

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

June 2025

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



The 2024 Bob Fuller Award honorees.
See page 4 for details on this amazing couple and their “gifts.”
(photo courtesy of L. Rodas)

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PASTORAL NOTES

Here I Raise My Ebenezer...

I have almost stopped endlessly talking about and delighting in the wedding of our friends Michael and Autumn at the end of April. I have joked, everywhere I go, I serve a community where I get to unite church members with strong opinions about the fact that there should be a hymn at a wedding, and that we should be sure to get the hymn from the *right* hymnal so the first part of the second verse of *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* reads:

*Here I raise my ebenezzer,
hither by thy help I'm come.
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.*

In many hymnals, that phrase has been adapted because, the thinking goes, nobody remembers what an *ebenezzer* is anymore. Even my spell check doesn't recognize it as a word. (Though it does as a name... well played, Mr. Dickens.) An Ebenezer was a memorial—sometimes a rock set vertically as a pillar, sometimes a pile of rocks, closer to the Celtic *cairn*—to memorialize an important inflection point in a journey. (Think the people of Israel crossing the Jordan.)

This is *sort of* a “milestone” ... but something more. At a wedding, yes, we know there is a road ahead, but maybe the call is more than simply a point along the loving path of two of our good friends on their happy day. A milestone might be about where they are going next... but maybe an ebenezzer is more a lasting memorial of where they come from on a more mysterious path.

It's a time of milestones. The church year and seasons change and mark another cycle of new life. We have celebrated and will celebrate baptisms, graduations, marriages, have had transitions in leadership, and more. Many have also tenderly marked the passages of illness and death in some cases, and others have marked painful turning points of loss or change they did not seek.

Milestones can lead us into the trap of always wanting to be certain of the next leg of the journey... to view each fixed point as a one vanishing behind us as we look to the next marker: A clear path that is surely and straightforwardly leading us to a destination that we are convinced we are the ones navigating towards. We live in a culture

that tends to value efficiency and forward momentum in a straight line. If we are well... well, surely things could be better. If we are challenged, then onward and upward is the only direction... take the express train. Experiences of rest and rejoicing right where we are need not apply. Even more, feeling uncertain or lost is often portrayed as a personal failing.

Of course, this is very different from every spiritual journey reported in our scriptures: if you map out Jesus's trail as he preaches and teaches, or Paul's journey of evangelism, or certainly that Exodus journey through the wilderness, you will not find a lot of straight lines! All the scriptural examples of the way and life of faith find people weaving through complexity and uncertainty: doubling back and taking the long road, pausing, reorienting, wandering and wondering on unknown paths.

Singing our old hymn with a congregation I'm reminded that ebenezers are meant to simply mark and wonder in what's in the rearview... and remember these things as testimony that *God accompanies us into an altogether uncertain future*. At a wedding, we celebrate what God in love has *already done* in calling two people to share promises... promises which will keep them in mutual care in a future totally unknown to them. At a graduation we celebrate accomplishments of what has been, not some dreamed of vision of success we insist our loved ones meet next. On the edge of a time of challenge we may even celebrate that we have come this far by faith, and not that faith promises an easy and direct route to the “finish line!”

A wise counselor once challenged me that if my gaze was always on a point just over the horizon, I'd be unlikely to enjoy any of the view along the way, and might even trip over my own feet... or worse. As this summer comes, I hope you will, as I do a little more often now, pause to give thanks: for where you have been and are now... where we as a community of faith have been and are now... for “hither by [God's] help we've come.” There is, in this season, a gentle rest to know that God has been with us, and will guide us still... May we find that, wherever we are on this journey, we have in God already, “safely arrived at home.”





