



The Messenger

*F*irst Parish Congregational Church Saco
The Church with Love and Hope to Share

January, 2022



How YOU can HELP



Web Hosting is looking for anyone interested in providing information to our online community during each Sunday service and other holiday services done on days other than Sunday.

If interested, please e-mail Carol Connelly at carol@freddieandmedesigns.us to set up a time to meet and review the process.



The **2022 Church Council** is seeking a member to fill the Clerk position. The Clerk is an officer of the Church Council who attends monthly Council meetings and provides the meeting minutes. If you are interested in being part of the 2022 Council as the Clerk or have questions, please contact Lynne Siulinski at lynne.siulinski@gmail.com for more details.

Investment Team is looking for additional members for 2022!! This team collaborates with a professional financial advisor to manage the Church's endowment portfolio. We meet 2 to 3 times a year to review current performance and make necessary adjustments. We prepare a yearend report of the market and portfolios performance to share at the annual meetings each January. This is an opportunity to work with some great people, learn the ins and outs of our monetary and fiscal policies, and support the future financial stability of the Church.




Contact Lynne Siulinski at lynne.siulinski@gmail.com for meeting details.



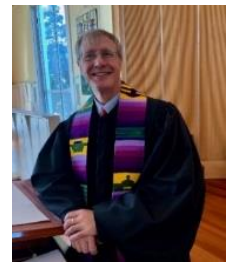
YOU Can Make a Difference!

Scott Cousineau, Senior Minister
 Kristine Galasyn, Director of Christian Education
 Jacqueline Savage, Music Director
 Nadeen DeSilva, Office Manager
 Guy Rochefort, Sexton

12 Beach Street,
 Saco, Me 04072
 207-283-3771

www.firstparishsaco.org



Pastor Scott's Message...



The Pastor's Perspective ...

Here we are ... 2022! What will this new year bring? Will it bring peace, hope, joy, and love for all the world? Will it offer the gift of Jesus Christ?

During the season of Advent we wait, and wait, and wait for the arrival of Christmas. We prepare, and prepare, and prepare. We prepare for parties, presents, and pageants. We prepare for gift-giving and gatherings. It is a season filled with light, and laughter, and activity. It is a season of kindness, compassion and generosity. It is a season of ugly sweaters but beautiful acts of love.

What would happen if we left the Advent wreath and candles in the sanctuary all year long? What would happen if we lit the candles of peace, hope, joy and love every Sunday? What if we never put the Christ candle away? What if the Nativity set found a permanent place in our weekly lives? Would we grow weary of them? Would they become less special because of their constant presence?

How can we keep the spirit of Christmas alive, and meaningful, and vital?

After the Brown Bag Pageant, someone suggested that we do it every year. I must admit that my first reaction was reluctance. I would hate for it to become hum-drum through over-exposure or repetition. But then I began to think of ways to keep it fresh, so ... we shall see!

Back to the question at hand ... how can we keep the spirit of Christmas alive throughout the year? Do we do a pageant once a month? Do we have the various characters from the Christmas Story make frequent appearances in worship or around the church? The radio stations stopped playing Christmas music on the 26th, should we sprinkle some carols throughout the year? Should I add Santa Claus to my repertoire of costumed characters? (I may do that one anyway!)

Do we need some sort of concrete, physical reminder to keep the spirit of Christmas alive?

I know that you are a wonderfully caring and generous church family. I know that your hands and your hearts are open, and you share the light and love of Christ in every season. And I am so very grateful for the many gifts that you give so freely. But just like our parents' reminders to 'play nice,' or 'drive safely,' or to 'be careful,' it does not hurt to hear the words again.

So, let us enter into this new year looking for wonder, prepared to be surprised. Let us look for opportunities to hear the songs of the angels and to share the good news. And let us never depart from that manger in Bethlehem. May we keep the Christ Child ever before us.

Grace and peace,
Scott





Moderator Update



From the Moderator...

