

The Foreside Community Church, UCC
United Church of Christ

December 2021



The Manger
Christ Born in Us

*Connecting
to God*

*Nurturing
Community*

*Discovering
how our Lives
Make a
Difference*

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Notes from Pastor Geoff

The Manger: Christ Born in Us

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.*

*We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings
tell;*

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

In the prayers of mystics and in the words of this old carol is one of the deepest hopes of our faith: that God has come to dwell in and with us in human life, and hence, has come to transform it. In Advent, we tell the unlikely story in this season of just that, God being born into life in a vulnerable child, in a manger (a feed trough!), in a stable... we have told the story so many times that sometimes we forget the power of what it symbolizes. So, in this coming season of Advent, we'll be meditating on "The Manger." We'll wonder together at what this might invite us to "prepare room" in our inner life for Christ to be born in us.

Week 1 - The Stable Place

The Holy Family finds their way to a place of safety for the birth to come: a stable. It is an improvised space, not one you would think of for housing God, and yet it does, even in a dangerous and uncertain time and world.

Just so, I begin in prayer for you to find a "shelter space" in space and/or time amidst this season. Come and join us here at church for worship or activities. Give yourself an extra 5 or 10 minutes to linger with the morning, or the evening. Remember that the Child of God did not even sweat four walls as a requirement for a place of shelter. Any "place" you can carve out provides hope for a holy encounter.

Week 2 - A Manger Frame

Carpenters and poets understand the value of a frame. A frame—a structure—gives us something to hold on to, and something that can hold us. It both limits us and stretches us.

Jesus was laid down not in a carved and gilded crib made for him, but from rough timbers tacked together to hold the hay for animals. What spiritual frame might you give yourself in this Advent?

What practice might you invite yourself into? It could be as simple as a silent prayer for God to be with you and others each time you enter into a building... It could be a commitment to read a poem each morning. It could be

a new practice of prayer or meditation. It could be the commitment to observe a few minutes of quiet each night. Remember that the manger which held Jesus was pretty old and rickety by anyone's imagination, so if you feel a little unsteady in this practice, that's just fine! Let it shape and support you in a growing peace.

Week 3 - Resting in Hay

What does it mean that the first bedding for a new-born Christ was hay for the feeding of livestock?

One reading could be that we are called to make a place for Christ in the gifts of life and creation. So, be sure that you are fed this season: by things which nourish you, that give you joy, that strengthen you for the journey. Like a tired child, I think so many of us are so exhausted and depleted we're not fully aware of it. What simple gifts can you share with yourself? Can you rest in? You might consider joining for an outdoor pageant, sharing in the joy of our young people in this season.

Week 4 - Wrapped in Song

Finally, we remember that our tradition has interpreted so much of Jesus's mother Mary's thoughts and reflections on the wonder of his arrival in song. In this way, we can imagine that the final gift of Jesus's birth was the love and lullaby of his mother. There are songs, prayers, words, and traditions of this season. Let their "song" wrap you as you give thanks for the blessings of those who share them with us, and tenderly mourn those no longer with us. So, come and share in some of the music of this season in our church life: on Music Sunday, at Carols and Cocoa outside, or sing along from wherever you are!

We can recognize that these gifts of the Manger invite us into deeper living in our own lives, but also a commitment to make them more available to others and the wider world as well. There are surely places in this world where hope, peace, joy, and love are in short supply... where the holy might not be welcomed in: sheltered, supported, comforted, and wrapped in love... And yet... Christ is born in us again, anew, this season. May you receive this gift—and share it!

Sending prayers for Advent blessings for you... From me, From our staff, From our leadership, and from this gathered community of Christ.





