

The Foreside Community Church United Church of Christ

May 2025

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



(photo courtesy of R. Singer)

Welcome Confirmands!

(See page 8 for more.)

THE FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH, UCC
340 Foreside Road
Falmouth, Maine 04105-1428

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PASTORAL NOTES

Christ is Risen! (And shall we?)

I need to say a giant *thank you* to our music ministry, ministers of worship, buildings and grounds and cleanup crews, fellowship feast preparers, confirmation mentors and Christian Ed teachers, confirmands and more... I want to thank this *whole church* for the gift of our Holy Week observances and Easter celebrations in April. There is simply no way to name and count all of the gifts of life that you all share to make this beloved community and sacred place on the Foreside in seasons both ordinary and deeply holy. *Thank you again.*

As we move into the Easter season, I find myself in a few groups reading together. Alongside our Green Team and the BTS Center, I'm reading *What If We Get It Right: A Vision of Climate Futures* by Ayaana Elizabeth Johnson. With some Cumberland Association clergy colleagues, I am reading *Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart* by Brian McLaren. Both address the realities of changing climate, our role in those changes, what may be asked of us to adapt in the face of them, and seek to help equip people and stir them to do what they can in both hopeful and—well, less hopeful—circumstances.

What If We Get it Right?...or... Life After Doom... the titles alone are enough to leave one in some pretty intense ambiguity about hope.

That may be on theme for Easter, though. I think of the strange paralysis of the disciples after the resurrection, even as they slowly came to understand more of what the risen Christ would mean for them, and for the world: they're found locked away in upper rooms in fear, or returning to their first careers as fisher-folk. For a season, the would-be apostles seem convinced of Christ's resurrection, *and* doubtful that resurrection might ask or call them into any response... **Christ is risen!** (exclamation point) *and* **Will we rise and follow him?** (question mark)

There is a lot that feels precarious in the world

and in our lives on any given day, ecologically or otherwise. There is much that feels too large for any one of us.

I'm thankful for these disciples' resurrection sightings and uncertainties, then. In the face of some of our world and nation's challenges, it's good to know I'm not alone in the temptation of the odd twin comforts: "It will be OK in the end." and "It's too late to change anything." Both permit me to rest too easily in my own inactivity, and what *is*, rather than participating in what *can be*. The BTS Center's Rev. Dr. Allen Ewing-Merrill often reminds faith communities seeking greater care for the earth to face this challenge, in the words of the theologian Jürgen Moltmann:

*"If we knew with certainty that we would not survive, we would do nothing. If we knew with certainty that we would survive, we would also do nothing. Only if the future is open for both possibilities are we forced to do today what is necessary to survive tomorrow."*¹

Easter's disciples are called by a risen Christ to follow on an extraordinary yet uncertain way. Just so, we're called to respond and follow on that Way of love in trying times... not because we are certain of any *destination*, but certain of our *dedication* to live as Christ's beloved and loving community, no matter the outcome. In a meditation on hope that might be deeper than some envisioned perfect result, Brian McLaren offers:

*When our prime motive is love, a different logic comes into play. We find courage and confidence, not in the likelihood of a good outcome, but in our commitment to love. Love may or may not provide **a way through** to a solution to our predicament, but it will provide **a way forward** in our predicament, one step into the unknown at a time. Sustained by this fierce love...we may persevere long enough that, to our surprise, a new way may appear where there had been no way.*²

(cont. next page)

Christ has gone ahead of us. Even in the midst of great uncertainty, then, we follow Christ forward in love. The destination may be unclear, but the Way is bright and unfolding before us, and we can trust that a life on that path of love for God, for one another, and for this fragile creation will never really end... but be transformed, and rise.



Jürgen Moltmann. *Hope in these Troubled Times* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2019) p. 8 [□□](#)

Brian McLaren. *Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart* (New York: St. Martin's Essentials, 2024) p. 84-85. [□□](#)

A memorial service for FCC member The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Erb is scheduled for Saturday, May 31, 2025 @ 10:30 a.m. A reception will follow downstairs. Your attendance is welcome.

The family of Rebecca 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.



I 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 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/>

UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

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. Stay tuned in the coming weeks for an easy way to upload a favorite photo of all the members of your household online.
2. If you would like a fresh photo taken, we'll have an informal "photo shoot" available for all after church on either Sunday, June 1st or 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 get to know and greet each other more fully!

CALL FOR ANNUAL REPORTS AND PROPOSED ROSTERS

The 2025 annual spring meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 18, 2025 immediately following worship that morning.

