

A Newsletter of

April 2025

The Foreside Community Church United Church of Christ

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



See page 9 for more details regarding this very successful "sorting" party held in March.



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ASTORAL NOTES	4
HOLY WEEK 2025 SCHEDULE / LABYRINTH / LINK TO PRIOR SERMONS	3
THANKS FOR GIVING / HOLY WEEK FLORAL DONATIONS / SCHEDULING	3
WITH PASTOR GEOFF	4
UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS	
FCC Book Club Updates	5
Fellowship's Game Day / Travelogue / Progressive Dinner Plans	5 5
Building & Grounds Spring Spruce Up Day Announced	6
Peter Leeman Memorial Service	6
The Rev. Rebecca Erb Memorial Service	6
Green Team Series Invitation	7
April Birthdays are Shared ~ Where R U?	8
Men's & Women's April Breakfast Dates Announced	8
May Steeplenotes Submission Date	8
Maine Needs Collection, Another Successful Service Project	
APRIL 2025 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE	10
DAILY LECTIONARY READINGS FOR APRIL 2025	11

PASTORAL NOTES

Resurrection: Pain to Power

Dear Foreside Friends,

We are on our way into the back half of Lent as I write you... and looking forward to the tenderness and mystery of Holy Week and the rowdy Alleluias of Easter Sunday. I hope you will read on for all the of the details on how you can share in these services and traditions.

At our 10:30 service on Easter we will be welcoming our newest Confirmands into the full life and ministry of the church as they confirm the promises made over them at their baptisms. These young people have been learning and working together with their peers from Falmouth Congregational Church, adult mentors, families, and many others over the last 7 months. Confirmands have deepened their understanding of our church and its history, our scriptures, prayer practices, and worship. They've explored other traditions and their practices, have visited elders in our congregation, learning from generation to generation, and they have served our community, finding meaning in becoming a source of help and compassion for others.

I have most been impressed by how much they have been coming to that wisest of faith discoveries: that seeking meaning and calling in our faith and the church is not an activity that they will complete on April 20th... it is a journey that they will participate in for the rest of their lives. They will walk that way with family given and chosen, with learning and faith communities, with neighbors and friends, and with the many versions of themselves they will carry through their days.

But, for now, I've been asking the confirmands to reflect some on where they may be called in the church in the near future. Pastors cannot help themselves but quote the wise chaplain:

"Vocation is the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need." - Frederick Buechner

They mostly take the questioning as well-intentioned... I hope!

As we have been going through our Lenten reflections on the cross, though, I have been thinking about the language that we sometimes use in our confirmation curriculum around the cross: that God's work in Christ transforms pain to power, and how that may play a role in our life's calling, as well. Importantly, this is not because God delights in testing and troubling us, but rather meets us where we are in those fearful times and manages to break something open that can yet yield newness of life. By this light, vocation may also be where our heart breaks and searches for a healing we can share with the world.

This is some of the power which we tell in this Holy season: Christ has come meet our world in its deepest pain... in injustice, in suffering, in violence, and in fear... and transformed that experience into a deeper call to justice, to compassion, to peace, and to love. We often say here that a heart broken is a heart that is open. How powerful and wondrous is that openness when it is God's heart which is broken!

How that transformation takes place is part of the mystery of resurrection. It involves facing directly the Good Friday realities of our world, and involves the quiet ambiguity and stillness of Holy Saturday, waiting to see what may rise again.

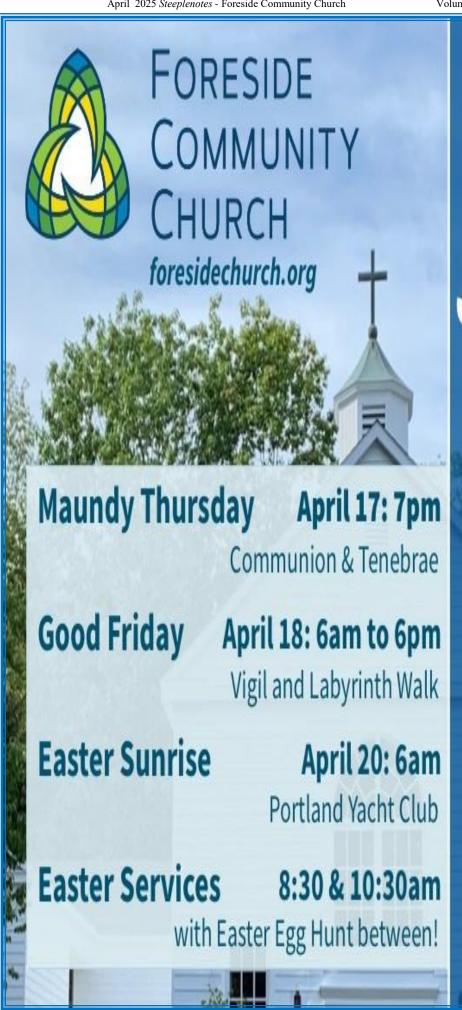
"I have a lot of faith. But I am also afraid a lot, and have no real certainty about anything. I remembered something [a wise friend] had told me—that the opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty. Certainty is missing the point entirely. Faith includes noticing the mess, the emptiness and discomfort, and letting it be there until some light returns." - Anne Lamott, Plan B, Further Thoughts on Faith