Advent and Christmas Worship 2021

At this time registration is closed for these services, unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, December 5 - 9:30 a.m. - Second Sunday of Advent, with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 12 - 9:30 a.m. - Third Sunday of Advent, with Outdoor Christmas Pageant (*No registration required for pageant, all are welcome at 10am!*)

Sunday, December 19 - 9:30 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. - Fourth Sunday of Advent, with Cantata

Friday, December 24 - 3:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve

Lessons and Carols - There will be an Online Only service of Lessons and Carols available on Christmas Eve for those who would like a share in a service at any time!

Sunday, December 26 - 9:30 a.m. - First Sunday of Christmas - register at www.foresidechurch.org.

Sunday, January 2 - 9:30 a.m. - Second Sunday of Christmas, with Holy Communion - register at www.foresidechurch.org. The Rev. Charles Erb will preach and preside.



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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Reverend Geoff.

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/>.

Don't miss the FORESIDE FAIRS
Catch the Christmas Spirit!!
Saturday, December 4

9am - 12noon Saint Mary's Church

12 - 2PM OUTSIDE! Foreside Community Church

FCC rain date Sunday December 5, same time and place!

**Saint
Mary's
Church**



43
Foreside
Road

Holiday Décor & Gifts
 Jewelry & other Treasures
 Soup, Cookies, Bake Sale,
 and MORE!
 Come Sparkle with us!

Foreside Community Church
 340 Foreside Road



Buy a gift or festive food
 Caroling to set the mood
 Vintage décor, greens galore
 Silent auction and much more.

O come! O come!
 Rain date, Dec 5, 12-2



Enter special drawing at Skillin's by passing in special cards from both fairs.

From the Music Team *Christmas Edition!*

We've circled right around the Sun again and made it back to my favorite musical time of the year. Ding! Dong! Ding! Dong! Christmas bells are ringing! The power of music comes to bear this season unlike any other. Sure, you may have the yearly rotation of summer rock anthems, you may have just attended another Spencer and The Walrus Beatles tribute (includes participating music ministry team members) and heard new guest artists bring a different light to old familiars, but we have powerful responses to the music we listen to during this Christmas season that is hard to match any other time of the year. From the feeling of a warm fire and hearing The Christmas Song in the background. Baking pies and cookies and other delicacies while listening to The Nutcracker (as performed by Duke Ellington in my case). How about going to the Magic of Christmas and seeing the different decorations on the instruments while they play Sleigh Ride. Perhaps it was an intimate moment with someone in particular, being warm, and the notes of Christmas Time Is Here. This music and much much more illicit strong memories. Perhaps these memories are more tender than some, perhaps others are the happiest moments you've experienced. Enjoy your journey and listen on.

A few notes for our Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany music journey at FCC:



The Portland Trumpet Ensemble at FCC!

Herald the holiday season with the bright sounds of the Portland Trumpet Ensemble. A festive concert that will be the perfect addition (and break from the madness) with a lively program that includes works by Bryan, Torme, Beile, Flecha, Anderson and many ore. So please join us for a concert of seasonal favorites as the PTE takes the sanctuary stage on December 11th. Look out for notices from the office as details are finalized!



Music Sunday Notes

I have been busy rehearsing the choirs (vocal and bell) and we are working on a special program of carols written by the American jazz musician Alfred Burt. Now don't let the word jazz put you off. These aren't stylized in the traditions of swing, bebop, or anything like that. These lovely carols pull from the great tradition of carol writing, ancient, intimate, textual, with hints of modernity. For Alfred, writing carols was a family tradition his father had begun, and after having graduation college studying music, Alfred took over the composing while using his father's, and family friend's, texts. These carols were sent as Christmas cards. These cards would have the text and music as well as artwork. Ultimately there were 15 carols written by Alfred before his untimely death. The Star Carol, which you will hear, was completed just days before he passed away and would be the last of the carols until Alfred's grandniece revived the family tradition. So please join us, your FCC music team, on this caroling journey and enjoy the story of old as told by the Burt family.



