

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

March 2023



*Connecting
to God*

*Nurturing
Community*

*Discovering
how our Lives
Make a
Difference*

THE FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH, UCC
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PASTORAL NOTES	2
WORSHIPPING IN THE SANCTUARY & SCHEDULING WITH PASTOR GEOFF	3
UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, & UPCOMING EVENTS	
Proposed Memorial Garden Updates	4
The Foreside Book Club Announces Next Book	5
The Bucket Brigade Marches Forward!	5
Seekers Group Continues w/ An Invitation for Lent	5
Mbabaali School Updates	6
Green Team Continues "Four Ways to Love the Earth" Series	6
March Birthday Greetings	7
Men's & Women's March Breakfast Dates	7
April SteepleNotes' Deadline Date	7
BELLS OF CASCO BAY still calling for novices and recruits	8
AND BEFORE YOU GO - FCC Outreach Ministry Continues to Amaze!	9
COMMUNITY EVENTS - St. Mary Schola Lenten Event	10
MARCH 2023 CALENDAR-AT-A-GLANCE	11
DAILY LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MARCH 2023	13

Pastoral Notes

New Dimensions on the Way

For as long as I have called the United Church of Christ home, this hymn has felt like our unofficial theme. I've been thankful for its encouragement to be God's people on a journey when much is changing around us, for the beauty and the face of Christ that we find in the diversity of life, and for the surety that though we are a people on the move, we are still a people "at home" with God. I have been thankful for those gifts and more in the last month, as I've heard it in the light of our recent All-Church Conversation, "Why Church?"

On Saturday, February 11th, 45 members and friends of FCC gathered on the campus of St. Mary's to talk and listen and listen together for where we might be being led as God's people on the journey here at FCC. Among us were those grounded in this community of faith for over 30 years, and our most recent new members who covenanted with us in January. We had some faithful folks with a collection of over 80 birthday cards and one who just collected her driver's permit!

Above all, it was a joy to gather together, to share conversations and experiences of our church's life, to see the energy and commitment that we share for the ministry of the church, and indeed, to break bread together! (Thanks to fabulous baking from Jill Fox and Phil Gleason, and a delicious soup from Pete and Liz Ventre!)

We were graciously facilitated by our Associate Conference Minister, the Rev. Alexis Fuller-Wright, who took as our text for the day Exodus 13:17–22, which reminded us that while the people of Israel were in the wilderness,

The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

There has been much of the past years that has felt like wilderness, and much that is uncertain, still. We considered how we might look and move towards those pillars of God's presence, even as the longer term direction may yet be unclear.

We spent time together telling the stories of how we first experienced Foreside Community Church: what drew us in and felt like God was calling us to this faith home. We reflected on those stories in which we have felt proud of our community; and felt the Holy Spirit especially alive among us. We challenged each other to imagine the impact we dream our congregation having as we live out the unique gifts and ministries of this body of Christ. Throughout, we heard several themes developing, including:

- Supporting Spiritual Formation
- Gathering Our Lives and Sharing our Stories
- Public Witnessing / "Making Our Christianity Visible"

*In the midst of new dimensions,
in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples
wandering in their separate ways?
God of rainbow, fiery pillar,
leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey,
now and evermore...*

- Julian Rush, *In the Midst of New Dimensions*

Pastoral Notes (cont.)

So what happens now? To begin, there is more listening to do. We recognize not all our members could join us on the 11th and would like to hear from different demographics and groups of the church not heard from on that day. Additionally, stay tuned for some creative ways to share notes and reflections in our Fellowship space during coffee hour.

At the end of our time together in February, those present who were willing joined "Action Planning Groups" that will be tasked with considering possible next step activities and projects aligned with our developing themes. We'll invite others to join as they feel called to this work. Those groups will report back to the Governing Board in the spring with recommendations as we make plans together for this next part of our journey.

As always, it is a gift to be on the way with this congregation and with God!

Blessings to you,



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

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 to the present can be viewed and/or heard on FCC's website at: <http://www.foresidechurch.org/index.php/category/sermons/>.