In preparation of this meeting, all appropriate staff, and (co) chairs of FCC's ministries, committees, and other formed special interest groups are requested to submit their annual reports for the calendar year May 2024 to 2025 into the church office **no later than close of business on Friday, May 9.** For reference, last year's reporting is available as needed. Contact [Christina](#).

Ministry (co) chairs are also asked to submit a proposed roster of members for the upcoming year. As part of the meeting agenda (**see next page**) both annual reports and rosters will be required for distribution **prior** to the May 18 meeting.



NOTICE OF SPRING MEETING

You are hereby notified that the annual Spring Meeting of The Foreside Community Church, UCC will be held in the sanctuary at The Foreside Community Church at 340 Foreside Road, Falmouth, Maine on Sunday, May 18, 2025, *immediately following the 9:30 a.m. worship service* for the following purposes:

- * Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes for January 26, 2025
- * (Review only) 2024-2025 Annual Reports
- * Election of Ministry Members for 2025-2026
- * Election of Governing Board Members for 2025-2026
- * Election of Church Officers for 2025-2026
- * Presentation of the 2024 Bob Fuller Award
- * To conduct any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Janette Gustafson, Clerk

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

~ Fellowship Ministry Updates

Teacup Posies

Welcome spring with a sweet arrangement of seasonal flowers in a pretty teacup! On Thursday May 8th at 11. Deb Gray will teach us how to make a teacup flower arrangement. Perfect for Mother's Day. It will brighten your home or home of a friend or loved one. We will provide everything you need including the teacups, unless you have a favorite at home you wish to use. If you have floral scissors, you may want to bring them.

This activity is limited to 15 people and to cover the cost of supplies, we are charging \$5 per arrangement. Please signup by contacting Christina in the church office (csklarz@foresidechurch.org or calling 781-5880) as well as make arrangements for payment.

Progressive Dinner Update

The signups are complete. It was an outpouring of interest with 52 signing up to participate. Unfortunately, the May 3rd date did not work for everyone, so we are down to 48. Still, that is a great turnout. I hope it lives up to the expectations!

My pen is flying around papers trying to assign people to their pre-dinner and dinner spots while trying to keep the groups changing. We have a few non-drivers so a couple of you will be asked to take some people from place to place. Once the assignments are done, you can think about how to carpool if you wish, but that is beyond my pay grade, except for those who must be driven.

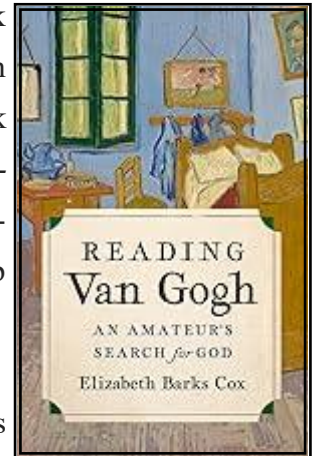
Soon there will be a chart with all of the details downstairs where the sign up was; but first I need to reach out to each of the hosts and drivers individually to be sure they are all on board.

A word of reminder, humor me if you want to roll your eyes, remember this is a church event and so I am leaving it to each of you to police yourself (and if necessary, but

hopefully not, you neighbor). Do not drive if you are not in full control of your abilities. Any arrests or accidents is not the kind of publicity the church would want. Obvious but worth being said.

~ Tuesday Morning Book Group

The Tuesday Morning Book Group reconvenes at 9:00 a.m. on May 13th. Our next book is *Reading Van Gogh An Amateur's search for God* by Elizabeth Barks Cox. The write up from Amazon is as follows:



Vincent Van Gogh, even with his mental illness, poverty, isolation, and persistent failure, reflected compassion remarkable for his own life of rejection. He loved God. He loved beauty. He acknowledged his own shortcomings and was never as good as he wanted to be. He might be an unlikely role model for some, since he was neither saintly nor successful; but his serious attention to human suffering, as well as to beauty in the world around him, gave this author a different vision. Cox writes about her own experiences: weeks spent living in a homeless shelter in New York City, a trip to the Mid-East where she visited Yasser Arafat in his compound, an unexpectedly impacting Alaskan adventure, working with abused/neglected children, and the explorations of the mind through reading. *READING VAN GOGH* plunges into the ideas of psychologists, artists, poets, physicists, and fiction writers who combine reason, imagination, and experience in a way that might enlarge the definitions we live by.