The 12 Days of Christmas

As part of my mission on keeping the musical forces feeling connected, perhaps a thank you to their hard work and perseverance through the FCC closure last year, I took the music crew on a 12 Days of Christmas musical tour. I provided a daily dose of listening pleasure (I hope!) and some thoughts during the days leading up to Epiphany. This year, I would like to open this musical Epiphany Calendar to you, our congregation. If you are at all interested in receiving 12 emails, one per day following Christmas, are able to comfortably open a hyperlink, then I would love for you to sign up. If you are keen on keeping the Christmas season going, please send an email to tlaven-bein@foresidechurch.org and type FCC Musical Epiphany Calendar in **the subject line**.



UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS AT FCC



A few Ideas for the Holiday Season!

Wendi Maynard, Fellowship Ministry

Depending on how busy you are and what your affinity for large gatherings are, Fellowship has put together a short list of things that are happening in our neck of the woods. Perhaps you wish to add one of these to your social calendar:

- * **Freeport Sparkle Weekend** - 12/3- 12/12- Free
- * **L.L.Bean Northern Lights Display** - 11/23-12/31- Free
- * **Portland Museum of Art**- Fridays 4-8pm- Free
- * **A Victorian Nutcracker**- Merrill Auditorium 12/18-12/23- Variable ticket pricing
- * **Coastal Maine Botanical Garden - Gardens Aglow - Driving Tour** 11/26 -1/1/22—\$30-\$40 per car
- * **Magic of Christmas** - Merrill Auditorium or Digital Concert option \$10 and up 12/10-12/19
- * **Maine State Ballet -The Nutcracker** - Merrill Auditorium 11/26-12/5-Variable ticket pricing
- * **Old Port December Walking Tour** 12/4, 12/11, 12/18 - 11 am- 1 pm- \$39
- * **Victoria Mansion** - 11/26-1/9/22- Variable ticket pricing
- * **The Polar Express** - Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. and Museum 11/26-12/23- \$31.00 and Up
- * **Holiday Arts and Craft Show** - James E Banks Sr. Exposition (Former Portland Expo)- December 4th 9am - 4pm. December 5th 10am - 3pm. \$ 2 Admission
- * **Maine Celebration of Lights - Drive Thru Light Show** - Cumberland Fairgrounds. 11/26-1/2/22. \$ 20 and Up



Still time to stop by the "Auction Table" downstairs and make a few bids on an array of excellent gift items. Chili and wreathes still available, just contact the office (781-5880).

Fire Pit Gathering a Great Success! (L. Ventre, Fellowship Co-Chair)



Do you like your marshmallow golden brown or charred black? That was one of the things we learned about each other at the wonderful gathering around John and Corey Goodrich's fire pit. The evening was beautiful and the weather was perfect, unlike the planned date of Friday. Our hosts went above and beyond with lovely lights

around the area, extra heaters, popcorn and nuts along with your choice of beverage. We all were able to reconnect in person with members of our community we have not seen in person for months and months. Lots of great conversation was had as we each milled around the fire

roasting our marshmallows. It sure was great to see Lisa and Jay Nash and hear about their trip. We got to catch up with Sally and hear all about her girls, Hannah and Sarah. It was nice to



see Carolyn Murray and Deb Reifsnnyder in person and get to know them a little better. We were all happy to have a chance to spend some time with Geoff and

Julia. Lots of laughs were had. Everyone there agreed this was so much fun that we are thinking about doing it again this winter.



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



Christmas Fair Creations

During the fall, a group of devoted mosaic fans and artists met to complete a variety of stunning mosaic pieces. Kathie McCatherin, who owns a small craft business called Sweet Piece Designs, led the group. A passion for breaking things and putting them back together were, of course, prerequisites for participation! We all enjoyed the fellowship, conversation and new ways to express our creative passions. We will be holding more mosaic workshops in 2022 for those who missed this opportunity.

Also, stay tuned for more craft and art-making offerings and workshops as we prepare, once again, for our church fair in 2022. If you consider yourself "creative" with a flair for projects and design, we want you! If you see yourself as a person who is "not creative" we want, you! Kathie will lead workshops to complete various projects that require no special skills OR you can bring your sewing machine, your own special projects or whatever you are working on to join in the fellowship and conversation with fellow creators. More details to follow!