Worship in the Sanctuary...

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

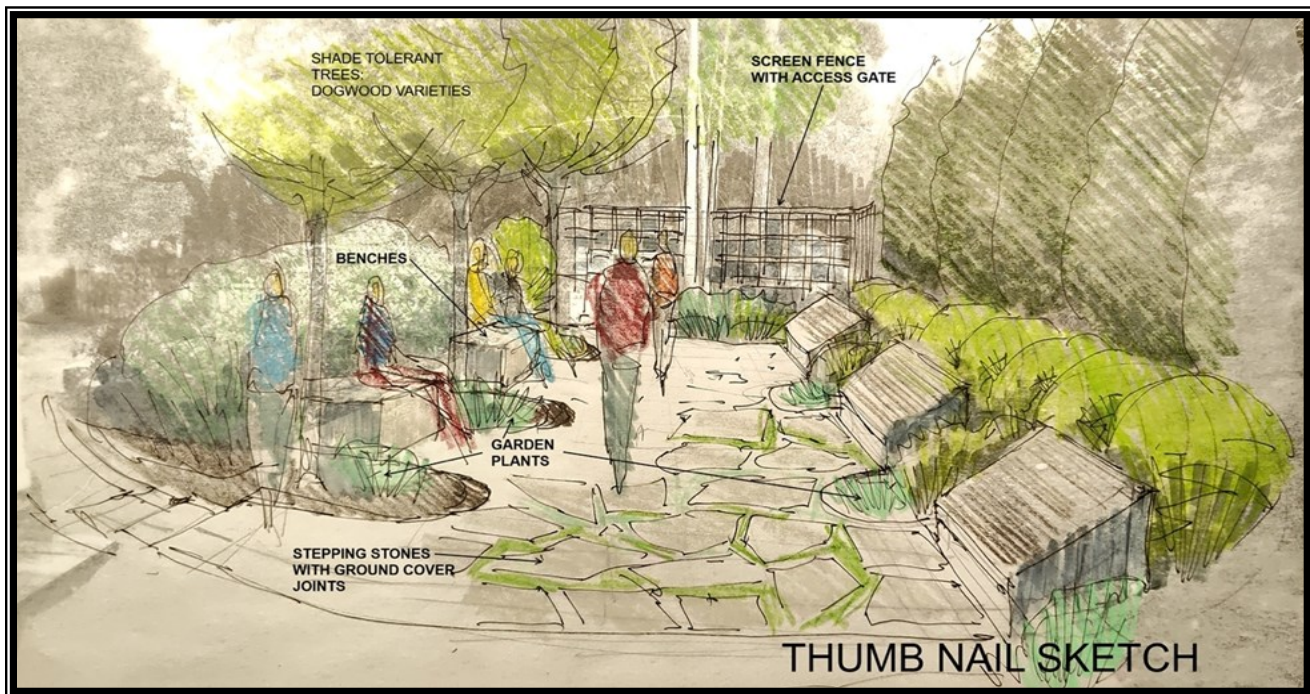
- **Masks are currently being requested (a supply of which can be located in the narthex).**
- We ask households to give each other good social distance.
- Windows will be opened enough to increase ventilation.
- Worship will also be live-streamed for any who cannot - or do not feel comfortable - attending by going to:

[https://www.youtube.com/
ForesideCommunityChurch](https://www.youtube.com/ForesideCommunityChurch)

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

UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Would you like to be included in our Memorial Garden?



Plans for its installation are proceeding nicely. In a perfect world, installation in the summer; planting, fall; Dedication - Columbus Day - leaf season. Once the rocks and bushes are installed, we can all reserve spaces for our names and birthdates without actually dying! We can surround activities on the holy patio in perpetuity.