So, in the Holy Week and Easter to come, I would ask you, friends... where is your heart broken right now? What pains you? What feels empty as a tomb right now? Consider the fact that may be the very place God is inviting you to a greater openness of heart, a greater compassion for others, and a greater calling to act on that experience, offering healing and common cause—to you—and to our community and world.

I give thanks for all those places where new life rises in our midst: in the new discoveries of gifts, callings, and deeper belonging in our young people... and in the joyful news that those of us who have been on the journey for a long time may yet experience new paths of hope and purpose. I look forward to celebrating with you in the month to come. Until all is risen, indeed... the peace of Christ be with you.

Soft

20





The Rev. Joan Murray has arranged for a labyrinth walk to be available downstairs in Fellowship Hall throughout the day on Good Friday, April 18. Using a labyrinth involves moving one's body and opening one's heart to Jesus. All you have to do is follow the path and you will find the center. Unlike a maze, the labyrinth has no tricks. However, to assist newcomers, a one page instructional will be available in the narthex and the hall.

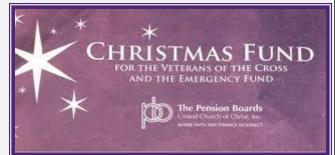
On the road and missing a sermon? Want to go back and revisit any one sermon? Want to share a sermon with a friend or family member? Pastor Geoff's sermons in both written and audio form from May 2019 and including Easter services (minus "Prayers on the Patio") can be viewed and/ or heard on FCC's website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

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

Thanksgiving for Support of the Christmas Fund Offering!

On March 16th, we were blessed by a visit from the Rev. Judith Blanchard, who shared her ministry of care to retired United Church of Christ clergy and church workers here in Maine trough the Pension Boards of the UCC. She also shared with us the important work of The Christmas Fund (formerly called Veterans of the Cross). This important resource shares emergency grants to support retired clergy and church workers in financial distress, many of whom may not have the benefit of a fully funded pension or retirement benefits. This is an important way in which we can care for those who have cared for so many.

Thanks to your generous giving, our congregation was able to raise over \$1,700.00 to contribute to the Christmas Fund. Thanks be to God for your compassionate giving, and the chance to support those who have given their lives to service in the church!





If you would like to place a plant or floral arrangement (please consider plants such as tulips or other greens that do not have "strong" floral scents) in our sanctuary in memory and/or celebration of those special to you, you may bring your donation *and place on the stage downstairs* between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Wednesday through Friday of Holy Week (4/16 through 4/18). Please plan to retrieve your arrangement after

the 10:30 a.m. Easter service, or by the following week. If you would like to have a dedication published in the Easter Sunday bulletins *please complete this form* or pick up a copy in the narthex and return to the office **no later than Monday, April 14.**

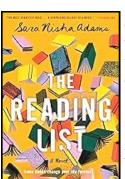
I am fully vaccinated and am available for times to visit, sit, or pray together as you would like. If you would like to schedule a meeting, you can do so here, or by contacting me by email.

Blessings of the Spirit to you ~ Pastor Geoff



~ FCC Book Club Updates

Four our April gathering, the Foreside Book Club will e reading The Reading List by Sara Nisha Adams. After several deep and thought-provoking discussions, this selection promises to be more uplifting! We are planning to go back to in-person meetings at the church, so mark your calendar for Wednesday, April 16 at 4:00 p.m. in the upstairs classroom. A summary follows:



"An unforgettable and heartwarming debut about how a chance encounter with a list of library books helps forge an unlikely friendship between two very different people in a London suburb.

Widower Mukesh lives a quiet life in the London Borough of Ealing after losing his beloved wife. He shops every Wednesday, goes to Temple, and worries about his granddaughter, Priya, who

hides in her room reading while he spends his evenings watching nature documentaries.