A new year always brings new hope. People use the new year to change some aspect of their lives that they are not satisfied with or does not bring them the happiness they seek. The key is to identify facets that need improvement, and then set goals that are realistically achievable with appropriate effort and put a mechanism in place that encourages one to continue in that effort to ensure success. You also need a few "wins" to provide incentive to continue. First Parish Church is in a similar position. The Church Council is in the process of revisiting the organizational structure that has been in place for ten years, recognizing that selected components of that structure are not as effective as they could be. As part of that effort, the Council is performing Mission and Visioning exercises to help clarify our purpose. Our long-term objective is to revisit the entire church governance structure throughout 2022 and develop improved strategies. We will continue to share progress in regular communication with the congregation and seek your insights and guidance. We have the Staff, the facility and the engaged membership to continue to achieve great things. Let us as members of this wonderful church, also plan on changes in 2022. We can help transform lives.

Our annual Generosity Campaign is coming to a close. If you haven't submitted a pledge, it's not too late! Based on the budget requests submitted by each team for 2022, we're a little behind our goal so any help is appreciated. You may still mail or bring your pledge card to the church. Even if you can't pledge this year, it would be nice to hear from you to know that you're okay. Please let us know. Congregational budget meetings are planned for Jan 9 and 16, 2022 in order to review and discuss the 2022 Mission Plan.

We also encourage you to consider giving, not only in financial terms but in pledging your time and talent as well, by participating in one or more of the many groups and activities that First Parish has to offer. There is a lot to do in an active church such as First Parish and we would appreciate your assistance.

Blessings and peace, Dale Siulinski



Church DEACONS

Dear family and friends of First Parish,

Happy New Year to you all. (We are praying that things get better!)

The diaconate is engaged in the exciting process of growing in numbers! Several deacons have decided to step down after years of faithful service, and we are currently reaching out to some members of the church who appear to be “good fits” for our mission, folks who are committed to the church and its ministry, people who demonstrate a willingness to serve regularly, men and women who are open to taking on an important role in the church. Just what is that role?

We have had frequent discussions about what it means to be a deacon at First Parish Church. Diaconates vary from denomination to denomination, and from church to church within those denominations. In some churches, deacons are actually ordained and authorized to preside over certain sacraments.

The diaconate at First Parish consists of ten or more lay people whose primary responsibility is working with the pastor in various spiritual matters. We prepare the sanctuary for worship and make sure that we maintain a welcoming atmosphere for our church family and for new friends. We prepare and serve communion each month and assist at baptisms and, occasionally, at funerals. We participate in study groups and plan to share our findings, eventually, with the community. We are in many ways the public face of First Parish Church.

However, on a personal level, most of us find that being a deacon is also a catalyst for our own spiritual growth. We feel blessed and grateful to have this experience and look forward to welcoming our new deacons in the near future.

Love and blessings,

Nadine Russell and Dan Carter, Co-chairpersons





The New Year is here!
Just like last year we are
still hoping that this New

Year will bring the end to

our pandemic. The good news is that our church is open, we have in person worship, teams are meeting, our choirs are singing, and our children shared the Christmas story with an in person Christmas Pageant. We are still diligent mask wearers, still social distancing, washing hands, and we still continue to take care of each other. Yes, it has still been a different kind of year, but once again the First Parish community has risen to the occasion and has made the best of it.

Our Church school Christmas Pageant was amazing. We had 20 children with 13



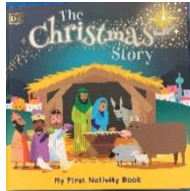
families participating. Thanks to our participants, their families, and all our music directors for making this happen. Many thanks to our youth, (**Jo Fitzgerald, Hope Poore** and **Cam Roberge**) and adult helpers (**Heather Hanscom, Christa and Mike Remillard**) that kept our angels, shepherds and wisemen on track. There are so many moving parts to a Children's Christmas pageant. We are so happy that everyone

loved it and that it brought great JOY to YOU. That is what the Christmas story is all about. Thank you everyone for the kind and beautiful words. They are greatly appreciated. More thank you's to the **Top of the Hill Gang** and our Custodian **Guy** for all the altar maneuvers. To our King soloists: **David Johnston, Phil Blood** and **Peter Gray**. To **Jim Pate**, who is so kind to transport hay from the Harris Farm to and from the church. Thank you to **Bev Harris**. Many hands made this Christmas Pageant possible.



Many thanks to our Youth for their leadership during our 5PM Family Christmas Eve service.