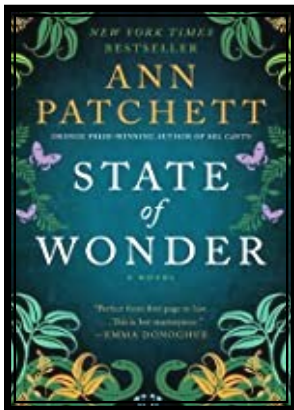
There will be a cost involved, to be determined. If you **remember the church in your will**, which we encourage, that could cover those costs after you pass.....but you won't get to reserve your spot until the church receives the money! Further information for your consideration:

- ♦ Can non-members be remembered here? No. They'll have to join the church first....so encourage your friends.
- ♦ Can the non-member spouses of members be remembered here? Yes.
- ♦ Can former members and/or long-time donors be remembered here? Depends. There will be wiggle room, and governing memorial "ministers" calling the shots.

Our next meeting is March 22, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the large classroom. We have managed to find a lot of humor in this topic – Join us!

C. Ward (cwardmd2@gmail.com / 838-8235)

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



The Foreside Book Club had a lively discussion on Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus in February. We all agreed that it was laugh out loud funny as well as presenting many more serious moral and social issues. We highly recommend it!

In March we will be discussing State of Wonder by Ann Patchett. It is the story of pharmacist Marina Singh, who journeys to Brazil to bring back information about seemingly miraculous drug research being conducted there by her former teacher, Dr. Annick Swenson. However Marina finds instead a puzzle in ethics, morality, and humanity that forces her to rethink her own positions in life and asks readers to do the same. Patchett's portrayal is as wonderful as it is frightening and foreign. She exhibits an extraordinary ability to bring the horrors and the wonders of the Amazon jungle to life, and her singular characters are wonderfully portrayed.

Due to a conflict we will be changing the time of the meeting to Thursday, March 23 at 4:00 p.m. **via Zoom**. Hope you will consider joining us for another stimulating conversation. As always, everyone is encouraged to participate at any time. We welcome all points of view. FMI: mimihinkel@gmail.com

The Bucket Brigade is off to a great start!

The collection has begun and will continue through March 19 for hygiene and cleaning supplies to be given to Maine families in need. Bins are located in the narthex. **On March 19 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** contributions will be assembled into buckets for later distribution. The "shopping" list includes for following desired items:

Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Dish Soap (8 oz.), Sponges, Trash Bags (13 gallon/kitchen sized), Body Soap (unscented), Body Lotion (unscented), Shampoo (10 - 12 oz.), Toothbrushes / Toothpaste (4 oz.).



Please consider supporting this precious effort, as well as joining everyone on the 19th for assembly. **Questions? Please do not hesitate to contact Debra Coyman, Wendy Tracy, or Dotty Blanchette.**



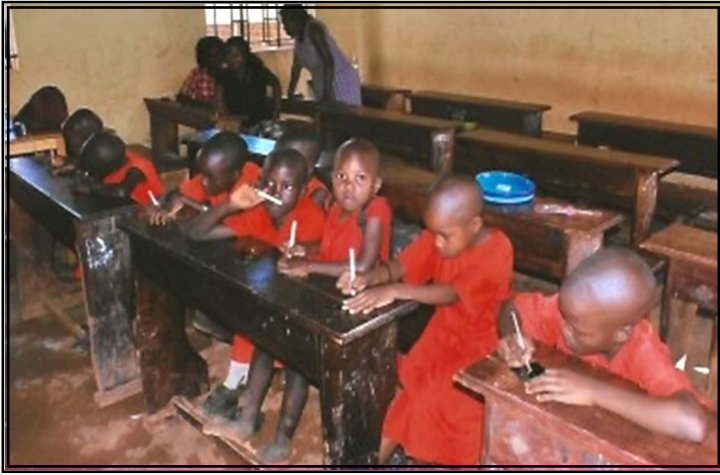
~ An Invitation for Lent **To Reflect on Friday Mornings** **with the Seekers Group**