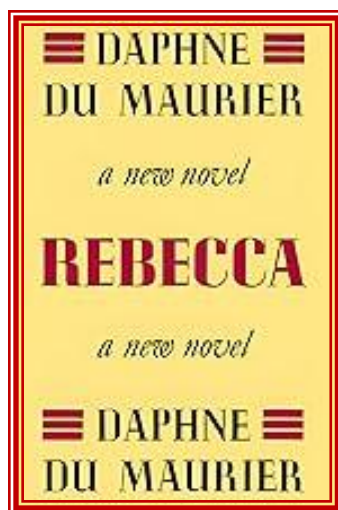
Please join us for what will likely be a lively discussion. Stay tuned for first assignment for discussion!

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

~ FCC Book Club Updates

We had a large and lively group discussion of *The Reading List* by Sara Nisha Adams for our meeting in April. Inspired by the reading list that was the focus of that novel, we have decided to read the classic *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier which was one of the books on that list. This will be the final meeting before the summer break and will take place on Wednesday, May 21 at 4:00 p.m. in the upstairs classroom of the church. The summary follows:

“Last Night I Dreamt I went to Manderley Again...”



“With these words, the reader is ushered into an isolated gray stone mansion on the wind-swept Cornish coast, as the second Mrs. Maxim de Winter recalls the chilling events that transpired as she began her new life as the young bride of a husband she barely knew. For in every corner of every room were phantoms of a time dead but not forgotten—a past devotedly preserved by the sinister

housekeeper, Mrs. Danvers: a suite immaculate and untouched, clothing laid out and ready to be worn, but not by any of the great house’s current occupants. With an eerie presentiment of evil tightening her heart, the second Mrs. De Winter walked in the shadow of her mysterious predecessor, determined to uncover the darkest secrets and shattering truths about Maxim’s first wife—the late and hauntingly beautiful Rebecca.” (quoted from Amazon)

Please consider joining us for this hour of friendly conversation. As always anyone is welcome to attend. FMI mimihinkel@gmail.com.



Three members of the FCC Green Team attended the annual Maine Conservation Lobby Day in Augusta on April 3. The event is hosted by the Maine Conservation Alli-

ance and provides Maine citizens with the resources needed to meet and speak with their representatives of the House and Senate about specific legislative initiatives. Over 50 people from around the state met in a conference room where staff provided fact sheets on the four specific initiatives – increasing storm preparedness for Maine communities, making climate polluters pay (specifically oil and gas companies), an energy fairness act, and preventing future toxic spills of PFAS chemicals. We were instructed on how to approach and speak with our representatives, introduce one of the initiatives, and specifically ask for their support. After this preparation, we walked up to the State House. Lobbying activity took place in the third floor hallways where the Senate and Legislative chambers are located. Staff leaders assisted us in locating our representatives as they headed from meetings to their sessions, and everyone was successful in having at least one five-minute conversation.

We were told that our representatives genuinely welcome members of the general public to meet them at the State House so they can hear our opinions and requests. This experience was invaluable in showing us how we can influence the legislative process by the most direct way possible – in person.



Photo: Susan Gilpin, Dana Humphreys and Janette Gustafson with (on left) Cathy Breen, Director of Government Affairs, Maine Conservation Alliance.

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

~ *Easter Services were a De “Light”*

Easter morning FCC family and friends welcomed in the rising sun at the Portland Yacht Club; temperatures were chilly but spirits were high.

Two more services followed in the FCC sanctuary with a well attended Easter egg hunt in between.

The 10:30 a.m. service was highlighted by the confirmation of four new members to the congregation, each bringing a basket of talents, and a potential for fresh, new perspectives to the church. *Welcome young people.*



Pastor Geoff leads a procession of FCC's young attendees on Palm Sunday morning. The 2025 Lenten season also included a silent but moving Maundy Thursday service with special readings provided by attendees, followed the next day by a day long Good Friday vigil, and a beautifully presented labyrinth devotional walk facilitated by FCC member The Rev. Joan Murray.

Photos courtesy of Mary Schendel.

Confirmand Skye Glover with confirmation mentor Sus Clark.



Confirmand Charlotte Talmadge with confirmation mentor Debbie Reifsnnyder.



Confirmand Lucas Rodas with confirmation mentor John Goodrich.



Confirmand Lucy Herring with confirmation mentor Dana Humphreys.