**Sunday, June 1, 2025
Graduation Commencement &
last day of Sunday School, Teacher Recognition
AND.... Sundaes for all afterwards!**

Join the Fellowship Ministry for an Ice Cream Social on Sunday June 1st after church. We will be celebrating our high school graduates, our new Bible recipients, and our volunteer Christian Education teachers. We can also celebrate the end of the school year and the start of summer! There is a lot to be thankful for! All of us can celebrate our community together. Please bring (and after, take home) your favorite sundae topping. Fellowship will provide the ice cream, including a dairy free alternative, along with the tea and coffee. There will be plenty of bowls and spoons so plan to join us and dig in. Let's hope for a nice day so we can enjoy time together out side on the patio. If the weather is inclement, we will move inside. Either way, don't miss the fun!

Please note: June 1st will be the end of our Sunday School year. We will look forward to seeing you again in September! Nursery care will continue through June.

Photo Directory 2025!

This summer, our congregation is preparing our brand new photo directory to help us all stay connected and get to know one another better, and we would like all of our members and friends to feel included!

There will be two ways to have your household appear in the photo directory:

1. **Upload a photo of your household.** If you have an existing recent photo you would like to use for the directory, you can upload it at [this link](#). Simply select your photo on your computer or phone, and enter your last name. We'll handle the rest!
2. **Have your photo taken.** If you would like a fresh photo, we'll have an informal "photo shoot" available for all after church on **Sunday, June 1st and Sunday, June 15th**. (Depending on weather, since photos always look so much nicer in the spring light!)

We hope that you'll participate so we can know and greet each other more fully!

Worship continues to be live-streamed for attending convenience 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

2024 Bob Fuller Service Award

(L. Rodas)

Each year, we gather to recognize a few individuals among us who truly embody the spirit of service and community and award them the Bob Fuller Service Award. This award is named for Bob Fuller, whose life and service to our church and the wider community set an extraordinary example for us all including Bob's service as a founding and lifetime member of the Falmouth Lions Club, service to the Foreside Community Church, to the town council, and to his alma mater, the University of Maine. Bob's dedication, humility, and selflessness continue to inspire us to live out our values of service and generosity, and his legacy continues to live on here in our community.

There are individuals whose dedication and contributions quietly shape the fabric of our congregation and beyond, who serve without seeking recognition, but whose efforts leave an indelible mark on us nonetheless. Some of the most impactful members of our community are those who step up time and again to serve in multiple capacities, and today's recipients are among the most dedicated, selfless, and relied upon in our congregation.

Married for almost 30 years, one half of this duo served on the Stewardship Ministry and now has stayed on as chair to the new Finance Ministry. He previously served the church as both treasurer and moderator and sat on the governing board for years. His service extended beyond our church, where he has supported several local nonprofits, served as treasurer at the Portland Yacht Club, and been a leader within the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Boy Scouts of America.

The other half of this incredible duo has quietly made her mark through years of service on the Fellowship Ministry, where her tireless efforts and creativity have helped make our church such a welcoming and vibrant community. She is an incredible organizer who pulls together events and activities with great attention to detail and thoughtfulness. Here at church, she has organized and participated in countless events, from card-making for Valentine's Day, church picnics, ice cream socials and high tea, to hosting the Travelogue events. You'll find her at every church fair - often staffing the Timeless Treasures table. She also sits on the Personnel Committee, putting her professional oversight skills to good use when the occasion arises.

While their individual contributions have been substantial, as a team they quietly shine even brighter. As a couple, they have been deeply involved in creating memorable experiences for our congregation, especially when sharing their notable talents in the kitchen with our whole community. From meals at the FCC retreat to coffee hour to making rusk for Toto's family fund raiser, they've always got great food to share - including delicious scones at the church fair and treats for the men's breakfast.

Together, this couple raised two children, Katie and Blaine, on the Cumberland Foreside. And like Bob Fuller himself, they love sailing and the ocean. They also enjoy skiing, hiking, gardening, reading, cooking and just about any outdoor activity. Their love of children and family seem to have contributed to their steadfast commitment to supporting children/family events here at FCC - including Mardi Gras, Sunday school end-of-year celebrations, and, most recently, they put on a delicious dinner for the confirmands and their families and mentors - an event that lasted far longer than planned, due in part to the delicious meal we all shared.