We will gather for an hour weekly on Fridays during Lent to share our reflections on the week's **Richard Rohr Daily Meditations**, which are emailed from the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) each day, as we did during Advent for just two weeks. Whether you are a regular reader of these or have never read them before, you are welcome to join us. While attending every week is good for the bonding of the group, please do feel free to come when you can, even if not every week. The first meeting will be on **Friday, February 24 at 10:00 a.m.** In the large classroom upstairs. We will then continue to meet same time and place every Friday **through March 31.**

We will begin each time together with a brief time of silent meditation. The focus for our discussion following the meditation, will be on what each of us brings from reading the daily meditations during the week, including what especially resonated, what was challenging, and what questions the readings raised for you. There is a theme each week, which is introduced on Sundays and continues through Saturday with Saturday being a review of the week. You can also click on the following link to sign up and receive the daily meditations from the CAC website by going to <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/>. There is no charge for these, and it is easy to unsubscribe, if you want to do so in the future. Joan Murray will convene the group. Please feel free to contact her at murray.joanb@gmail.com or at 781-540-4503 with any questions.

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

Mbabaali School Updates



For many years the Foreside community has supported the Mbabaali School for Orphans. This grassroots orphanage for 273 children is located seven miles outside the capitol city of Kampala in Uganda. Twenty-three years ago it was organized and continues to be nurtured by the heroic efforts of James Kyeynue along with a small team of dedicated staff. In order to feed and educate the children, James not only teaches but walks many miles each day to beg for medical assistance, food supplies, and school equipment. There have been many difficult challenges, but James is a man of great faith and practical skills.

Over the years James has personally visited the Foreside Church on three occasions and he has inspired our congregation to join in his work. We purchased his first cow that we named Emily. Our children raised the funds to help build a shelter and food for Emily and she has proudly given birth to several calves. Several years ago the orphanage was able to purchase and clear land for a farm and this has provided not only food for the children but enough extra produce to sell for much needed funds. In addition, the farm has provided a place to train some of the children for future work as farmers. Hardship has hit Mbabaali many times, but the pandemic brought terrible hardships. Traveling to the farm became very dangerous and the staff and children suffered from greatly reduced food supplies. But through all of the challenges James and his staff have continued to teach and care for the children. This week he shared the very exciting news that twenty of his high school seniors qualified for the state exams. Of these twenty teens, sixteen scored at the highest level and the other four qualified at the next level. Because education is not generally free in Uganda, by obtaining these high scores these young people will receive state scholarships that will pay for college. The love and dedication of the staff that educates, feeds, and loves these children is an inspiration. If

anyone would like to communicate with James please contact Dorothy: dorothyb@maine.rr.com



Green Team Updates ~ One out of every six homes in Maine have installed energy efficient heat pumps for heating and cooling, saving money, lowering carbon footprints and taking advantage of Efficiency Maine's \$1,200 rebates.

The installation of a heat pump water heater, which also qualifies Mainers for Efficiency Maine rebates, can save a homeowner as much as \$500 a year in operating costs.

Efficiency Maine's website — <https://www.efficiencymaine.com/> — details not only its rebate programs but information about home energy loans and financing tools, a home efficiency calculator, and an extensive database of certified vendors and installers for best solutions for insulating, heating and cooling your home or business. For more information, call 866-376-2463. Look for more highlights from the series in next month's Steeplenotes and please save the date: **Andrew Tufts, Maine Audubon's Bringing Nature Home Manager, will join us on Wednesday, April 26 from 6:30 - 7:30 for our postponed program about pollinator gardening.**

The "Four Ways to Love the Earth" series is hosted by Green Team members Sue Clark, Susan Gilpin, Dana Humphreys, Lois Myers, Nancy Olmstead and Deb Refsnyder. Interested in joining us? We'd love to include you and your ideas in our planning for future activities. **Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 8, immediately following Evening Prayers at 6:30 p.m.**

"Efficiency always is the least expensive," says Andy Myer, Senior Program Manager of Efficiency Maine, speaking at FCC on February 2.



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

March Birthday Greetings

Pisces ~ The most intuitive, sensitive, and empathetic sign of the entire zodiac — and that's because it's the last of the last. As the final sign, Pisces has absorbed every lesson — the joys and the pain, the hopes and the fears — learned by all of the other signs.

