans- Siberian.com
- PSO- Magic of Christmas- Livestream- December
 1- December 31st. Ticket prices \$10.00 and Up
- Portland Ballet- Great Russian Nutcracker Ballet-Livestream- Saturday- December 19th 8pm. \$ 24.99 and up / Nutcracker.com
- Winter Wonders Sandy Hill Farm- Eliot
 Maine. Walking trail through hardwood forest of
 holiday lights. Tickets \$12.50 Sandyhillmaine.com
- Portland Tree Lighting Virtual- "Tree Cam" -Event details not posted yet.
- NH- Ice Castles . Season will start Winter 2202-2021. Event details not posted yet/ Ice castles.com
- Gift of Lights NH Motor Speedway- 2.5 million twinkle lights - drive thru. \$25.00 a car. Event runs from 11/26-1/23/2021. NHMS.COM

During Advent the Falmouth Congregational **Church** will host a variety of in-person and virtual opportunities. FCC invites you to join us for Christmas programming including car caroling at 1PM on the 13th in our parking lot, small group prayer and study at 3PM on Wednesdays with Pastor Amelia, and Advent mini worship services at 5:30PM Thursday nights. For more information, please website see our www.falmouthcongregationalchurch.org/ or reach out to office officemanager@falmouthcongregationalchurch.org.

FCC Youth Profile of the Month

Skye Hayhurst Glover



Skye, a spunky 11 -year old member of our church, recently sat down for a Zoom interview with Sunday School Administrator, Laura Rodas. We began by talking about what she would want to share about herself with the church. Pets are clearly a big deal to the Hayhurst Glover family, and Skye shared that she has two pet rats, Cookie and Wonton, who she adores. While the family has 8 pets in all, the rats

are hers and her favorites!

Skye is quite a writer – and quite a reader, too. For her novels, she writes fantasy stories. Skye, her sister, and a friend of theirs are working on a novel where each of the girls writes the narrative of a different character. They then blend the narratives into one story, told from different perspectives. Skye shared that she has written volumes of stories and finds it really satisfying.

The pandemic has not been the easiest situation for Skye as it has made it so she can't spend time with friends as she normally would, playing inside or out on the trampoline in the ways that they used to do before. As tag is a favorite game, that's been hard to not do, too, but she's been focusing her play on dress-up and crafting fantastical stories instead.

Skye is modest and matter-of-fact. Asked about something she could teach someone else, she shared she could teach someone to swim, figure skate, or lots of interesting things about animals. All of this rang true – it turns out that Skye has been on a swim team and has been figure skating since age 5.

The environment is especially important to Skye, and a desire to take care of the planet, animals, and plants runs deep in this family. Skye, Lindy, and a few friends from school are developing a neighborhood club, "Earth's Helpers" focused on helping their community, donating to environmental and social justice causes. In fact, at their next meeting, they are making dolls and small figurines from natural sources (leaves, sticks, bits of logs from the ground, plus string and tape), and will bring these items around the neighborhood (socially distanced) on their wagon, asking for donations and offering the figurines as gifts for donating. They plan to split their raised funds between two causes –protection of the local

Underwood Forrest and also giving to a local BLM group.

When asked to reflect upon what she's good at, Skye shared that she's got a great imagination and is very creative. She also said that her ADHD is one of the best things that has happened to her, as it helps her to be creative and to have out of the box thinking. She is good at just being herself and following her own heart and interests. This ability to just be herself, and not focus on what other people think —to fly with the day, do what you do love, as she described it — clearly guides this charismatic child.

Skye's laisse faire style was exquisitely demonstrated when asked about advice she'd give to parents, generally. She expressed that parents should try to "fly with the day," noting that it can be really stressful for parents to take care of everyone, work from home or in new jobs, to try and get everything done perfectly all the time... so she encouraged parents to go with the flow and not get caught up with unrealistic expectations. For instance, not to worry about making a fancy dinner every night ("it's just one meal, just grab something from the freezer, who really cares?"). This seems like advice worth heeding for many of us in the trenches of having young families.