Aleisha is a bright but anxious teenager working at the local library for the summer when she discovers a crumpled -up piece of paper in the back of <u>To Kill a Mockingbird</u>. It's a list of novels that she's never heard of before. Intrigued, and a little bored with her slow job at the checkout desk, she impulsively decides to read every book on the list, one after the other. As each story gives up its magic, the books transport Aleisha from the painful realities she's facing at home. When Mukesh arrives at the library, desperate to forge a connection with his bookworm granddaughter, Aleisha passes along the reading list... hoping that it will be a lifeline for him too. Slowly, the shared books create a connection between two lonely souls, as fiction helps them escape their grief and everyday troubles and find joy again.

An unforgettable and heartwarming debut about how a chance encounter with a list of library books helps forge an unlikely friendship." (quote from Goodreads)

I hope you will consider joining us for this friendly hour of rewarding conversation. As always, anyone is welcome and encouraged to share your thoughts at any meeting. Happy reading and happy spring!

Mimi FMI: mimihinkel@gmail.com

~ Fellowship's April Calendar

Game Day #2!

Ten of us gathered last month to play games together and everyone had so much fun there was the desire to do it again. So, join us on April 13th after church for more games. Last time those who came chose to play Parcheesi and Cribbage. There were people learning a new game, remembering/relearning a game played years ago as well as some teaching others how to play. So, no matter if you think you won't know the game or know lots of games, everyone of

all levels is welcome and encouraged to join us. Bring your favorite game or play someone else's favorite game. This is all about having fun together.



Another Excellent Travelogue 10 Flights in 10 Days, or Pete's Adventure to the bottom of South America



Join Pete on April 9th at 7 p.m. as he shows you the scenic beauty of far south Chile. Walk with Pete and six friends as they hike on Navarino Island on the Beagle Channel. Hope you can join us on a trip to Patagonia via Zoom.

Progressive Dinner Anyone?

Fellowship is testing the waters to see what the interest is in holding a progressive dinner in May. Please look for the signup sheet on an easel downstairs where anyone can access it during coffee hour or any other time. This sheet will ask various questions we need to know to plan properly. Please fill out all the spaces so we can get a sense of the interest and the willingness to participate, as well as your preferred date. It will be necessary for all those who wish to attend even if they cannot host to sign up. The signup will be up until mid-April. I cannot stress enough that signup is required.



The Building & Grounds Ministry invites you to

"Spring Spruce-Up Day"
Saturday, April 12, 2025
9:30 a.m. — Noon
(Rain date will be Saturday, May 3 —
same time, same plan)

Please mark your calendars and help give our piece of the earth some loving care. We will be raking, sweeping, clearing – basically blessing and giving thanks for this sweet spot that we call our church home. Making our church a welcoming environment is always a good way to spend our energy.

Wear your comfortable work clothes and bring your favorite gloves and garden tools, if you like. We do have a supply of rakes and brooms to share.

Beverages and snacks will be provided.

We hope you will join us.... Let's shake off those winter vibes and make things new and beautiful! A memorial service for FCC member Peter Jon Leeman who passed on February 9th, is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. A reception will be held downstairs afterwards to which all attendees are invited.



The family of The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Erb, FCC member who passed in October 2024, has set up a memorial fund at the Topsham Public Library, 25 Foreside Rd., Topsham, ME 04086 and invites your support.

Rebecca's memorial service is scheduled at FCC on Saturday, May 31, 2025 @ 10:30 a.m. Details to follow in the coming months.

Sincerely, Chuck

Volume 55 Issue 4

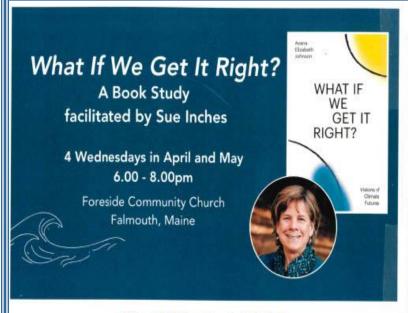
~ Green Team Series Invitation

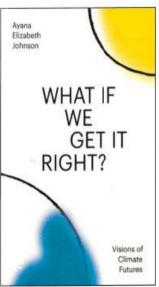


You are warmly invited to participate in a four-week book study of Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's joyful and optimistic work <u>What If We Get It Right?</u>: Visions of Climate Futures. This program, hosted by the Green Team and facilitated by author and climate justice activist Sue Inches, will be an opportunity to read and discuss what has been described as "a brilliant mix of creativity and wisdom that feels like we're eavesdropping on intimate conversations with the world's most brilliant change-makers."