Dick Shand ~ 8

Julia Parker ~ 8

Chuck Erb ~ 11

Ann Deering ~ 14

Laura Rodas ~ 14

Charlie Bernacchio ~ 16

Lyall Rogers ~ 19

Aries ~ The first sign of the zodiac, and loves to be number one. This dynamic fire sign is no stranger to competition. Bold and ambitious, Aries dives headfirst into even the most challenging situations.

Debra Coyman ~ 21

Phil Gleason ~ 24

Caroline Tracy ~ 27

Rebecca Erb ~ 27

Gretchen Lacombe ~ 28

Henry Jose Curtis ~ 30

Jackie Bates ~ 31

The Men's Breakfast...

Will be gathering on

Saturday, March 4, 2023 @ 8:30 a.m.

at the church

An enjoyable repast and
lively discussions are always on the menu!

FMI John Bischof

jegbischof@gmail.com or 781-2391

**The April *Steeplenotes*
deadline is Friday
March 17, 2023**

Let's do (a continental) Breakfast Ladies!

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

Thursday, March 16 @ 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!

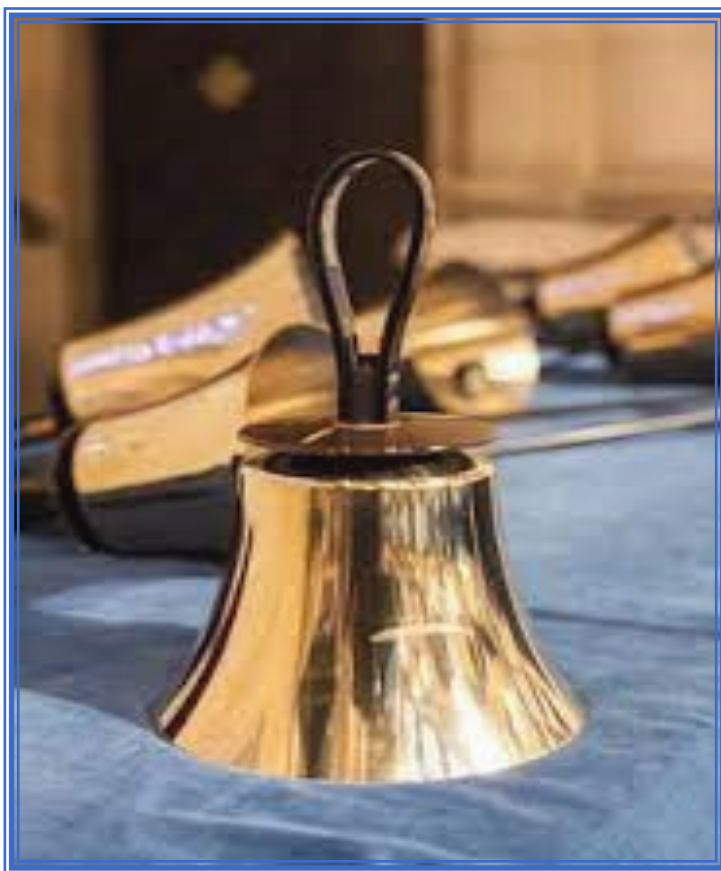
Please RSVP to deborah.gray48@gmail.com

or 952-4041 by Monday, March 13

so we can plan accordingly.

See you there!

Interested in playing handbells?



Handbells are not just for church! They are fun to play, a great opportunity to learn a new way to play music, while exercising Your brain, and a wonderful social activity with other folks!

Bells of Casco Bay, a community handbell choir based at The Foreside Community Church, UCC in Falmouth, is ***still offering*** a free handbell class that ***meets Thursdays from 9 to 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary.*** Whether or not you have experience ringing or simply want to learn, all are welcome. The ability to read music makes it easier to learn, but is not required; there are other techniques for learning the notes.