I am sure you can all visualize them in your mind's eye right now - cheerfully working away in their aprons preparing food for an event, any event, and at the end of that event, kindly receiving, scraping out and washing dirty dishes, ensuring compostable products and recycling get sorted to the right places - and radiating kind smiles and friendly hello's to everyone. For me, that is one of the things that stands out most about this pair - they care about doing service, doing it well and cheerfully, and doing it not because they are seeking accolades but because it brings them joy to help others, to serve, to be in community carrying out God's work.

Please join me now in recognizing and celebrating Pete and Liz Ventre as this year's recipients of the Bob Full Award. Their unwavering commitment to service and the warmth and generosity they bring to our community make them the perfect embodiment of this award. Thank you both for everything you have done and continue to do for Foreside Community Church.

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

Spring Book Study Group Brings Together Community, Church Participants To Discuss Vital Climate Work

(S. Clark)

What If We Get It Right? For four Wednesday evenings in April and May, community and church participants gathered in Fellowship Hall to consider this question and some of the many positive visions for resolving our world's climate crisis described in Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's 2024 book of the same title.

The book is a series of interviews with leading scientists, economists, philanthropists, land and ocean farmers and others engaged in building resilient communities, renewable energy systems and social and environmental justice. It has been described as an "opportunity to eavesdrop on intimate conversations with the world's most brilliant change-makers."

More than two dozen participants registered for the series, contributing to robust conversations. Half of those attending were new to Foreside Community Church and learned of the program thanks to the BTS Center's help in promoting the program.

Commented one participant, "This book truly opened my eyes to initiatives that are making a difference in our world! Everyone should read it! We learned about so many hopeful things."

Author, educator and environmental rights and energy democracy advocate Sue Inches of Yarmouth facilitated the discussion group. Sue had a 25-year career in public policy, working as Deputy Director of the Maine State Planning Office, among other roles. 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

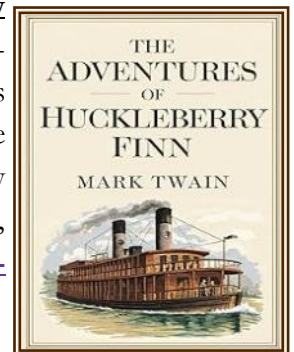
~ FCC Book Club Updates

The Foreside Book Club ended this season with a rousing, thought-provoking discussion of the classic **Rebecca** by Daphne DuMaurier. We all admired her writing style and her remarkable ability to create an atmosphere of mystery, suspense and terror. After much conversation we agreed that, of all the characters, Rebecca fit the role of a sociopath and was the true villain in this Gothic novel. It is no wonder that **Rebecca** has been voted the nation's favorite book of the past 225 years and has repeatedly been adapted for stage and screen.

We are taking a break from June through August and will resume in September when we will be discussing

The Adventures of Huckleberry

Finn by Mark Twain, and comparing it with **James**, Percival Everett's contemporary reimagining of the same story. So stay tuned and enjoy your summer, be happy and safe, and keep reading ! [FMI mimi-hinkel@gmail.com](mailto:FMI_mimi_hinkel@gmail.com).



The Green Team sponsored 4-night book series "What If..." attracted good participation. The committee looks forward to future presentations on timely and important topics.

(photo courtesy of S. Clark)

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



On Sunday, June 15, the Justice & Outreach Ministry will be presenting another important and informative mission moment by reintroducing to the congregation the **Maine Seacoast Mission**. We will hear from Dr. John Zavodny who joined the Maine Seacoast Mission in 2019, after a 20-year career as a Professor of Philosophy, most recently at Unity College. Dr. Zavodny is from Cleveland, Ohio, and a proud graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Maine Seacoast Mission first took on its “task of greater magnitude” when two Mount Desert Island pastors and brothers, Alexander and Angus MacDonald, sailed a small sloop called *Hope* to islands and lighthouses along the Maine coast, intent on relieving the desolate conditions they often found there. As a pastor in Bar Harbor, Angus was connected to many of the wealthy rusticators of Mount Desert Island. He successfully solicited their help in funding the *Hope* and its charitable endeavors, and the Maine Seacoast Mission was born in 1905. From the start, the Mission provided access to medical and dental care, spiritual support, education, and crisis services.

