STEEPLENOTES

A Newsletter of

The Foreside Community Church
United Church of Christ

November 2026



Ebbe takes the pulpit during Youth Sunday held October 25th.

PASTORAL NOTES



…but speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. - Ephesians 3:15-16

Dear Foreside friends,

Last week, as our youth led us in parts of worship, they also helped us to bless the work of our Prayer Shawl Knitters. It was meaningful watching them stretch those colorful and literal labors of love from one side of the sanctuary to the other, and often from one generation to the next. Of course, the metaphor extends: here we are lovingly knit together, an echo of those first bodies of Christ—first inspired by the Holy Spirit, but also painstakingly crafted by faithful apostles—centuries ago. We recognize that lasting bonds of love and community are not an accident. They are the work of countless (or perhaps carefully counted!) tiny works of care: knits and purls over hours, days, years… that become something even greater; whose beauty and meaning arrive in our live as a blessing and a grace freely given.

- As we prepare to honor and remember the saints of our lives, we give thanks for each of those saints that first drew us in and knit us into this place. We rejoice in the work of their lives which brought meaning and joy to ours.
- As we gather our gifts both to improve and repair our facilities in our capital campaign, and to sustain our ministries on the Foreside and beyond in the annual appeal, we find that every gift given in love is essential, and is gathered into God's work beyond our imagining.
- As we prepare to discern our nation's way in elections, we strive to carry in us God's call to love of self and neighbor that will weave us together as communities striving to care for each and for with policies of justice, mercy, and love.

Sometimes, we need to step back in order see the gift—the fabric—of this place. Our friend, Jackie Bates, asked me to share this note with you all, which reminded me of just how blessed we are by God's work, and the work of so many to nurture community here:

> *As many of you know, I am undergoing a 6-month regimen of chemotherapy for pancreatic cancer which was fortunately caught early in July. In the past, I've been fortunate to have had a healthy life but sometimes wondered about what it would be like to be overcome by a life-threatening illness. I thought about the physical ramifications but not in my wildest dreams imagined what an outpouring of kindness, support and love I would receive from all of you. Your prayers, calls, cards, and meals have been so greatly appreciated and welcomed. I thank each and every one of you for all you have done for Peter and me and hope to see you in church soon.*
>
> *Love,*
> *Jackie*

Thanks be to God for the ways in which we are knit together in this community: in ways that help us to build up the body of Christ in this congregation, to serve as that body in the wider world, and to wrap each other in those bonds of commitment and care in times of trial…and in times of rejoicing in the gift of this life we are blessed to share.

Three Sisters Potluck on Friday November 6th

Please join the Green Team and Fellowship for a potluck celebrating the Three Sisters on Friday November 6th at 6 pm.

Who or what are the three sisters, you ask. The three sisters were the mainstay of Abenaki agriculture in Maine. The first sister is **corn**, planted in little mounds. It will grow tall to support the second sister. The second sister is **beans**, planted in the mounds 2 weeks after the **corn**. The beans pump nitrogen into the soil. The third sister is **squash,** planted 2 weeks after the beans. The third sister spreads her leaves all around the mound to create shade and hold in moisture. Together in community they thrive.

Why the three sisters' theme? Because together we thrive as a community just like the three sisters and it is a way to celebrate and acknowledge all that nature gives us during this time of Thanksgiving. We also found out last year there are so many things one could make with these three. This year I am going to make a desert with beans.

Fellowship and the Green Team are asking you to join us in this celebration by bringing a dish to share at the potluck – preferably one that includes corn, beans, or squash/pumpkin. Of course, if you have your heart set on bringing something else, that is fine as well. We welcome all dishes. If you need ideas for a Three Sister dish, feel free to reach out to **Liz Ventre.** She has lots of recipes to share. So, mark your calendars for a meal together to celebrate our community and the gifts that nature provides.



Time to Buy Your Pies!!!



Starting in November, we will have pies available for sale. Flavors available will be published in the Weekly Updates. **Some flavors we have thus far are apple, berry, pumpkin, pumpkin cheesecake, blueberry, and Fudge Crostata with Raspberry Sauce. More flavors will be announced as the bakers decide on what they wish to make.**

Each pie is $25. There are multiple apple and pumpkin pies available. Please pay Christina directly. I will keep her posted on who has bought which pie. I will also let the baker know to whom their pie is going.

