

# The Messenger

First Parish Congregational Church ,UCC

The Church with Love and Hope to Share



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## The Pastor's Perspective ...

We have completed our Lenten walk, and we were blessed along the way. I would like to offer my sincere gratitude for all of our guest preachers that offered their messages to guide us: Reverend Peter Gray, Reverend Carlton Gunn, Reverend Bill Donoghue, Reverend Merle Steva, Reverend Rick Huleatt, Reverend Dr. Doug Nielsen. Their words were deeply personal, inspirational and meaningful, and I am exceedingly grateful for their leadership.

The month of April brings us to the destination of our Lenten journey ... Easter Sunday! After a week of tremendous highs and heartbreaking lows, the disciples learned the truth of Jesus' promise. The tomb was empty! He is risen! It was resurrection day!! Jesus has risen, and it was also resurrection day for the disciples. They rose from the gloom and sorrow of the crucifixion. They rose from sadness and despair to overwhelming joy. They rose from being followers of Jesus to become the bearers of the Good News!

Their lives changed the moment that they met Jesus. He called them out of their ordinary lives and led them on an extraordinary journey. After the crucifixion, they may have thought of returning to those old lives, but the resurrection called them all to new life! They knew that the promises were true. They knew that the love of God had overcome death. They knew that they had to share the Word with the world!

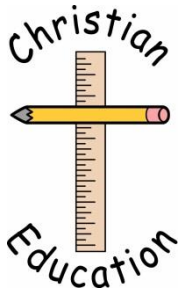
It is somewhat ironic that we receive this wonderful Word as we continue through this global pandemic. On the Sunday that we celebrate the stone being rolled away from the tomb, we are still confined by the threat of the coronavirus. We dream of that moment when this stone will also be rolled aside, and we can rush forth with shouts of "Hallelujah!"

We are almost there. The vaccination rate is going up. Despite the fact that the infection rate is climbing again, we are hopeful that the vaccinations will help flatten any surge that may be on the horizon. The COVID task force met the third week of March. We are watching the numbers and the guidelines. The bipolar ionization system will be installed during the April school vacation week. That system will work to eliminate the presence of the virus in our air. Our tentative plan is for a phased-in resumption of in-person worship beginning in June. We will practice the recommended protocols: reservations, signing in, masking, social distancing, no passed or shared objects, no singing, and no fellowship hour. We will limit the number who will be able to attend, and increase (or decrease) the number depending upon the circumstances. Of course, we will continue to livestream all of our worship services. Our hope and our prayer is that we will be able to expand our in-person ministries in September.

The signs of life are all around us ... people are spending more time outside, little green shoots are pushing their way through the soil of our gardens, the birds are filling the air with their songs. We are also feeling the same promise of life here at First Parish Church. We will be together soon!

May God bless you all!

Scott



I know that my heart is breaking and I'm sure yours are too over the recent events in the news. More shootings.

More people's lives ending in such violent and senseless ways, more families grieving. Such a waste. Some days it is hard just getting out of our beds. Some days it is hard not to be hopeless. That is when God comes into our lives. That is when our Faith family comes together. That is when we look to God, to our church, to each other to find HOPE. How wonderful our world could be if we could live by

*the nine key teachings of Jesus*

- radical **love**
- lavish **generosity**
- extravagant **forgiveness**
- inclusive **hospitality**
- compassionate **action**
- selfless **service**
- a passion for **justice**
- creative **nonviolence**
- simple **living**

As Easter approaches let's remember the Pomp and Circumstances of Palm Sunday, The Joy of Easter and the Resurrection of our Risen Lord. Let's remember the HOPE.

Happy Easter,

*Kris*



## Pilgrim Lodge

We have recently received word that Pilgrim Lodge will not be operating in full capacity this summer. The pandemic is still with us and therefore making it hard for PL to reopen safely. After reading the letter it does seem like there will be opportunities to visit Pilgrim Lodge on day visits. As soon as we know how this will play out we will get the word out to support PL in any way we can. Pilgrim Lodge is a very important part of our church's ministry and we want to encourage all ages to experience this beautiful place.