The group will meet Wednesday evenings after Easter — April 23, 30, and May 7, 24 — from 6 - 8 p.m in FCC's Fellowship Hall. To register, please contact the church office at info@foresidechurch.org or calling 781-5880.

The book is available at several Sherman's Bookstore locations throughout Maine, and if not currently on the shelf can be ordered at www.shermans.com. The book is also available online @ Amazon (hard copy or kindle).





"This is the book we've been waiting for—a brilliant mix of creativity and wisdom that feels like we're eavesdropping on intimate conversations with the world's most brilliant change-makers. In What If We Get It Right?, Johnson weaves together art, poetry, and expert interviews into a deeply human exploration of the interconnected challenges we face. The result is a vision of a future filled with joy and oossibility, where fixing one problem helps us solve many more."

-Katharine Hayhoe, climate scientist, author, and JN Champion of the Earth

What If We Get It Right? A Book Study

Wednesdays • 6.00 - 8.00pm (Eastern)
Foreside Community Church, Falmouth, Maine

April 23, 2025 April 30, 2025 May 7, 2025 May 14, 2025



Registration is free

The book is available at several Sherman's Bookstore locations throughout Maine, and if not currently on the shelf can be ordered at www.shermans.com. The book is also available online @ Amazon (hard copy or kindle).

You are warmly invited to participate in a four-week book study of Ayara Elizabeth Johnson's powerful work What If We Get It Right?: Visions of Climate Futures. Facilitated by Sue Inches and convening at Foreside Community Church in Falmouth, Maine, this group will be an opportunity to gather in community, to discuss this essential work, and to connect with others doing vital climate work in congregations and communities.

For more information or to register, please contact info@foresidechurch.org or cal 207-781-5880

Since childhood, Susan Inches has envisioned a world that is compassionate, inclusive, and environmentally aware. This vision guided her through a 25-year career in public policy. As Deputy Director of the Maine State Planning Office, she represented the Governor as an organizer and lobbyist on environmental issues. Sue has worked on many issues including fisheries, land use planning, smart growth, building and energy codes, energy policy, working waterfront access, community finance, and rural broadband.

Sue now works as a speaker, educator, author, and advocate for environmental rights and energy democracy. She holds a BA in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic, and an MBA from the University of New Hampshire. She has taught advocacy courses at Colby, Bates, and Colorado Colleges. She is the author of Advocating for the Environment: How to Gather Your Power and Take Action, and twice monthly she publishes reflections on spirituality and the environment on Substack at susanbinches.substack.com.



Please help us acknowledge the following

April birthdays!

Michael Messina ~ 5

Bob Murray ~ 11

Claudia Kinnear ~ 11

Gail Shand ~ 20

Mary Schendel ~ 28

Abigail Lacombe ~ 30



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.

Who knows,
maybe you might even be "gifted!?"
You can also call 781-5880.

Let's do (a continental) Breakfast Ladies!

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

Wednesday, April 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 Deb Gray by Monday, April 14

(deborah.gray48@gmail.com / 952-4041)

so we can plan accordingly. See you there!

The Men's Breakfast...

will be held

Saturday, April 12 @ 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 or 781-2391

The May edition of *Steeplenotes* material submittal deadline is Friday, April 18, 2025

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



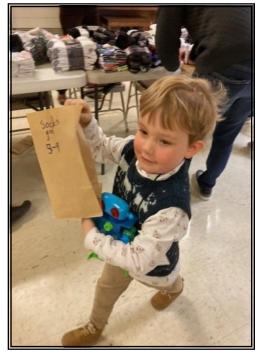




~ FCC Annual Service Project: Youth Socks & Underwear Collection ~

On March 23rd the Christian Education Ministry concluded its annual FCC-wide Community Service project for Maine Needs, the Portland based non profit that supports Maine families, newly arrived immigrant families, those fleeing domestic violence, those in recovery, veterans, and those who are unhoused, newly housed or experiencing financial hardships. Collected in impressive quantity was youth-sized socks and underwear. Over twenty volunteers gathered in the Fellowship Hall to help sort and pack the donations before final delivery. FCC member Janette Gustafson, photographer of this photo collection noted, "There was so much positive energy during the afternoon. Everyone was fully engaged. CE chair Wendy Tracy did an amazing job with the collection. Everything was so well organized!"