The Falmouth Food Pantry, The Pastor's Discretionary Fund, and St. Mary's Join Resources

This past fall a Falmouth woman was found to be in urgent need of repairs at her home. She is elderly, living on a very limited social security and her home was not safe due to unsafe appliances. Foreside Community Church and The Episcopal of Saint Mary joined with the Falmouth Food Pantry to provide safe equipment for Sue. In addition to a completely new hot water system, her furnace was cleaned and made ready for the heating season.

Dear Friends,

The LP hot water tank in my home was an antique that could not be repaired. Due to the extreme cost of liquid petroleum and the malfunction of the tank, I used hot water sparingly for many years. Since it was "on demand" when water was called for, streams of hot water would spew out under pressure into a large tub and dragged nine feet across the cellar and dumped into a well...daily.

At times I boiled water for dishes to avoid stressing the valves and hearing a "splash" in the tub. I thought "getting by" was good enough until Dotty's visit to my

home and assured me this was not safe.

As of Friday, October 22, a new electric hot water tank has been installed and is the newest member of my humble home dubbed my "testimony tank."

Thank you for your immediate and generous donations of funds, of time, energy, and actions! Your gift has improved daily life (in my home) and posted at my kitchen faucet is a note with your names in Sharpie marker as to never forget each one of you for supplying a "life improvement gift" without hesitation. You truly are earthen vessels with heavenly contents!

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world...indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

May the blessings you have bestowed upon me be returned to you tenfold.

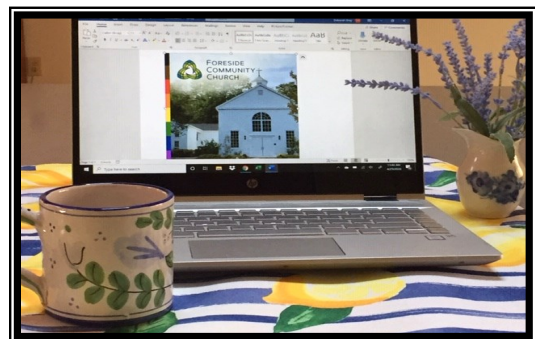
*Thank you,
Sue*

THE WOMEN'S BREAKFAST IS BACK!

Starting on **Wednesday, December 1st at 9:00 a.m.**, and going forward, every week on Wednesday, Deborah Gray is back hosting this gathering. If you can stay for just one cup, or your schedule allows the full meal, please **"Zoom"** in and join the female members and friends of FCC. **Fill up and catch up!**

You may also link up by going to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85920636293?pwd=c0xxblhzdkRmbjNRcjRBakNjZW4vQT09>
Meeting ID: 859 2063 6293 and Passcode: 913726.

FYI contact Deborah at 443-0427.



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



Stewardship Ministry Updates



Stan Reed, engineer and husband of Kathy Hillman-Reed, tackled our overflowing gutter on the back of the church, which was causing water to leak into the fellowship hall during heavy rains. Turns out a sharp u-shaped bend connecting one roof to another had accumulated an impervious gooey clog of sticks, leaves and

acorns. Stan removed the

bend, replaced it with a straight piece of gutter, and the problem is solved. Hooray!

Stan is also a master craftsman and has made a beautiful turned, covered wooden box for the Christmas Fair silent auction. Please be sure to consider a bid for this priceless, one of a kind item.