**SAVE THE DATE**

## Vacation Bible School

July 6-9, 2021  
Tuesday – Friday  
9-11:30 AM

In person/Covid protocols  
Children 4 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Our theme for this year is **Discovery on Adventure Island**. Our Bible verse is: **“Arise, shine! Your light has come; the LORD’S glory has shone upon you!”**

— Isaiah 60:1

More information and online registration will be available next month.





## Confirmation

April 11<sup>th</sup> is our Confirmation Sunday.

This class, due to the pandemic, has been waiting for this day for almost a year. All of the youth are very involved in the church and have been seen in choir, playing instruments, skits, and a variety of other activities. They have so much talent and love to share with their faith family. Please welcome to our church the Confirmation class of 2021. A special drive thru in their honor will be after the worship service on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Our newest First Parish UCC members will be in the parking lot waiting to greet you. Please come and greet them.

## First Parish



At our March Christian Education Team meeting a proposal by Freddie Connelly was discussed. The proposal for First Parish : To better connect First Parish to the LGBTQ+ Community. The group's core missions would be to Educate, Outreach and Celebrate. The Christian Education Team voted to support this proposal and is excited to see it happen. Freddie and the CE Team is seeking others who would like to lift up these core missions within our Church and within our community. Please email Freddie: [freddie.connelly@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:freddie.connelly@firstparishsaco.org) or Kris: [kris@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:kris@firstparishsaco.org) More information will be in our May Newsletter.

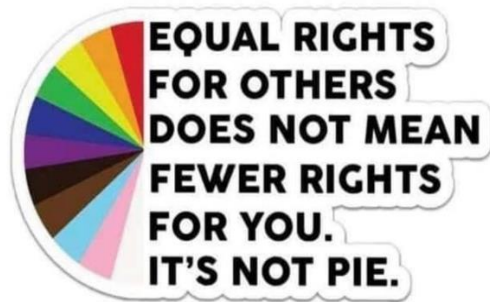


## Fellowship

This year we will be putting together our College Care Packages for our college kids. If you have a youth at college please email:

[kris@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:kris@firstparishsaco.org) and let me know name, address of your student and year, (ie. freshmen, sophomore etc.).

We would like to ask our church family for contributions of items for these care packages. We are specifically looking for items that are individually wrapped, small, and light in weight (we mail these care packages). Some examples: candy, popcorn, small packets of kleenex, band aids, small packets of hand wipes (no liquid please). These packages will be sent out mid-April. There will be a special laundry basket in a shopping cart that will be placed outside the church doors beginning **April 1st** Thank you for supporting this fun way of connecting our college students with our church.



# Easter Activities and Egg Hunt



The Christian Education Team hosted an Easter Activities and Egg Hunt the last Saturday in March.

Families had options as to how they would like to participate. Many took part in participating in all the activities. Some of our families opted to have everything bagged up for them to do at home. Last year at this time we had to cancel this event due to the pandemic so it was nice to have our Church school children hunting for eggs and having fun together, socially distancing of course. We hope our Faith community enjoyed seeing some of our Church school participating in the Palm Sunday parade. Thank you to all our families who have supported these activities as we continue on our journey throughout this pandemic. Thank you to our resident Easter Bunny who made a grand appearance.







Simon DiMatteo,  
Parents: Allison and Chris  
Siblings: Anna  
Soccer, Running



Grace Doyle  
Parents: Jennifer and Brian  
Siblings: Caleb  
Zip lining, Long jump, Running