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

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

Susan Clark ~ 1

Cathy Sanders ~ 15

Nancy Ladd ~ 22

Grace Parker ~ 23

Sam Ladd ~ 26

Alan Saabye ~ 28

Joan Murray ~ 29

Joyce White ~ 29

Henry Demetriou ~ 30

London Herring ~ 31

**Let's do (a continental)
Breakfast Ladies!**

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

Wednesday, May 21 @ 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, May 19

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

so we can plan accordingly.

See you there!

The Men's Breakfast...

will be held

Saturday, May 10 @ 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

Youth and Families Ministry Coordinator Position Open

This is a part-time position supporting learning, formation, and fun with our younger members and their families, in partnership with the Christian Education Ministry. If you, or anyone you know, has experience or interest and gifts in walking alongside and supporting young people as they learn and grow—in their life in the world, and in the life of faith—[please share this opportunity](#), and be in touch!

**The June edition of *Steeplenotes*
material submittal deadline is
Friday, May 23, 2025**

**Submitted articles should be final and
print ready, pictures complete with cap-
tions in jpeg format can be included.**

COMMUNITY EVENTS

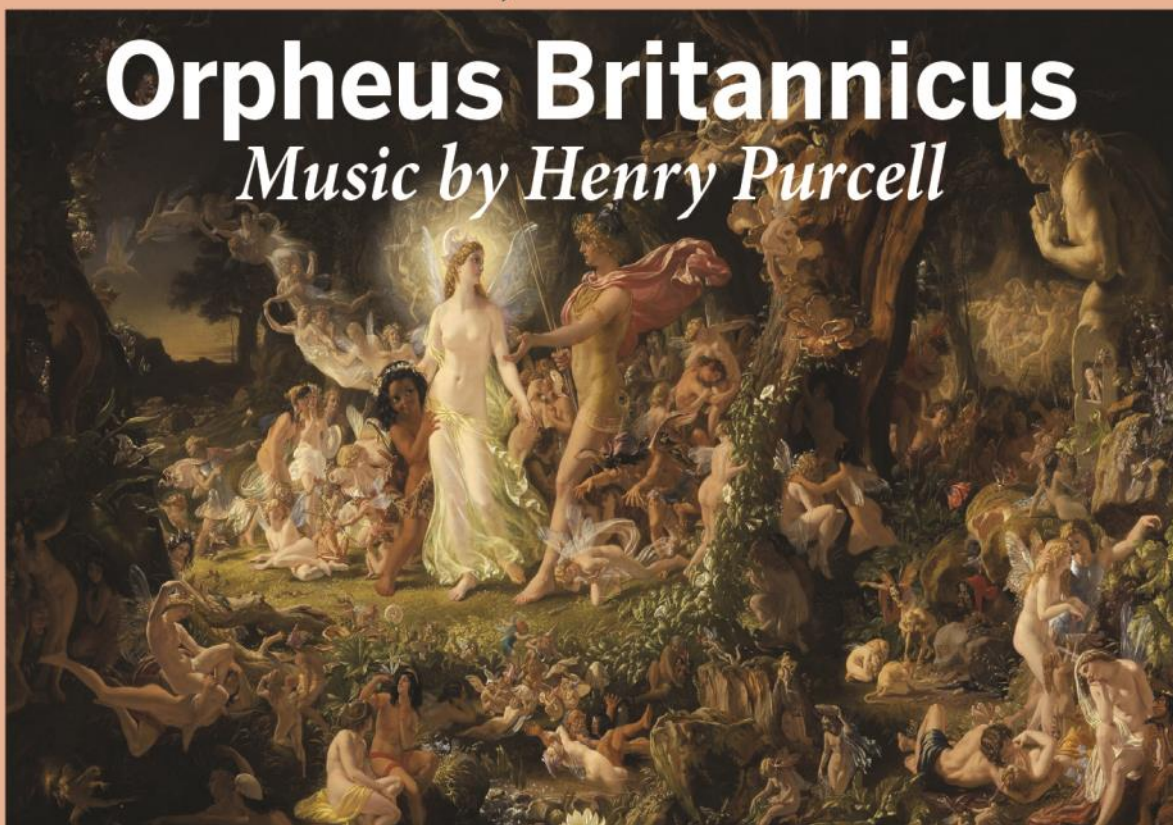


ST MARY SCHOLA

presents

Orpheus Britannicus

Music by Henry Purcell



The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania painting by Joseph Noel Paton

Saturday, May 17, 2025 at 4:00pm

Doors open at 3:30pm

First Parish in Portland, Unitarian Universalist

James Kennerley, Artistic Director

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT stmaryschola.org

\$30 in advance and \$35 at the door • Students 21 and under are free.