During Fellowship coffee afterwards, Dr. Zavodny will join us downstairs for a Q&A session.

FCC’s Justice & Outreach Ministry is responsible for providing the means and opportunities through which members can become directly involved in work on behalf of those in need in our communities. In addition to sponsoring projects (e.g., The Habitat for Humanity Walk, food drives for the Falmouth Food Pantry, Christmas Angels), the ministry has an educational and inspirational calling as well, manifesting this into monthly Mission Moment presentations that are incorporated into Sunday services. The ministry is always interested in welcoming in new volunteers who are moved to be “part of the solution.” If this is you, please reach out to chairwoman [Dotty Blanchette](#) to discuss further.

I am seeking small apartment or suite to rent. I sold my house and need a place to land for a few months while I figure out what’s next. Start date August 1, and I would need the terms to be open-ended. **OR**, maybe you know someone who has such a possible arrangement?

Please call Kathie McCatherin at 207-272-4364 to discuss. Thank you.

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

**Please help us acknowledge
the following June birthdays!**

Trevor Lavenbein ~ 6

Michaela Lahlou ~ 7

Wendi Maynard ~ 10

Charlotte Talmadge ~ 11

Pete Ventre ~ 11

Jim Gertmenian ~ 16

Deborah Gray ~ 20

Parker Albee ~ 23

Shirley Pyles ~ 25

Clifford Gilpin ~ 28



The Next Men's Breakfast...

...will be held

Saturday, June 14 @ 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



*Do you know someone who likes
asking questions with children?*

They might be a:

Retired Teacher

Ed Tech at a local school

Education student

Camp Counselor/Director

Nanny looking for more hours

Friend of your adult child

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

FCC needs YOUR help!

Please take a moment and consider who might be a good fit and
email Geoff or Wendy at wendyrtracy@gmail.com.



Learn More



FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Women's Monthly Breakfast gathering will break away for the summer. The next scheduled meal is tentatively set for Wednesday, September 17 @ 8:30 a.m.

**The July/August edition of *Steeplenotes*
material submittal deadline is
Friday June 20, 2025**

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

COMMUNITY EVENTS

New Podcast Launch: Biologica – Where Animals and Humans Meet

FCC member Susan Hayhurst, staff veterinarian at Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland, and former marine researcher/educator, is thrilled to announce the launch of her brand-new podcast:

Biologica: Where Animals and Humans Meet!

If you're passionate about nature, animals, and the fascinating ways we connect with the natural world, this one's for you.

You can now listen to the first three episodes on:

- Apple Podcasts
- Spotify

Podcast Landing Page: <https://susanhayhurst.podbean.com/>

Episode Highlights:

- *The Dogs of Cotacachi, Ecuador*
- *Big Night* – A magical spring night full of amphibian migration
- *Birdwatching in Spring* – The joy of spotting and listening as the season comes alive

☐ Here's how you can support:

- Listen, follow, and leave a review on your favorite podcast app.
- Share the podcast on **Facebook, Twitter**, or by word of mouth: wherever you connect with friends\
- Email her @ susan.hayhurst@gmail.com if you'd like a **free podcast sticker or magnet**.

Every share makes a huge difference!