Jamie Johnson  
Parent: Jean Johnson  
Loves to Sing



Dale Siulinski



Karen Brann



Nadine Russell



Hope Poore  
Parents: Jennifer and Nathan  
Siblings: Marston  
Loves to sing



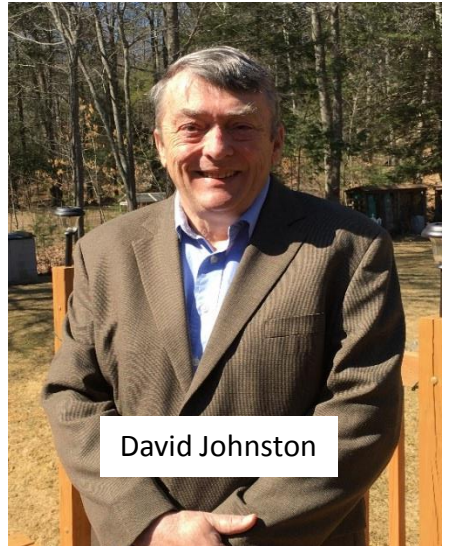
Marston Poore  
Parents: Jennifer and Nathan  
Siblings: Hope  
Creates beautiful cards



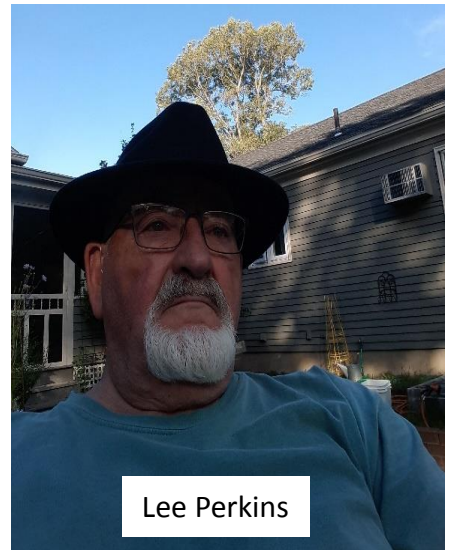
Alex Savage  
Parents: Amanda Romero and Steve Savage  
Stepmom: Jacqui Savage  
Siblings: Emily and Gunnar  
Loves Music



Vanessa Johnston



David Johnston



Lee Perkins





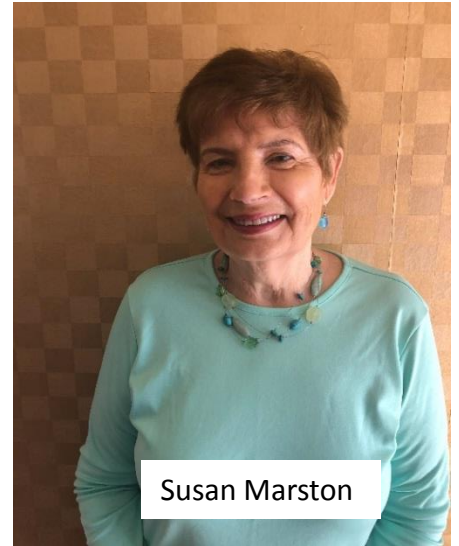
Cam Roberge  
Parents: Danielle and Marc  
Loving people who are accepting



Christa Staten



Ella Walters  
Parents: Karen Hanna and John Walters  
Music, Drama, Gymnastics



Susan Marston





# Music Ministry

Jacqui Savage: Music Director



*It is my goal for Easter this year, for the music to be as uplifting as possible since last year was so disappointing to our choirs. After working so hard for weeks on Easter music, we were unable to sing together on Easter Sunday since just a few weeks prior, we had to stop gathering in the sanctuary. This year, I am excited that all choirs will be singing all the music that we prepared for last Easter. One thing we learned this year – you can't stop us from singing! I hope you enjoy our virtual anthems. Happy Easter! **SAVE THE DATE: Music Sunday will be May 2<sup>nd</sup>***

-Jacqui

## Meet The Musicians:

### Evan Cuddy

Evan Cuddy is a musician and a teacher residing in Portland Maine. He currently serves as Musical Director at both Lyric Music Theatre and Portland Players Theatre. Evan also maintains a private studio that caters to violin and viola students of all ages, and teaches music classes at the West End Village School in Portland. In the summer months, Evan serves as Music Director at Maine State Music Theatre in Brunswick. Evan recently made his Hollywood debut as a featured musician/extra in Little Women. When not teaching or performing Evan enjoys long distance running, long days on the beach, and quality time with his roommate's cat, Chaquita. Evan holds degrees in music performance from Susquehanna University and the University of Southern Maine.