"The Christmas Story" is the name of the book that Pastor Scott and I read for the service. We loved having the children come up to hear the story this year



For the month of January our Children's Message will focus on the Bible stories of Jesus growing up. In the Temple, his Baptism, Temptation in the Desert, in the Synagogue and Healing are our topics. Our Wonder Word for the month is **Journey**.

Happy New Year

Stay safe and stay well

Kris



December

- December 5 Connor Remillard
- December 12 Alex Savage
- December 19 Cam Roberge
- December 26 Chloe Remillard



Jesus says:
*“Let the little
 Children come
 to me”*

-Matthew 19:14

Helping **Lisa** in the Nursery for the month of **December** was:

- 5th **Glenys Salvas**
- 12th **Aldene Walters**
- 19th **Glenys Salvas**
- 26th **Aldene Walters**

Thank you to all who have signed up for helping in our Nursery. Our sign up sheet for the Fall and Winter is up and we hope you will continue your generosity by signing up.

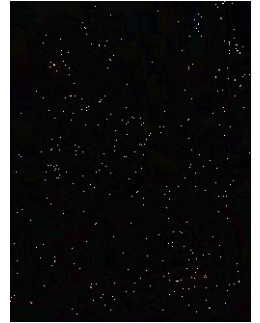
“Its Only One Sunday!”

First Parish Christian Education Team appreciates your time. **Thank you**

SPURWINK
ADOPT-A-FAMILY
 Thank you to all who

participated in this project. We helped out five families, 11 children. Isn't this what Christmas is all about? This year we are back to being able to shop for the gifts. Many people shared with me that they enjoy doing the shopping. Once again, **Susan Anton** and her daughter made Christmas stockings for each child and filled them. Through other generous donations, like three full dinners from the Snowmobile Club (thank you **Gordon Mehlman**) and gift cards we were also able to put food on the table for the holidays.

This year we made **Gingerbread Houses** after worship on Dec. 19th. Each family group had their own kit. Here are the results.



Great job everyone!!



Watch for your **Superbowl Subs** order form in **January** and also on the web site. Subs will be available after church on **Sunday, February 6, 2022.**

We will also do curbside delivery for anyone who would like a sandwich but is still not attending in person worship. At this time we will be taking a special offering for **Souper Bowl Sunday**. This offering will stay in our community.

“I was hungry and you fed me.”---Matthew 25:35, The Message by Eugene Peters





Martin Luther King
Day of Service

January 17, 2022

Not A Day Off, But A Day On

Life's most urgent question is?

“What are you doing for others?”

-Martin Luther King

Due to the pandemic we are still working on a way to make Martin Luther King, Jr Day of Service happen. At this time we ask our Faith community to start collecting **Health and Beauty items**: toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, feminine sanitary products, deodorant (men and women), shampoo etc.

New Underwear, all sizes

New Socks, all sizes

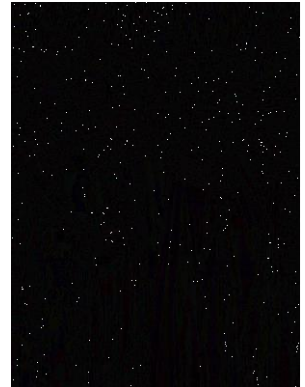
There is a shopping cart outside the parking lot entrance for all items to be left. This cart will be inside on Sunday mornings to collect any donations. A sign up sheet will be available soon. If you would like to help on MLK Day of Service please email me:

kris@firstparishsaco.org

Thank you

Awesome Pictures from our Christmas Pageant.

Thank you Ken Maclay



Flower and Altar Update

Thank you to everyone who ordered the poinsettias to grace the sanctuary for Poinsettia Sunday. We obtain the poinsettias grown in the Morrison Center's greenhouse. The Morrison Center provides services for adults and children with developmental disabilities. You are welcomed to take one of the poinsettias to someone who is unable to get out and enjoy in the sanctuary.

Are you new to the church and looking for a way to get more involved? Join the Flower and Altar Team and make some new friends!



Sunday Flowers

If you'd like to provide flowers during 2022 the new sign up sheets are available outside the Church Office or you can contact:

Patrice Tripp at 207-590-1109 or rtripp@maine.rr.com

or

Marcia Lord at 207-768-1699 or mvlord@aol.com.



Altar Flowers given for the Month of December

Thank you to all who provide flowers for the altar.