The pies will be dropped off at the church on Wednesday morning, November 25 unless you and your baker make other arrangements. Each baker is using their own 9-inch pie plates, so please arrange to return the dish to the baker after Thanksgiving.

Help us kick off the church fair with the proceeds from the pie sale and enjoy what I am sure will be a delicious pie for your holiday!

Worship Notes

Evening Prayer returns on Wednesday, November 11, and will continue through the Advent Season. Join us at **6:00pm** for a brief service of prayer, candlelight, quiet, and communion. All are welcome to this chance to reflect and renew in the middle of the week.



Angel Tree

For more than two decades Justice & Outreach has invited our church family to be Christmas Angels, to provide special care for a child in need of essential clothing. In the hope that we will not burden our church with too many requests we have limited our list of children. Each child and a parent has provided J&O with information on what is most needed, and we have made out a personal tag for our "Charlie Brown Christmas Tree." The children come from a variety of backgrounds: children who have lost their primary bread winner, some have lived through overseas terror, some who are disabled or have family members who are disabled - all live in poverty.

This year 3/4 of the children are local and 1/4 of the children are indigenous children from the Pine Ridge Reservation. The Angel tags list the first name, age, gender, and size clothing needed. Because we are aware everything is more costly this year, we have worked hard to list only the most urgently needed items. If possible, we can try to find some additional items through Maine Needs. For the children of Pine Ridge arrangements will involve having J&O fulfill your requests through Amazon Prime. We encourage Angel sponsors to shop for sales or even to partner with a friend to fulfill the needs listed.

The Angel tags will be available starting on Sunday, November 8 and we ask that all local gifts be returned wrapped by Sunday, November 29. Please securely tape the child's name tag onto the package. J&O ministry will sort and bag gifts by families and then all will be delivered early in December. Gifts may be left in the church office during the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.

If you have questions about your child or the process, please contact ***Lisa Nash*** for information about Pine Ridge children. For information about local children please contact ***Dotty Blanchette.*** Thank you for your compassion and generosity.

THANKSGIVING DINNER AT CHURCH IS ON!!!! 1pm on NOVEMBER 26, 2026



Kathie McCatherin has graciously (I am so grateful) offered to be the point person to play hostess, and supervise the clean up on Thanksgiving Day.

As in the past, the turkey will be provided for all to enjoy. The side dishes for a typical dinner will be provided by everyone in attendance. Our thought is for people to bring whatever makes them smile when they think of a happy Thanksgiving dinner. Kathie would like an idea of what type of dish people are bringing, so I will include that on the sign up.

A sign-up sheet will be down in the coffee hour room by Sunday November 1, or you can text or email me, and I will put you on the list. We do need to know how many people are coming in order to set up enough places.

This dinner is for anyone (singles, couples or families) who would like to dine with a slightly larger group or simply don't want to be alone. It is for anyone in or out of our church community! So please invite neighbors and friends. (Last year several of my knitting friends came and had a very good time). For questions or to sign up please contact me at Carriepenrose@gmail.com or 207-415-5513. Thank you!

Happy Halloween to all you energetic gifted, artistic, imaginative, generous people who work on the fair! It is **spooky** how little time we have left before **Saturday December 5 (8:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.)** and arguably the best fellowship event of the year!

You know what to do between now and then – I recount these things every year – knit, sew, gather, can, jell, pickle, and donate. Thursday afternoons after 12 you will find knowledgeable volunteers in the fellowship hall, pricing and crafting and gluing and organizing, and ready to help **YOU** find a way to take part.

Every year we try to put a little different twist on the fair just to keep it interesting and cozy and pretty. This year I hope to recruit children to decorate a whacky candy-covered gingerbread church. Feel free to give me your leftover Halloween candy, just as long as it isn't orange!



As usual, I'm looking for items for the silent auction – We love experiential donations! Weekend in a ski cabin or beach cottage, ride in a boat, dinner delivered to a buyer, guided hike, and the like – Use your imagination! Share your talents and knowledge with your fellow church members. Help make our magic happen!

See you Thursday afternoon!
Carol Ward (and Jill Fox)

State Street Winter Family Shelter News & A Call for Volunteers

The State Street Winter Family Shelter will be ready to open on November 15, 2026 for the winter season. Shifts are as follows: 6PM - 8PM / 8PM - 7:30AM / 7:30AM - 9:45AM

The management team is in the process of getting the website ready for the season. Once the link is open, volunteers can register for the shifts you want. Please do not start early with last year's link. New volunteers are needed and will need to complete a background check on the SSWFS website (https://sswfs.galaxydigital.com). This background check is good for 5 years. Options are being worked on for volunteer parking.