An incredibly joyful, down-to-earth and thoughtful child, I shared that I thought she had a lot of wisdom for a young person. Having heard this before, she told me how her parents had often said the same thing of her when she was little – that she was always coming up with sage advice and perspective – so much so that her parents even developed a nickname for her as a nod to her "old soul." Asked for parting wisdom, she implored readers to not have a grudge against rats and to try not to get freaked out about them. Not all rats have red eyes (only the white ones do), but even if they do have red eyes, rats are still amazing, smart and kind creatures... they get stereotyped a lot and sometimes mistreated

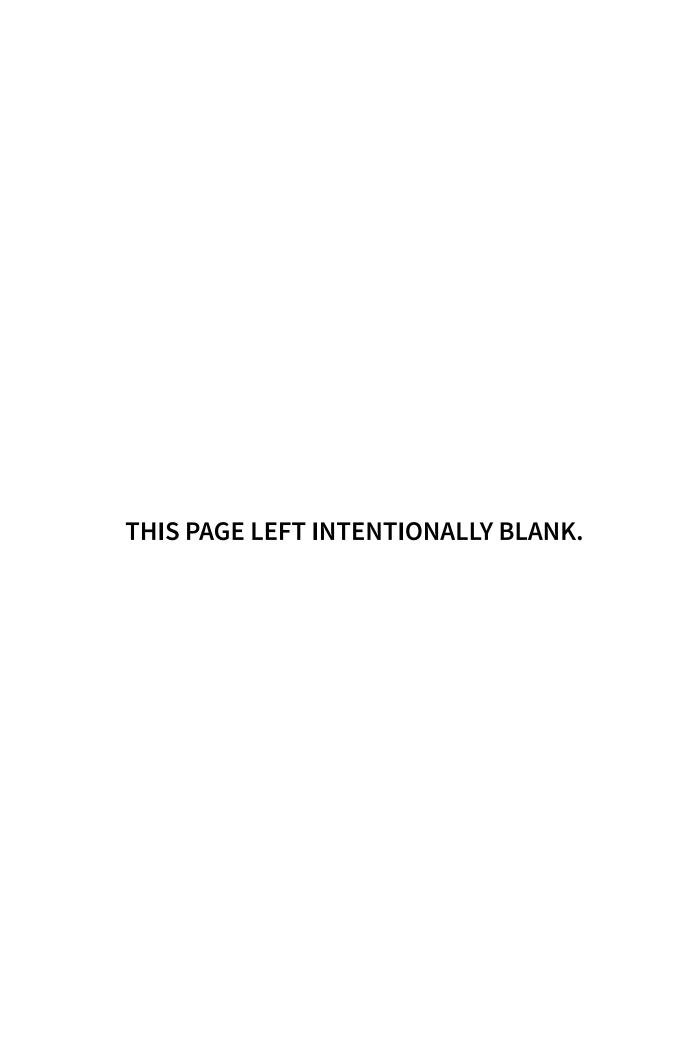
because of that. Skye encourages people to challenge their stereotypes of all kinds, and to try to see the individual or animal, their characteristics traits and how they are in the world, and not rely on preconceived ideas but instead to have an open mind... One never knows, such thinking awareness may lead to becoming a pet rat owner!



Be sure to check the calendar at Foreside Community Church's website ww.foresidechurch.org for any updates or changes.