### Easter Brass Ensemble

Members of the Easter Brass Ensemble have all played together for many years as members of the Ocean Park Band, Ocean Park Brass, The Alumni Band of Biddeford Saco and the Alumni Brass group. Many of them have a connection to First Parish as Members or substitutes in Audrey Cabral's Bell Choir. Audrey and Nancy MacNider are also members of the Ocean Park and Alumni Brass. Nancy was responsible for putting the group together for this occasion. Thank you Nancy!!

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet-Adrien Cote
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet-Ron Houle
- 1<sup>st</sup> Trombone-Jeff Chute
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trombone-Dan Evans
- Tuba-Tom Milligan



# Calling All Knitters!

Our prayer shawl ministry has been greatly impacted by the pandemic, like every other aspect of our church life. We are, however, expanding our gifts to others in need. We have distributed 30 prayer shawls - 15 to The Wardwell in Saco and 15 to the Cancer Center in Scarborough. We would like to continue this outreach mission.

We have great faith that gifts of prayer shawls will continue to increase, especially when we can all be together again, so keep knitting, dear Knitters! You can drop off your finished shawls at the church. They will be well cared for until needed.

~Brenda MacDonald~

For those of you interested, but have not yet contributed a prayer shawl, the instructions are below. Also, there is an abundance of yarn in the Women's Ministry closet at church. If you would like to know more about how to access the yarn, please email me: Debbie Grew at [debgrew1@gmail.com](mailto:debgrew1@gmail.com)

*We continue to be ever so grateful for your gifts of time and talent!*



## PRAYER SHAWL DIRECTIONS

Materials: 3 skeins of Lion Brand Homespun yarn (available at Michaels, A.C. Moore or Walmart). Size 11 or 13 needles. Some knitters prefer circular needles and some like size 15 although they are hard to hold. The idea is to get a loose comfortable weave.

### RECTANGULAR SHAWL PATTERN

Cast on 54, 57, 60 or 63 stitches, or some multiple of three. Knit three, purl three to the end of the row. Turn and knit the purl and purl the knit stitches. (If you have 57 or 63 stitches, you will begin every row with knit.) A weave pattern will develop. Knit about 2 and 2/3 skeins in pattern. Use the remainder of the yarn for fringe. The fringe can be as short as three inches or as long as eight or nine inches. It is up to you. A fringe is not necessary but if fringed, tying a knot at the end of each strand prevents fraying.)



## TRIANGULAR SHAWL PATTERN (Circular Needles size 13)

Cast on one stitch.

Row 1: Knit into the front and into the back of stitch (increase made): 2 stitches.

Row 2: Increase, K 1: 3 stitches.

Rows 3-6: Increase, knit across: 7 stitches

Rows 7: K3, YO. Knit across 8 stitches.