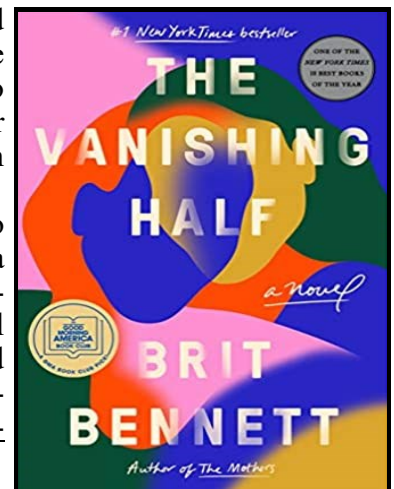
FCC Book Club Update

It was great to meet in person again in November (albeit masked and distanced with windows open). Seven of us had a great discussion of *A Brother's Blood* by Michael White. There certainly were many layers to unpeel in this mystery, and I think we touched on all of them. After much discussion, we decided to continue to meet at the same time inside, but Liz Ventre has volunteered to try to set up a Zoom connection for those who can't meet in person at the same time. Hopefully that will allow all to attend together. **Our next book will be *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett on Wednesday December 15 at 4:00 p.m.** Summary follows:

"The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Many years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect?"

Weaving together multiple strands and generations of this family, from the Deep South to California, from the 1950s to the 1990s, Brit Bennett produces a story that is at once a riveting, emotional family story and a brilliant exploration of the American history of passing. Looking well beyond issues of race, *The Vanishing Half* considers the lasting influence of the past as it shapes a person's decisions, desires, and expectations, and explores some of the multiple reasons and realms in which people sometimes feel pulled to live as something other than their origins." (from Goodreads)

All are welcome to attend any meeting for a fun and friendly discussion. We love all perspectives! Happy and safe holiday wishes to everyone! FMI: mimi-hinkel@gmail.com



December

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

Eric Lacombe - 1

Priscilla Simm - 4

Lucas Rodas - 5

William Rodas - 5

Colleen Hutchinson - 7

John Bischof - 17

Mary Ryder - 27

Carol Ward - 29

Mark Munson - 30



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



(Still...) Calling all strong Men, Women and Youth.....

WE NEED YOU!!!

(L. Ventre)

Want to give back to our church community but don't have a lot of free time? Have so many meetings now that you just can't face another? Have some muscles that need to be put to good use and not just at the gym? Want to be appreciated by many in our community? If you answered yes to any or all of these questions, then join Dr. "J" Goodrich, Pastor Chuck Erb, Pete Ventre, and Christina, the first volunteers to join the **FCC Muscle Brigade**.

Fellowship is hoping to expand this list of members and friends who live close to the church who would be willing to be on a call list for our committee as well as any other committee, ministry, or group in the church who need help in setup for events. Christina will keep the list, so it is available to all. Many times, it is a very quick thing but impossible for those of us who are organizing the events due to our physical condition or age. If you volunteer, as a need for strength arises another church member will call you to ask for help. They should be able to give you a time to show up and about how long it will take to set up. You just have to show up and carry and/or move things. Normally there are plenty of people around after an event to help pick up so I suspect this will be mostly set up.



If you are willing to help us, please email Christina with your name, email address and phone number (csklarz@foresidechurch.org). Give any times that just will not work for you so we don't waste your time or ours with a call.

The Men's Breakfast

Meets every other Saturday.

**The next virtual gatherings
are scheduled for
December 4th and 18th
@ 8:30 a.m.**

Join the gents here ([Zoom](#))

Spotlight on FCC Youth

Youth group members Skye and Lindy Glover and a friend thought of, and started a volunteer project/fundraiser for a group they have called "Earth's Helpers."

The young women will be drawing and hand-painting holiday cards, and with each donation received, will personally deliver the cards to seniors at local nursing homes. Then, all the funds gathered will be donated to Portland area organizations that support individuals or families in need at the holidays. Supporting this project does 3 things; it encourages these fledgling activists who really want to make the world a better place, it supports local nonprofits, and it brings some light to seniors who may feel isolated during this holiday season. For more information on this amazing community endeavor, and to donate, please go to <https://gofund.me/4d8e6816>



Sisters Skye and Lindy pictured with close friend Nico take time out from card crafting for a little skiing.