Thank you for your help in keeping families safe and out of the cold. This important work can only exist and operate with the help of our volunteers. This is a concrete way to help those in need during these trying times.

For more information please contact the following people via email or text: **Laura Lepine (207) 899 5867** or **Carrie Penrose (207) 415 5513**

The Christian Education Ministry says,

"Hold this date!"



Connect with other FCC parents! Join Pastor Geoff and fellow FCC parents for another open-ended conversation about parenting, family life, and how our church community can best support you. The next opportunity for gathering with other FCC parents is as follows: **Sunday, November 1 from 4-5 pm in FCC's large classroom upstairs.** This conversation will focus on teen/young adult years. (No childcare). Have questions or want to know more? Contact Wendy at wendyrtracy@gmail.com. Hope you can join us!

Also, save this date: Christmas Fair Crafting!

November 15, after worship, in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to join as we create crafts for the Christmas Fair. **Stay tuned as more details to follow!**

FCC Book Club Updates

For our October selection, Stoner by John Williams, nine of us had an hour-long discussion exploring the psychological aspects of Stoner and the people who influenced his life. Despite the many challenges and obstacles he encountered, he also experienced true joy and passion in his career, lasting friendships, and moments of deep love. Throughout his life, he remained true to his principles, proving that a solitary and stoic life can still be beautiful and meaningful (a true existential hero). Can anyone ask for more?

Now for November, we move onto another fun book by Frederik Backman. My Friends is a "dual-timeline novel about four dysfunctional teenagers who form a powerful bond and an 18-year-old foster care survivor named Louisa, all connected by a famous painting and a life-changing train journey." (quote from Amazon). **We will meet on November 18 at 4:00 p.m. in the classroom** for this discussion. It is fairly long but a fast read, so get started now. As always, we welcome anyone who wishes to join in any of our friendly conversations. Hope to see you all then.

Mimi

CONSUMER CONSUMPTION IN AMERICAN CULTURE

The US ranks #1 in consumer spending compared to other industrialized nations. In 2023, American consumer spending topped $18.8T nationally with China coming in at a distant second at $7.T. What does this mean for the waste stream, the toxic-byproducts of production, and the other ways we impact the earth through our buying habits? Let's get curious and explore what this means for us, individually, and as a collective society. We'll discuss ways we could look at our society through the lens of consumption and outline practical ways to reduce our own impact. **On Sunday, November 15 following worship, we will have a group discussion around these issues in the large classroom.**

Consumer Consumption Week #1 tip:

Did you know there are resources in our area to fix broken items for free? So often we "throw away" electronics or other items that we believe are broken but could be fixed! Here are a couple of options:

Ripe for Repair - A semi-regular hang to fix our broken things, learn new skills, teach each other stuff, and build community across social circles. Free & open to all. www.ripe4repair.org There's also an opportunity on this site to join the Maine Community Repair Network.

Consumer Consumption Week #2 tip:

Did you know that we have options right in our own back yard to borrow rarely used items rather than purchase them to have them sit on a shelf in our homes?

Check out:

Maine Tool Library, 224 Anderson Street, Portland

https://portlandmainetoollibrary.org/?page_id=70

https://portlandmainetoollibrary.org/wp/

And….you can tap into a "library of things" at the following public libraries!

Falmouth Memorial Library

Prince Memorial Library- Cumberland

Curtis Memorial Library- Brunswick

Fall Walk at Riverfront Woods Preserve Highlights Wabanaki Heritage

Maine naturalist and retired UCC minister Susan Gilpin, a member of FCC's Green Team, led about twenty members and friends of our congregation on a walk through the Riverfront Woods Preserve in Yarmouth on Sunday afternoon, October 4. Corey and John Goodrich hosted a gathering for participants at their home after the hike.





The Riverfront Woods Preserve is one of the last remaining pieces of unfragmented habitat and shoreline along the Royal River in Yarmouth, supporting beavers, otters, deer and a variety of bird species and distinct flora.