If you are interested in giving handbells a try or have other questions, please contact Debbie Reifsnyder at gailekieh@gmail.com or by calling 207-232-7298.

**AND
BEFORE
YOU
GO...**



The Foreside Community Church Outreach Ministry has generously given seed money for the past three years to buy gift cards for families of sickle cell disease (SCD) patients at the Maine Children's Cancer Program. Other members of the FCC congregation have also contributed generously and individually over this time.

Most children with SCD, who inherited the disease from both parents, often present with symptoms in the first year of life. This is an incurable and painful disease. The misshapen red cells become wedged in blood vessels causing great pain and affecting organs throughout the body. These young patients deal with complications of this disease throughout their lives. MCCP has seen dramatic increases in this population in recent years—from 15 in 2016 to 66 in 2023. There is an expectation that these numbers will continue to grow.

Many immigrant and asylum seekers look for treatment shortly after they arrive in this country. Often upon introduction, the medical team finds that these families do not have basic needs like warm clothes, food, or money for medication, and they may not yet be eligible for general assistance from the state or within their host communities. Cold weather is a documented trigger for SCD symptoms.

Five years ago, I heard a talk given by Dr. Aaron Weiss, a pediatric hematologist-oncologist, who treats sickle cell children. During his speech Dr. Weiss expressed how frustrating it was for the treatment team to recognize the serious needs these families were facing yet having no way to give non-medical assistance. I reached out to Dr. Weiss, and we came up with the idea of obtaining gift cards that case-assigned social workers could distribute to families with dire immediate needs, hence helping their young patients.

The picture above is on the front of a thank-you card I received last week on behalf of the church with comments from each of the medical team. One comment was, *"Thank you is just not enough."* Another said, *"The funds you and your church community donate makes a difference every single day."* Dr. Weiss reiterated how significant the gift cards are and he said, *"Thank you from the bottom of all our hearts."* I think the members and friends of FCC can be assured that our efforts and monetary gifts are truly significant and greatly appreciated, especially with these young recipients.

Marian Albee

COMMUNITY EVENTS



ST MARY SCHOLA

Paul McGovern,
Interim Music Director

DE PROFUNDIS: MUSIC FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

Sat, March 25, 2023 at 4:00 pm
Cathedral of Saint Luke, Portland

Sun, March 26, 2023 at 4:00 pm
Church of Saint Mary, Falmouth



St Mary Schola presents *De Profundis: Music for the Lenten Season*.


The program includes *a capella* works by Champion and Josquin and Cantata 131 *Aus der Tiefen* by J.S. Bach. Also featured is a rare performance of a *Miserere mei* setting attributed to Costanzo Festa which likely served as a model for the famous setting by Gregorio Allegri.

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at door | Students (25 under) free
available at stmaryschola.org

March 2023

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



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 9:30 hybrid service (see pg. 2 for details)	6 Office opening @ 12 p.m.	7 9 a.m. Tues Study Group 12 p.m. Shawl Knitters 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 p.m. AA Meeting 7:15 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	1 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayers	2 9 a.m. Bells of Casco Bay (see pg. 8 on how you can join)	3 Office opening @ 11:30 a.m. 10 to 11:00 a.m. Seekers' Group (see pg. 5 for details)	4 8:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast (see pg. 8 for details)
4 to 6:00 p.m. Foreside/ Falmouth Youth @ FCC			8 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayers 6:30 p.m. Green Team Series (see pg. 6 for details)	9 9 a.m. Bells of Casco Bay	10 Office opening @ 11:30 a.m. 10 to 11:00 a.m. Seekers' Group (see pg. 5 for details)	11
12 9:30 hybrid service	13 	14 9 a.m. Tues Study Group 12 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 p.m. AA Meeting 7:15 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	15 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayers	16 8:30 a.m. Women's Breakfast (see pg. 7 for details) 9 a.m. Bells of Casco Bay	17 Deadline for April Steeplenotes 10 to 11:00 a.m. Seekers' Group (see pg. 5 for details)	18
19 9:30 hybrid service 4 to 6:00 p.m. Bucket Brigade Project (see pg. 5 for details)	20 6:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry Monthly Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Governing Board Monthly Mtg.	21 9 a.m. Tues Study Group 12 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 p.m. AA Meeting 7:15 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	22 3:00 p.m. Memorial Garden (see pg. 4 for details) 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayers	23 9 a.m. Bells of Casco Bay 4:00 p.m. FCC Book Club (see pg. 5 for details)	24 10 to 11:00 a.m. Seekers' Group (see pg. 5 for details)	25
26 9:30 hybrid service (see pg. 2 for details)	27	28 9 a.m. Tues Study Group 12 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitters 6:15 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:45 p.m. AA Meeting 7:15 p.m. Bell Rehearsal	29 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayers	30	31 10 to 11:00 a.m. Seekers' Group (see pg. 5 for details)	