December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		18:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details) 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Group 1-3:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters (see pg. 7 for details) 4:00 p.m. Staff Meeting	9:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	38:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details)	4	12 noon to 2:00 p.m. Christmas Fair No touch/pick up/drive thru!
9:30am Online Worship Second Sunday of Advent w/ Communion Coffee hr. to follow 5:00 p.m. Zoom Scones! (see pg. 7 for details)	7 7:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry Monthly Meeting	8 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details) 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Group 1-3:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters (see pg. 7 for details)	9 9:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details) 4:00 p.m. Zoom Book Club (see pg. 7 for details)	8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details)	11	8:30 am. Men's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)
9:30 am Online Worship Third Sunday of Advent w/ Pageant Coffee hr. to follow (see pg. 3 for link)	7:00 p.m. Governing Board Monthly Meeting	15 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details) 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Group 1-3:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters (see pg. 7 for details) 4:00 p.m. Staff Meeting	9:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details)	Deadline for January Steeplenotes material submittal	19
9:30 am Online Worship Fourth Sunday of Advent w/ Special Music Coffee hr. to follow (see pg. 3 for link)	21	8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (see pg. 3 for details) 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Group 1-3:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters (see pg. 7 for details)	9:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	5:00 p.m. brief outdoor worship, details to follow 8:00 p.m. Online lessons and carols	***************************************	8:30 am. Men's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)
9:30 am Online Worship First Sunday After Chris Coffee hr. to follow (see pg. 3 for link)	28	29 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Group 1-3:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters (see pg. 7 for details) 4:00 p.m. Staff Meeting	9:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	31		



Daily Lectionary Readings for December 2020

Tues. Dec. 1

Psalm 79

Micah 4:6-13

Revelation 18:1-10

Wed., Dec. 2

Psalm 79

Micah 5:1-5a

Luke 21:34-38

Thurs., Dec. 3

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Hosea 6:1-6

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Fri., Dec. 4

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Acts 11:19-26

Sat., Dec. 5

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Mark 11:27-33

Sun., Dec. 6

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2

Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

Mon., Dec. 7

Psalm 27

Isaiah 26:7-15

Acts 2:37-42

Tues., Dec. 8

Psalm 27

Isaiah 4:2-6

Acts 11:1-18

Wed., Dec. 9

Psalm 27

Malachi 2:10-3:1

Luke 1:5-17

Thurs., Dec. 10

Psalm 126

Habakkuk 2:1-5

Philippians 3:7-11

Fri., Dec. 11

Psalm 126

Habakkuk 3:2-6

Philippians 3:12-16

Sat., Dec. 12

Psalm 126

Habakkuk 3:13-19

Matthew 21:28-32

Sun., Dec. 13

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm 126 or

Luke 1:46b-55

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Mon., Dec. 14

Psalm 125

1 Kings 18:1-18

Ephesians 6:10-17

Tues., Dec. 15

Psalm 125

2 Kings 2:9-22

Acts 3:17-4:4

Wed., Dec. 16

Psalm 125

Malachi 3:16—4:6

Mark 9:9-13

Thurs., Dec. 17

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

2 Samuel 6:1-11

Hebrews 1:1-4

Fri., Dec. 18

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

2 Samuel 6:12-19

2 Samuel 0.12-18

Hebrews 1:5-14

Sat., Dec. 19

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Judges 13:2-24

John 7:40-52

Sun., Dec. 20

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55 or

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

Mon., Dec. 21

10011., Dec. 21

Luke 1:46b-55 1 Samuel 1:1-18

Hebrews 9:1-14

Tues., Dec. 22

Luke 1:46b-55

1 Samuel 1:19-28

Hebrews 8:1-13

Wed., Dec. 23

Luke 1:46b-55

1 Samuel 2:1-10 Mark 11:1-11

Thurs., Dec. 24

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Fri., Dec. 25

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]

John 1:1-14

Sat., Dec. 26

Psalm 148

Jeremiah 26:1-9, 12-15

Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60

Sun., Dec. 27

Isaiah 61:10—62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Mon., Dec. 28

Psalm 148

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Matthew 2:13-18

Tues., Dec. 29

Psalm 148

Isaiah 49:5-15 Matthew 12:46-50

Wed., Dec. 30 Psalm 148

Proverbs 9:1-12

2 Peter 3:8-13

Thurs., Dec. 31

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Psalm 8

Revelation 21:1-6a

Matthew 25:31-46



A Newsletter of

The Foreside Community Church

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