If you would like to recycle those **free 2022 calendars** you get in the mail, Jill Fox is hoping to collect 150 for food pantry clients to be able to include one in each home delivery box in January. Feel free to bring them into the church office or leave them in the Lucite mail slot outside the office door. Jill will pick up afterwards. **What a useful, and green gift!!**

January Steeplenotes

Deadline Is Friday,

December 17, 2021

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



The Foreside Community Church Assists the Nash Family with an annual Labor/Trip of Love

Jay and Lisa Nash recently returned from The Pine Ridge Reservation, the home of Oglala Lakota tribe located in South Dakota. Traveling in their own vehicle on a trip they have been making for the past four years, they carried with them donations of toiletries, socks, and underwear collected from members and friends of the FCC. Also included in the conveyed goods, donations of winter quilts and coats from the Cobblestone Quilting Group. The drive took 4 days and time spent on the reservation was about 3 days.

These much needed donations were in support of the approximately 300 youth involved in the "Bears" project, whose primary focus is suicide prevention of tribal children from birth to their early 20's. And these needs are extremely great with the percentage of teen suicide in this population 150% higher than the rest of the United States. The grateful response by the reservation coordinators, volunteers, and representatives of the tribe when Jay and Lisa arrived was overwhelming at the sheer volume of supplies brought. Multiple thanks were extended to be returned to the FCC church.

The reservation has recently purchased two buildings, one to be developed into a library, and the second to accommodate youth whose parents may be absent from their day to day existence. Jay and Lisa will continue to bring support to the establishment of these two projects, including identifying the next level of need, and then planning a fifth trip next year with hopes of bringing further provisions and backing.



(pictured left) Tiny McCrory, co-leader of the Bears project, is one of the life skill instructors, seen here in the training kitchen.

(pictured right) Eileen Janis also serves as a co-leader to the Bears project, seen here outside of the mini restaurant associated with the training kitchen.



(pictured left) The Wounded Knee Memorial lists the names of the tribe members killed in the Wounded Knee Massacre, also known as the Battle of Wounded Knee, in which nearly three hundred Lakota people were slaughtered by soldiers of the United States Army. The multitude of colored banners and ribbons are left as honorariums to the fallen.
(pictured right) Another view of the actual Wounded Knee battle site.



UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)***Continuing the Conversation on Church Signage***

In the past two months, many of us have thoughtfully considered church signage and how it reflects The Foreside Community Church's identity as a congregation. The Governing Board received a request from a member to place a Black Lives Matter sign at the church entrance to demonstrate our solidarity with those who condemn hatred and racism. We felt that any decision about such a statement should be made in a deliberative way through a broader discussion with the congregation, so members and friends of FCC were invited to share their views during a Zoom discussion in October.

We learned that this is a complex issue. We heard support for displaying a BLM sign, and we heard reservations about the political overtones; we heard an appeal to stand as allies in the BLM movement, and we heard concerns that making such a stand was not broad enough; we heard that we are sensitive to wrongs being committed, and we heard reminders to align our actions and relationships with congregational statements. All agreed that we want FCC to be known as a welcoming community of faith, as well as thoughtful people whose actions reflect that faith. Continuing this conversation will help inform our decision about signage.

We'll begin by getting comfortable with the language we use to bear witness to our beliefs. As one Zoom participant noted, "The church is a welcoming, spiritual organization guided by the Bible. Jesus' teachings lead us somewhere." The United Church of Christ has expressed what it means to be "unapologetically Christian" in nine bold statements, and has helpfully provided its member churches with banners and other resources to define to the world what the denomination is about:

- * Protect the Environment
- * Care for the Poor
- * Embrace diversity
- * Reject racism
- * Forgive often
- * Love God
- * Fight for the powerless
- * Share earthly and spiritual resources
- * Enjoy this life

Beginning in the season of Epiphany, Geoff plans to explore each of these statements during worship, and incorporate them into our overall messaging, including our website, Sunday Bulletin, and exterior signage. The statements are meant to invite dialogue----to be not only a statement to the world but a challenge to us to live those things.