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Daily Lectionary Readings for March 2023

Wed., Mar. 1 Psalm 32 Exodus 34:1-9, 27-28 Matthew 18:10-14	Thurs., Mar. 9 Psalm 95 Exodus 16:1-8 Colossians 1:15-23	Fri., Mar. 17 Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:22-31 Ephesians 5:1-9	Sat., Mar. 25 Psalm 130 Ezekiel 36:8-15 Luke 24:44-53
Thurs., Mar. 2 Psalm 121 Isaiah 51:1-3 2 Timothy 1:3-7	Fri., Mar. 10 Psalm 95 Exodus 16:9-21 Ephesians 2:11-22	Sat., Mar. 18 Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:32-34 John 1:1-9	Sun., Mar. 26 Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45
Fri., Mar. 3 Psalm 121 Micah 7:18-20 Romans 3:21-31	Sat., Mar. 11 Psalm 95 Exodus 16:27-35 John 4:1-6	Sun., Mar. 19 1 Samuel 16:1-13 Psalm 23 Ephesians 5:8-14 John 9:1-41	Mon., Mar. 27 Psalm 143 1 Kings 17:17-24 Acts 20:7-12
Sat., Mar. 4 Psalm 12 Isaiah 51:4-8 Luke 7:1-10	Sun., Mar. 12 Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 95 Romans 5:1-11 John 4:5-42	Mon., Mar. 20 Psalm 146 Isaiah 59:9-19 Acts 9:1-20	Tues., Mar. 28 Psalm 143 2 Kings 4:18-37 Ephesians 2:1-10
Sun., Mar. 5 Genesis 12:1-4a Psalm 121 Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9	Mon., Mar. 13 Psalm 81 Genesis 24:1-27 2 John 1-13	Tues., Mar. 21 Psalm 146 Isaiah 42:14-21 Colossians 1:9-14	Wed., Mar. 29 Psalm 143 Jeremiah 32:1-9, 36-41 Matthew 22:23-33
Mon., Mar. 6 Psalm 128 Numbers 21:4-9 Hebrews 3:1-6	Tues., Mar. 14 Psalm 81 Genesis 29:1-14 1 Corinthians 10:1-4	Wed., Mar. 22 Psalm 146 Isaiah 60:17-22 Matthew 9:27-34	Thurs., Mar. 30 Psalm 31:9-16 1 Samuel 16:11-13 Philippians 1:1-11
Tues., Mar. 7 Psalm 128 Isaiah 65:17-25 Romans 4:6-13	Wed., Mar. 15 Psalm 81 Jeremiah 2:4-13 John 7:14-31, 37-39	Thurs., Mar. 23 Psalm 130 Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:8—3:3 Revelation 10:1-11	Fri., Mar. 31 Psalm 31:9-16 Job 13:13-19 Philippians 1:21-30
Wed., Mar. 8 Psalm 128 Ezekiel 36:22-32 John 7:53—8:11	Thurs., Mar. 16 Psalm 23 1 Samuel 15:10-21 Ephesians 4:25-32	Fri., Mar. 24 Psalm 130 Ezekiel 33:10-16 Revelation 11:15-19	



STEEPLENOTES

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

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