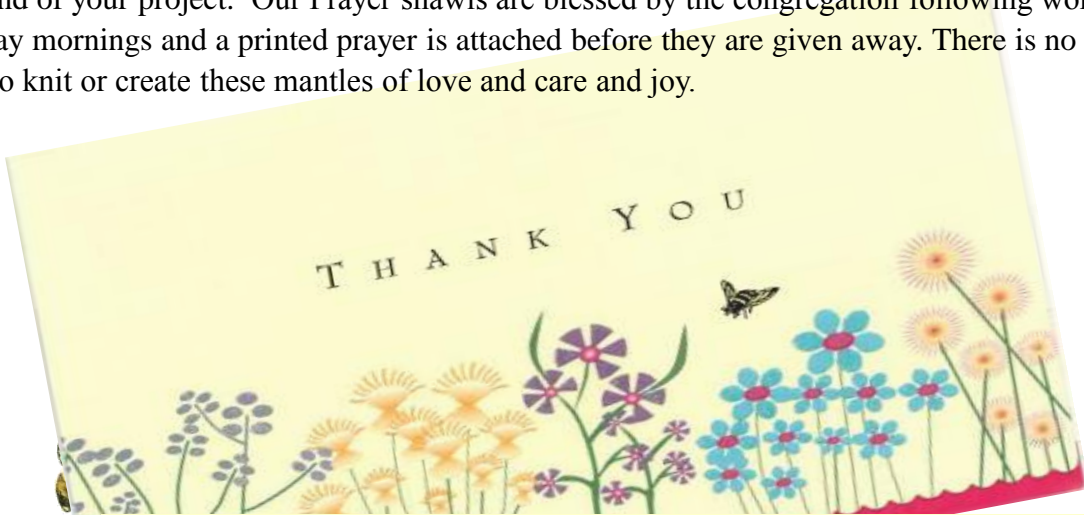
Repeat Row 7 until piece measures approximately 32" in. from cast on edge, ending with an even number of stitches.

Next Row: K 3, YO. \*K2 together, YO: repeat from\* across to last 3 sts, K3.

Next 4 rows: Increase, knit across.

Bind off Row: K 2 together, pass second stitch on right needle over first stitch and finish off.

Prayers: It is suggested that you weave prayers into your shawl as you knit, particularly at the beginning and end of your project. Our Prayer shawls are blessed by the congregation following worship on Sunday mornings and a printed prayer is attached before they are given away. There is no right or wrong way to knit or create these mantles of love and care and joy.



*To the Congregation of the First Parish Congregational Church.*

*Thank you very much for your kindness and compassion as we grieve the loss of our sweet little girl, Hadley Maeve. Although we are not fortunate enough to be a part of your congregation, we feel an incredible connection with you all. You are shining examples of the good of humanity.*

*We are so thankful for the beautiful prayer shawl. Purple has always been what we thought Hadley's favorite color was or would be! We will use this shawl along with the incredible energy which surrounds it as we continue to heal. Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. God Bless.*

*With Love & Gratitude,  
Jill & Eric*

## Flower and Altar

We are blessed to have donations for altar flowers in honor or memory of loved ones. Most Sundays after April 4<sup>th</sup> are open. If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, contact Patrice Tripp at 590-1109 or [rtripp@maine.rr.com](mailto:rtripp@maine.rr.com) or Marcia Lord at 768-1699 or [mvlord@aol.com](mailto:mvlord@aol.com). Please tell us if the flowers are in remembrance of someone, or in honor of a person.

**March 7** Given by Mary Johnson, Jane McKechnie and Nancy Brookshire  
In loving memory of our mother, Helen Mitchell Atkinson

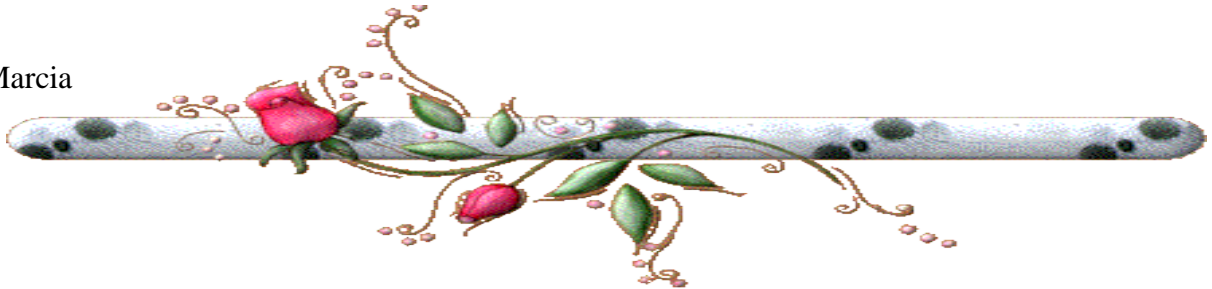
**March 14** Given by Charles & Debra Clark Flower Fund  
In Memory of Fred Clark