November 7th given by Carol & Fred Connelly in memory of Carol's brother, Thomas H. (Tripp) Grosvenor's 74th Birthday on November 8th and Anniversary of his death, 11/23/2020. (this was inadvertently omitted last month)

With Communion, the Pageant and Poinsettia Sunday, there were no additional altar flowers on Sundays in December.

Christmas Eve Service December 24th given in memory of Dr. George Patrick Shaw from his family



Women's Fellowship Update



Women's Fellowship-Reimagined for 2022

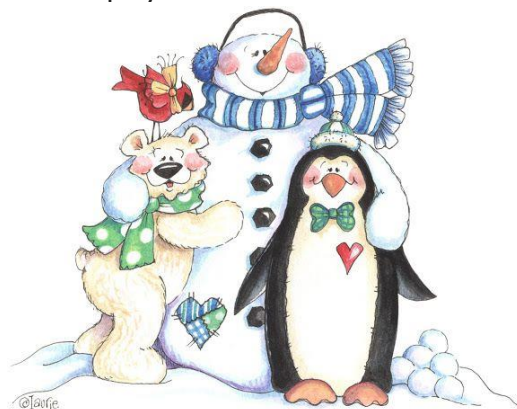
Women's Fellowship "Workshop" has been meeting on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 for decades! Over the years, there were many people in attendance working on a variety of projects for the fair. As with all things, times have changed!

We would like to kick off The New Year in a special way. Please join us at 9:30 for coffee and bring a lunch. If you have any handwork, bring it to work on. (Knitting, crocheting, embroidery, cross-stitch, jewelry making, sewing, etc.) If you would like to learn a new skill, we have plenty of supplies in the closet and many willing teachers, too.

We will also talk about some new ideas for enhancing our community and how we help with various projects around First Parish. We will have our "brown bag" lunches around noon with new friends and old!

This year, we decorated a wreath for the Festival of Trees in memory of 2 steadfast members of the group: Alma Klotz and Priscilla Kelley. The wreath is on display outside the office!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!



"IN MEMORY... OF LIVES WELL-LIVED"

This beautiful wreath was won by Sue Neumeyer at the Festival of Trees!!

Men's Study and Fellowship Group

The Men's Bible Study and Fellowship group's membership is growing and would love to expand its participation even further. We meet each Tuesday at 7:15 PM. The first Tuesday of each month we meet in person and the remaining Tuesday meetings of the month are via Zoom.

Our format has been to study a chapter or two of the Bible each week by first reading then engaging in discussion to understand the meaning and how to apply its lesson to our lives as Christians today. Currently the group is studying Genesis.

If you have an interest in the group, please contact John Grew:

grewjd@gmail.com



Mission Team Update

FMI – Carol SpencerLemay
SpencerLemay2@gmail.com



The RED CROSS is in great need of blood for the blood bank. The **First Parish Congregational Church, Saco, RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE is Saturday, January 29 from 9 am to 2 pm.**

You may sign up to donate before or after the Sunday service - look for the **RED CROSS** sign. You may also sign up to give blood by calling 1-800 RED CROSS, or visit redcrossblood.org and enter our zip (04072) into the red "Find a Blood Drive" box. Next, on the column to the left, click on "BY DISTANCE" and find a time that works for you. If you are not able to give, please encourage others to give. If you can't come January 29, you can sign up for a different date and place via the phone or website. Please help save a life!!



Thank you for donating to the Saco Food Pantry!

THE SACO FOOD PANTRY thanks all those who have donated to their cause. The cart for donations will remain either outdoors or in the atrium so that non-perishable food items will continue to be accepted.



Please donate **shoes and boots** in good or better condition. The items may be left at the shoe table in the Atrium. In particular, we need children's footwear and sturdy boots and shoes for women, but will accept all shoes in clean condition with not too much wear.



OneBody Member Directory

From Our
Good News
Team

Now available to all First Parish members



We're happy to announce the availability of a secured online member directory for First Parish Saco. Once a verified active member has setup access to the directory they will be allowed to submit revisions to the information on file in PowerChurch as well as search for available contact information of other members.

How to access OneBody Member Directory

The directory can be accessed from <https://www.firstparishsaco.org/> and select *Offering & Services* and then *OneBody Member Directory* from the site menu. To logon you will need to use your previously confirmed email address and password.