Be sure to check the calendar at The Foreside Community Church's website **APRIL** 2025

www.foresidechurch.org for any updates or changes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		-	2 10am Centering on Prayer	3 9am Casco Bay Bells sanctuary 6bm AA-Fellowship	4	5 Ipm Peter Leeman Memorial &
6 8:30 am hybrid service & Communion See pg. 3 for details.	7	8 9am Tues book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	9 10am Centering on Prayer 7pm Travelogue (see pg. 5 for details) No Evening Prayer	10 9am Casco Bay Bells sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship 7pm Bldg & Grounds mtg. (Zoom)	11	Reception 12 8:30am Men's Breakfast Spring Clean Up! (see pg. 6 for details)
9:30 am Palm Sunday hybrid service Game Day Gathering after worship Fellowship Hall	14 1:30pm J&O Mtg. (classroom)	9am Tues book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	8:30am Women's Bkft 10am Centering on Prayer 4pm FCC Book Club (classroom) 7pm Finance Ministry Mtg. (Google)	6pm AA-Fellowship Maundy Thursday Worship Service	Good Friday Vigil & Labyrinth May Steeplenotes material deadline	19
6am Sun Rise Service 8:30am Easter Service 9:30am Egg Hunt! 10:30am Easter Service & Confirmation Ceremony (see pg. 2 for details on all)	office closed church Easter holiday	9am Tues book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	6pm Green Team Presentation (see pg. 7 for details)	9am Casco Bay Bells sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship	Ç	3 p.m. Wedding
9:30 am hybrid service Mission Moment 1pm Roy Peppiatt Memorial service	287 pm GoverningBoard Mtg. (Google)	9am Tues book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	30 10am Cumberland Presentation 6pm Green Team Presentation (see pg. 7 for details)			

Daily Lectionary Readings for April 2025

Tues., Apr. 1 Psalm 53

Leviticus 25:1-19 Revelation 19:9-10

Wed., Apr. 2

Psalm 53 2 Kings 4:1-7

Luke 9:10-17

Thurs., Apr. 3

Psalm 126 Isaiah 43:1-7

Philippians 2:19-24

Fri., Apr. 4

Psalm 126

Isaiah 43:8-15

Philippians 2:25—3:1

Sat., Apr. 5

Psalm 126

Exodus 12:21-27

John 11:45-57

Sun., Apr. 6

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126

Philippians 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8

Mon., Apr. 7

Psalm 20

Exodus 40:1-15

Hebrews 10:19-25

Tues., Apr. 8

Psalm 20

Judges 9:7-15

1 John 2:18-28

Wed., Apr. 9

Psalm 20

Habakkuk 3:2-15

Luke 18:31-34

Thurs., Apr. 10

Psalm 31:9-16

Isaiah 53:10-12

Hebrews 2:1-9

Fri., Apr. 11

Psalm 31:9-16

Isaiah 54:9-10

Hebrews 2:10-18

Sat., Apr. 12

Psalm 31:9-16

Leviticus 23:1-8

Luke 22:1-13

Sun., Apr. 13

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Luke 19:28-40

Passion: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

Mon., Apr. 14

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm 36:5-11

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 12:1-11

Tues., Apr. 15

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 71:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

Wed., Apr. 16

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 70

Hebrews 12:1-3

John 13:21-32

Thurs., Apr. 17

Maundy or Holy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Fri., Apr. 18

Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13—53:12

Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25 or

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

John 18:1—19:42

Sat., Apr. 19

Job 14:1-14 or

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24 Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16 1

Peter 4:1-8

Matthew 27:57-66 or

John 19:38-42

Sun., Apr. 20

Easter

Acts 10:34-43 or

Isaiah 65:17-25

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or

Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 or

Luke 24:1 12

Mon., Apr. 21

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Joshua 10:16-27

1 Corinthians 5:6b-8

Tues., Apr. 22

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Judges 4:17-23; 5:24-31a

Revelation 12:1-12

Wed., Apr. 23

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

2 Samuel 6:1-15

Luke 24:1-12

Thurs., Apr. 24

Psalm 150

1 Samuel 17:1-23 Acts 5:12-16

Fri., Apr. 25

Psalm 150 1 Samuel 17:19-32

Acts 5:17-26

Sat., Apr. 26

Psalm 150

1 Samuel 17:32-51 Luke 24:36-40

Sun, Apr. 27

Acts 5:27-32

Psalm 118:14-29 or

Psalm 150

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

Mon., Apr. 28

Psalm 122

Esther 7:1-10

Revelation 1:9-20

Tues., Apr. 29

Psalm 122

Esther 8:1-17

Revelation 2:8-11

Wed., Apr. 30

Psalm 122

Esther 9:1-5, 18-23



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

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