MAY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6pm AA-Fellowship	2	3 Annual Yard Clean Up <i>Progressive Dinner</i>
4 9:30 am hybrid service & Communion See pg. 3 for details.	5	6 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	7 6pm GT Series	8 9am Casco Bay Bells sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship 7:30 pm Building & Grnds. Mtg. (Zoom)	9	10 8:30am Men's Breakfast
11	12	13 9am Tues book grp. Parlor (See pg. 6 for details.) 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	14 10am Cumberland Presentation 6pm GT Series 7pm Finance Mtg.	15 6pm AA-Fellowship	16	17
18 9:30 am hybrid service ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOWING WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY	19 7pm Governing Board Mtg. (Google)	20 9am Tues book grp. parlor 12pm Knitters 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm AA 7:15pm Bell Rehearsal	21 8:30am Women's Bkfst 4 pm FCC Book Club (See pg. 7 for details.) 6:30 pm Green Team Mtg. (classroom)	22 9am Casco Bay Bells Sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship	23 <i>deadline for June Steeplenotes material submission</i>	24
25 9:30 am hybrid service Mission Moment			28 10am Cumberland Presentation	29 9am Casco Bay Bells Sanctuary 6pm AA-Fellowship	30	31 10:30am The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Erb Memorial, reception to follow downstairs

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Daily Lectionary Readings for May 2025

Thurs., May 1

Psalm 30
Isaiah 5:11-17
Revelation 3:14-22

Fri., May 2

Psalm 30
Isaiah 6:1-4
Revelation 4:1-11

Sat., May 3

Psalm 30
Genesis 18:1-8
Luke 14:12-14

Sun., May 4

Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]
Psalm 30
Revelation 5:11-14
John 21:1-19

Mon., May 5

Psalm 121
Ezekiel 1:1-25
Acts 9:19b-31

Tues., May 6

Psalm 121
Ezekiel 1:26—2:1
Acts 26:1-18

Wed., May 7

Psalm 121
Isaiah 6:1-8
Luke 5:1-11

Thurs., May 8

Psalm 23
Ezekiel 11:1-25
Revelation 5:1-10

Fri., May 9

Psalm 23
Ezekiel 20:39-44
Revelation 6:1—7:4

Sat., May 10

Psalm 23
Ezekiel 28:25-26
Luke 12:29-32

Sun., May 11

Acts 9:36-43
Psalm 23
Revelation 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

Mon., May 12

Psalm 100
Ezekiel 37:15-28
Revelation 15:1-4

Tues., May 13

Psalm 100
Ezekiel 45:1-9
Acts 9:32-35

Wed., May 14

Psalm 100
Jeremiah 50:17-20
John 10:31-42

Thurs., May 15

Psalm 148
Ezekiel 2:8—3:11
Revelation 10:1-11

Fri., May 16

Psalm 148
Daniel 7:13-14
Revelation 11:15

Sat., May 17

Psalm 148
Daniel 7:27
Revelation 11:16-19

Sun., May 18

Acts 11:1-18
Psalm 148
Revelation 21:1-6
John 13:31-35

Mon., May 19

Psalm 133
1 Samuel 20:1-23, 35-42
Acts 11:19-26

Tues., May 20

Psalm 133 65:17-25
2 Samuel 1:4-27
Acts 11:27-30

Wed., May 21

Psalm 133
Leviticus 19:9-18
Luke 10:25-28

Thurs., May 22

Psalm 67
Proverbs 2:1-5
Acts 15:36-41

Fri., May 23

Psalm 67
Proverbs 2:6-8
Acts 16:1-8

Sat., May 24

Psalm 67
Proverbs 2:9-15
Luke 19:1-10

Sun., May 25

Acts 16:9-15
Psalm 67
Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5
John 14:23-29 or
John 5:1-9

Mon., May 26

Psalm 93
1 Chronicles 12:16-22
Revelation 21:5-14

Tues., May 27

Psalm 93
2 Chronicles 15:1-15
Revelation 21:15-22

Wed., May 28

Psalm 93
2 Chronicles 34:20-33
Luke 2:25-38

Thurs., May 29

Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 47 or
Psalm 93
Ephesians 1:15-23
Luke 24:44-53

Fri., May 30

Psalm 97
Exodus 33:12-17
Revelation 22:6-9

Sat., May 31

Psalm 97
Exodus 33:18-23
John 1:14-18



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

E-mail: info@foresidechurch.org Web: www.foresidechurch.org

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