June 2025

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 |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1 9:30 am hybrid service & Communion Graduation commencement & ice cream social PHOTO SITTING FOR DIRECTORY | 2 <i>Church office closing @ 2:45pm today.</i> | 3 9:00am Tues Book Group 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal | 4 10am Cumberland Asso- ciation (Fellowship) 2:30pm J&O Mtg. (Classroom) 7pm Finance Mtg. (Zoom) | 5 9am Bells of Casco Bay - Sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship | 6 | 7 |
| 8 9:30 am hybrid service See pg. 3 for details. | 9 | 10 9:00am Tues Book Group 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal | 11 10am Cumberland Asso- ciation (Fellowship) 2:30pm J&O Mtg. (Classroom) 7pm Finance Mtg. (Zoom) | 12 9am Bells of Casco Bay - Sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship | 13 | 14 8:30am Men's Breakfast See pg. 8 for details. |
| 15 9:30 am hybrid service See pg. 3 for details. PHOTO SITTING FOR DIRECTORY <i>Mission Moment: Maine Seacoast Mission</i> | 16 7pm Governing Board Mtg. (Zoom) | 17 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal | 18 6:30pm Green Team Mtg. (Classroom) | 19 Office closed in observance of Juneteenth Federal Holiday. 6pm AA-Fellowship | 20 Deadline for July/August newsletter submissions. | 21 |
| 22 9:30 am hybrid service | 23 | 24 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal | 25 | 26 9am Bells of Casco Bay - Sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship | 27 | 28 |
| 29 9:30 am hybrid service | 30 Office closed-staff on P.T.O. | | | | | |

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Daily Lectionary Readings for June 2025

Sun., June 1

Acts 16:16-34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

John 17:20-26

Mon., June 2

Psalm 29

Exodus 40:16-38

Acts 16:35-40

Tues., June 3

Psalm 29

2 Chronicles 5:2-14

Acts 26:19-29

Wed., June 4

Psalm 29

Ezekiel 3:12-21

Luke 9:18-27

Thurs., June 5

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Isaiah 32:11-17

Galatians 5:16-25

Fri., June 6

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Isaiah 44:1-4

Galatians 6:7-10

Sat., June 7

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

2 Kings 2:1-15a

Luke 1:5-17

Sun., June 8**Pentecost Sunday**

Acts 2:1-21 or

Genesis 11:1-9

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:14-17 or

Acts 2:1-21

John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Mon., June 9

Psalm 48

Joel 2:18-29

1 Corinthians 2:1-11

Tues., June 10

Psalm 48

Ezekiel 11:14-25

1 Corinthians 2:12-16

Wed., June 11

Psalm 48

Numbers 24:1-14

Luke 1:26-38

Thurs., June 12

Psalm 8

Proverbs 3:13-1

Ephesians 1:17-19

Fri., June 13

Psalm 8

Proverbs 3:19-26

Ephesians 4:1-6

Sat., June 14

Psalm 8

Proverbs 4:1-9

Luke 2:41-52

Sun., June 15

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalm 8

Romans 5:1-5

John 16:12-15

Mon., June 16

Psalm 124

Proverbs 7:1-4

Ephesians 4:7-16

Tues., June 17

Psalm 124

Proverbs 8:4-21

Ephesians 5:15-20

Wed., June 18

Psalm 124

Daniel 1:1-21

Luke 1:46b-55

Thurs., June 19

Psalm 42 and 43

Genesis 24:1-21

Romans 2:17-29

Fri., June 20

Psalm 42 and 43

Job 6:14-30

Galatians 3:15-22

Sat., June 21

Psalm 42 and 43

Proverbs 11:3-13

Matthew 9:27-34

Sun., June 22

1 Kings 19:1-4 [5-7] 8-15a

Psalm 42 and 43

Galatians 3:23-29

Luke 8:26-39

Mon., June 23

Psalm 59

2 Kings 9:1-13

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Tues., June 24

Psalm 59

2 Kings 9:14-26

Ephesians 2:11-22

Wed., June 25

Psalm 59

2 Kings 9:30-37

Luke 9:37-43a

Thurs., June 26

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20

1 Kings 22:29-40, 51-53

2 Corinthians 13:5-10

Fri., June 27

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20 2

Kings 1:1-12

Galatians 4:8-20

Sat., June 28

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20

2 Kings 1:13-18; 2:3-5

Luke 9:21-27

Sun., June 29

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Luke 9:51-62

Mon., June 30

Psalm 75

2 Kings 2:15-22

1 John 2:7-11



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

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