Its trails are designed for wheelchairs, baby carriages and comfortable walking with informational Wabanaki interpretive signs., though dogs and bikes are not allowed. The preserve is a collaborative project of the Town of Yarmouth, Royal River Conservation Trust, members of the Wabanaki (Chuwaponahki) Alliance and other community groups. For more information, visit https://www.rrct.org/locations/riverfront-woods-preserve

Participants learned about the history of the Wabanaki or Chuwaponakhi Confederacy and its five remaining tribes — the Abenaki, Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq and Maliseet. Spirituality infused every part of existence, rooted in respect for the animals, waters and ancestors. There was no concept of ownership of land or its products.

Blessing of the Animals Well Attended

On the afternoon of October 18th, about 20 four legged-friends (dogs and cat!) and their humans came for a 'Blessing of the Animals' Service. We listened for God speaking in the wonders of creation and in the love shared between us and our more-than-human friends and family, sharing in a liturgy partially created by our ministry intern, Skye Glover. Everyone sat, stayed, and was blessed!





A Warm *"Thank You!"* from member Susan Hayhurst and the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland





Susan poses with two friends during the fund raising; one with glasses, and one without!

Thanks to all the members and friends of FCC for supporting this very valuable fund raiser event. So many FCC people donated that in I raised $8,372 - which was the highest of all the sleep-in competitors! (The Board of Directors raised a little bit more, but were not participating in the sleep in.) I couldn't believe it! The people from FCC were a huge part of making it a success. It goes directly towards supporting the animals. Support that is getting more important yet more diminishing in volume. Our theme of the overnight event was "American Gothic Farm," and we set up the guinea pig and rabbit area to reference the painting American Gothic.

Best,
Susan

A HUGE THANK YOU! to all the friends and members of the Foreside Community Church who made the October 2026 Community Supper, hosted by the Falmouth Congregational Church, and benefitting the Falmouth Food Pantry such an amazing success. The donation of your time and efforts, as well as generous donations made such a difference. The food was delicious and plentiful, and over $9,663.00 was collected with an additional $5,155.00 **for a grand total of $14,818.00!**

Now remember.....SAVE THE DATE OCTOBER 21, 2027 ~ Hope to see you there, again!

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 **9:30a** All Saints Worship *with Garden Blessing* **4p** Parents Gathering	**2** **6-7:30p** *Vigil for an Election* (6pm silent reflection, 7pm vigil service)	**3** **12p** Prayer Shawl Knitters **6:15p** Choir Rehearsal **7:15p** Bell Rehearsal **7:15p** AA Meeting	**4** **10a** Centering Prayer	**5** **9:30a** Bells of Casco Bay **12p** Christmas Fair Prep **6p** AA Meeting	**6** **6p** 3 Sisters Potluck	**7**
8 **9:30a** Sunday Worship **4p** Confirmation Class (Falmouth)	**9** **Office closed for staff PTO.**	**10** **12p** Prayer Shawl Knitters **6:15p** Choir Rehearsal **7:15p** Bell Rehearsal **7:15p** AA Meeting	**11** **Veterans' Day** **6p** Evening Prayer	**12** **9:30a** Bells of Casco Bay **12p** Christmas Fair Prep **6p** AA Meeting	**13**	**14** **8:30a** Men's Breakfast
15 **9:30a** Sunday Worship **11a** Green Tips Session	**16** **7:00p** Governing Board	**17** **12p** Prayer Shawl Knitters **6:15p** Choir Rehearsal **7:15p** Bell Rehearsal **7:15p** AA Meeting	**18** **8:30a** Women's Breakfast **10a** Centering Prayer **4p** FCC Book Club **6p** Evening Prayer **7p** Finance	**19** **9:30a** Bells of Casco Bay **12p** Christmas Fair Prep **6p** AA Meeting **7:30p** Building & Grounds	**20**	**21**
22 **9:30a** Sunday Worship **10:45a** Green Team **4p** Confirmation Class (Falmouth)	**23**	**24** **12p** Prayer Shawl Knitters **6:15p** Choir Rehearsal **7:15p** Bell Rehearsal **7:15p** AA Meeting	**25** **10a** Centering Prayer **6p** Evening Prayer	**26** **Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closed** **1p** Thanksgiving Dinner **6p** AA Meeting	**27** **Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closed**	**28**
29 **Advent Begins** **9:30a** Sunday Worship	**30** **7:30p** CE Meeting	1	2	3	4	5