Deb Gray
Moderator

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



Proposed Beginner Handbell Group Kicks Off!

Do you enjoy listening to handbells? Are you ever inspired to try ringing? If so, the Music Ministry is interested in hearing from you regarding the formation of a beginner's handbell group. The objectives are:

- 1) to have **FUN**;
- 2) to provide **FELLOWSHIP** with others who like to make music;
- 3) to **EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN!**

Read on...



We're pleased to report that the Beginner Handbell Group is in the formative stage and consists of four ringers besides the director, Debbie Reifsnnyder. A tentative schedule has been set to practice on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary, beginning on Nov. 18. If you haven't had a chance to contact the church with your interest there is still time to do so at any point. No ringing experience is necessary! Only a desire to feed your heart and soul and brain with music. If interested, please contact the church office (781-5880) or send Debbie an email at gailekieh@gmail.com.



A big shout out to our Christmas elves Carol W & Debra C for bringing in the holidays with the stringing and lighting of FCC's tree.

Beautifully done!!



COMMUNITY UPDATES

*Learning to See As Mystics See II***A class/group experience****The Revs. Ellie Mercer and Bill Gregory, guides**

Six, two-hour sessions on Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. beginning on Epiphany, January 6, 2022, and depending on weather, concluding by the end of February.

Location: Chapel at The Yarmouth First Parish Church, UCC, 116 Main St, Yarmouth, ME 04096

Group size, determined by Covid precautions, will be at least ten nor more than fifteen plus guides.

Ellie and Bill's goal in offering these gatherings is to continue their own spiritual journeys and assist others on theirs. To get a flavor of our thinking, we like Richard Rhor's sentence, "*A mystic is one who has moved from mere belief systems or belonging to an actual inner experience.*" Our experiences are teaching us that learning to see the Sacred frees us to love ourselves, others and the Earth and empowers us to be instruments of love and justice in the world.

The first offering of this class was in 2014. Ellie and Bill are standing on the same spiritual foundations but seven years later we find ourselves wondering what the Spirit is asking of us as we navigate issues related to aging and loss. Being with others discovering the power of Love and seeking to see the Sacred in a rapidly changing world gives us strength to be who God intends us to be.

Our spiritual tradition is Christian. An aspect of the class will be to share what we see as the inclusive heart of Christianity in its stories, symbols, and practice. It is an understanding that has opened us to value and affirm the mystical heart of the major faith traditions of the world's cultures.

Gatherings will begin with prompts from Ellie and Bill, stories of their journeys and sharing of resources. They will also contain sharing one on one, in small groups and as a group of the whole.

Members are asked to attend regularly, read from suggested resources and, if one chooses, meet one on one between classes.


There is no fee for the class.