**March 21** Given by Jeffrey & Kathleen Larsen  
As a Thank You and Farewell to Our Church Family here at First Parish

**March 28** Large Palms given by Deb & Mike Richard in memory of their daughter, Tracy Lynn.

Pastor Scott and members of the Flower & Altar Team will be available after Palm Sunday service (March 28<sup>th</sup>) to handout palms. Flowers for Easter Sunday will be provided by Flower & Altar again this year. We are all looking forward to the time when we will be together again for worship and fellowship. Happy Spring!

Patrice & Marcia



### Women's Fellowship Meeting

Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30 am in the Atrium

Please call or email Carol SpencerLemay at (207) 284-9088  
or [spencerlemay2@gmail.com](mailto:spencerlemay2@gmail.com) to reserve your spot.

Due to Covid Regulations we will be limiting the number of people to 15.

Thank you!

Carol SpencerLemay.



# MISSIONS

For future reference, the members of the Mission Team were wondering how many members of our church could use a ride to church? In addition, does anyone need a ride to doctor's appointments, or help with grocery shopping? We are uncertain if we can offer this assistance at this time, but we welcome your input.

Please contact Carol SpencerLemay at (207) 284-9088 or [spencerlemay2@gmail.com](mailto:spencerlemay2@gmail.com), or contact any member of the mission team.



## Saco Food Pantry Ministry

Please consider donating the following to re-stock items that are in short supply this month

### Food

- \*Complete Pancake Mix and Syrup
- \*Can Stew, Chili, Hearty Soups and Chowders  
(NO tomato or cream of mushroom)
- \*Spaghetti  
(regular spaghetti, not elbows, etc.)
- \*Rice Pilaf, Rice-a-Roni, Ramen Noodles

### Hygiene Products

- \*Shampoo
- \*Toothbrushes
- \*Bath Tissue
- \*Bar Soap



# Good News Team

Hello and Good Day from the Good News Team! We are starting to make plans for this Summer. We invite you to think about an evening at the Salvation Army Pavilion in Old Orchard Beach. In 2019 we had a wonderful time with The Beatles. Granted, it wasn't Paul, George, John and Ringo, but it sure sounded like them. We will keep you apprised of this developing possibility. What we do know, is the management at the Pavilion has said they will be opening this summer.



We are also looking into a possible visit to the Sea Dogs Park in Portland. We are waiting for them to announce what opportunities might be offered this year. As many of you know, one of the ways we welcomed Scott and Renee was by inviting them to a Sea Dogs Game. At the game, Scott threw one of the first pitches, Robert Guptill sang the National Anthem and Peter Gray Sang God Bless America. They both were sang beautifully! It was just the best afternoon.



Please stay tuned for these and other opportunities for gathering to celebrate us! **If you would like to join the Good News Team**, We would love to have you. Please email me Rick Campbell, at [papagnome@aol.com](mailto:papagnome@aol.com)



## Thank You!



Thank you to Scott for the yummy soup and Karen Donoghue for the delicious bread. It has made recovery from shoulder replacement surgery much easier.

We felt fed and blessed.



Judy and Peter Gray



## A Message From Guy Our Maintenance Man



Greetings everyone, just a reminder I'm here to help when needed.

Please contact me anytime.

My email is [maintenance@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:maintenance@firstparishsaco.org) or you can reach me by calling the church at 207-283-3771.

I look forward to meeting more of you as the church reopens.

Thank you all,

Guy'



## SAY THIS PRAYER QUIETLY

Dear God, I come before you  
at this moment. Please  
Enlighten what is dark in me,  
Strengthen what is weak in me,  
Mend what is broken in me,  
Heal what is sick in me,  
And revive whatever peace  
and love that has died in me.  
This prayer is for me, my family,  
my friends, my enemies and even  
those who hate me. Amen.

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# Easter

Blessings