To inquire and/or apply, please email

Bill at wgregor1@maine.rr.com or Ellie at ellie.mercer0@gmail.com

December 2021

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	2 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 9 a.m. Beginner Bells	3 Men's Breakfast (see pg. 9 for details) Noon to 2 p.m. The Fair!!!	4 Men's Breakfast (see pg. 9 for details)
5 9:30 a.m. Hybrid Worship 2nd Advent with Communion	6 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship	7 9 a.m. Tues Morn Book Club 1 p.m. Knitting Group-lrg elsm 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 to 9 p.m. Large AA Group 7:30 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	8 9 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	9 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 9 a.m. Beginner Bells	10 2:30 p.m. <i>FCC Trumpet Concert in sanctuary</i>	11 Fellowship Hall closed to traffic to allow for total floor cleaning and waxing.
12 9:30 a.m. Hybrid Worship 3rd Advent w/ outdoor Christmas Pageant @ 10 a.m. - No Registration Required!	13 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 7 p.m. Stewardship Mnthly Mtg.	14 1 p.m. Knitting Group-lrg elsm 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 to 9 p.m. Large AA Group 7:30 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	15 9 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details) 4 p.m. FCC Book Club (see pg. 8 for details)	16 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 9 a.m. Beginner Bells	17 Deadline for January <i>Steplenotes</i> material submittal	18 Men's Breakfast (see pg. 9 for details)
19 9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Worship 4th Advent <i>with Cantata</i> <i>4pm Family Church Carols & Cocoa</i>	20 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 7 p.m. Governing Bld. Mnthly Mtg.	21 1 p.m. Knitting Group-lrg elsm 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal <u>TBD</u> 6:45 to 9 p.m. Large AA Group 7:30 p.m. Bell Rehearsal <u>TBD</u>	22 9 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	23 8 a.m. Advent Morning Worship 9 a.m. Beginner Bells	24 <i>See page 3 for all Christmas Eve Service times</i>	
26 9:30 a.m. Hybrid Worship	<div>Church offices closed in observance of Christmas Holiday leave.</div>		29 9 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details)	30 9 a.m. Beginner Bells	31	

Daily Lectionary Readings for December 2021

**Wed., Dec. 1**

Psalm 90
Isaiah 1:24-31
Luke 11:29-32

Thurs., Dec. 2

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 3:5-12
Philippians 1:12-18a

Fri., Dec. 3

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 3:13-18
Philippians 1:18b-26

Sat., Dec. 4

Luke 1:68-79
Malachi 4:1-6
Luke 9:1-6

Sun., Dec. 5

Second Sunday of Advent
Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

Mon., Dec. 6

Psalm 126
Isaiah 40:1-11
Romans 8:22-25

Tues., Dec. 7

Psalm 126
Isaiah 19:18-25
2 Peter 1:2-15

Wed., Dec. 8

Psalm 126
Isaiah 35:3-7
Luke 7:18-30

Thurs., Dec. 9

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 6:1-8
2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Fri., Dec. 10

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 8:4-12
2 Corinthians 9:1-15

Sat., Dec. 11

Isaiah 12:2-6
Amos 9:8-15
Luke 1:57-66

Sun., Dec. 12

Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Mon. Dec. 13

Isaiah 11:1-9
Numbers 16:1-19
Hebrews 13:7-17

Tues., Dec. 14

Isaiah 11:1-9
Numbers 16:20-35
Acts 28:23-31

Wed., Dec. 15

Isaiah 11:1-9
Micah 4:8-13
Luke 7:31-35

Thurs., Dec. 16

Psalm 80:1-7
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Hebrews 10:10-18

Fri., Dec. 17

Psalm 80:1-7
Isaiah 42:10-18
Hebrews 10:32-39

Sat., Dec. 18

Psalm 80:1-7
Isaiah 66:7-11
Luke 13:31-35

Sun., Dec. 19

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55 or
Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Mon., Dec. 20

Psalm 113
Genesis 25:19-28
Colossians 1:15-20

Tues., Dec. 21

Psalm 113
Genesis 30:1-24
Romans 8:18-30

Wed., Dec. 22

Psalm 113
Isaiah 42:14-21
Luke 1:5-25

Thurs., Dec. 23

Luke 1:46b-55
Micah 4:6-8
2 Peter 1:16-21

Fri., Dec. 24

Christmas Eve
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

Sat., Dec. 25

Christmas Day
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Sun., Dec. 26

First Sunday after Christmas
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Mon., Dec. 27

Psalm 148
Proverbs 8:32-36
John 21:19b-24

Tues., Dec. 28

Psalm 148
Isaiah 54:1-13
Revelation 21:1-7

Wed., Dec. 29

Psalm 147:12-20
1 Chronicles 28:1-10
1 Corinthians 3:10-17

Thurs., Dec. 30

Psalm 147:12-20
2 Chronicles 1:7-13
Mark 13:32-37

Fri., Dec. 31

New Year's Eve
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46



STEEPLENOTES

A Newsletter of

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