How to Sign up for a OneBody account

Once you access the directory site from <https://www.firstparishsaco.org/> and select *Offering & Services* and then *OneBody Member Directory* from the site menu please click on *Sign Up for an account if you don't have one*.

On the next screen please select *Verify by email* and enter the email address you have previously provided to First Parish Church for your member account. If the email matches what we have in the directory you will receive an email at that same email address shortly after with a link to create a password for your account. *Please use a complex password to protect access to the directory.*

You will not be able to gain access to the online directory if you are not using the email address the Membership Team has on file.

If you receive an error message when entering your email please contact

membership@firstparishsaco.org and describe the issue you are experiencing so the Membership Team can provide assistance.

[sign out](#)

Search by name



Music Ministry

From Our Music Director

jacqui@firstparishsaco.org

Special Thanks:

Thank you to all of the singers in the Senior, Youth and Junior Choir, to players in the String Quartet Kaitlyn Walsh, Jamison Baker, Maddie Darigan and Evan Cuddy, to Jacqui's students on the piano Lucy and Winnie Dubail, to Stephen Shiman on oboe, to Susan Marston, to Music and Arts who organized the pizza meals for people in both services on Christmas Eve and to everyone who supports the music program at First Parish. Christmas Eve was beautiful and meaningful for all.



Click on the link to view the Choir and Musicians perform.

[O Come, All Ye Faithful](#)





Bell Choir:

A **huge** thanks goes to Audrey Cabral for bringing in the Bell Choir and Brass Players on Christmas Sunday at First Parish! Special thanks to Daniel Evan, Ron Houle, Tom Milligan and Audrey Cabral for playing brass along with our hymns.





Have you ever worked with children in a paid or volunteer capacity?

YOU may qualify to provide treatment level foster care!



What does that even MEAN?

1. You'll be partnered with an agency for support and expertise.
2. The children you foster may have a mental health diagnosis such as ADHD, ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder), PTSD or Autism Spectrum disorder.
3. The children you foster will often surprise you with their ability to inspire, amuse, and blossom in your care.

Make a **REAL DIFFERENCE** today by amplifying the call for Maine families and individuals to consider foster care! Go to spurwink.org/foster-care for more information.



The Maine Steiners will be performing on Thursday, January 13th at 7:30pm. Join us at the First Parish Church to enjoy this evening of a cappella music by Maine's premiere male a cappella group.

Donations will be accepted at the door!



Diaper Bank News

First Parish Diaper Bank continues to help more and more low-income families in our tri-town area as the weeks go by. Since we are the only organized diaper bank in York County, we have also provided diapers for families from Kennebunk, Wells, Sanford, Springvale and Parsonsfield.

For the past three months, we have found ourselves consistently giving out more than 1000 diapers each week; sometimes as many as 1600. Over 100 family units have completed our registration forms since this past May and an average of 16 - 25 families visit the diaper bank each week. The majority of these families have more than one child in diapers.

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation and for the surprising donations from the community, the bank has been able to remain sustainable after initially receiving "seed" money from the Pastor's / Deacon's Discretionary Fund.

With a generous gift from FP Women's Fellowship and the regular donations from members and friends of the congregation, we have also been able to offer feminine hygiene products to the women who come to the diaper bank. The need for these items is great.

Please look for the First Parish Annual Report for more detailed Diaper Bank statistics. Please continue to keep yet another amazing FP mission in your prayers and awareness.

Cathy Baillargeon, Pam Mohlin and Nadine Russell



Air Quality at First Parish Church

The church has improved ventilation and indoor air quality. This project was managed by the Facilities Team and was completed in April 2021.

Yankee Air Balancing came in to measure and balance the air flow provided to all the spaces. The volume of air flow had been changed over the years and now the system is more balanced. We hired Trane Co. to install "bi-polar ionization" units in each of the three systems that serve the entire building.

Below are two technical graphics that provide an explanation of what ionization is all about. It's pretty cool technology. Basically, ions attach themselves onto particles in the atmosphere, such as dust, viruses, dander, etc, and render them inert.

Also, the engineer found problems that he fixed, mostly regarding incorrect set points for area temperatures. Those have been corrected and hopefully rooms are a little more comfortable now.

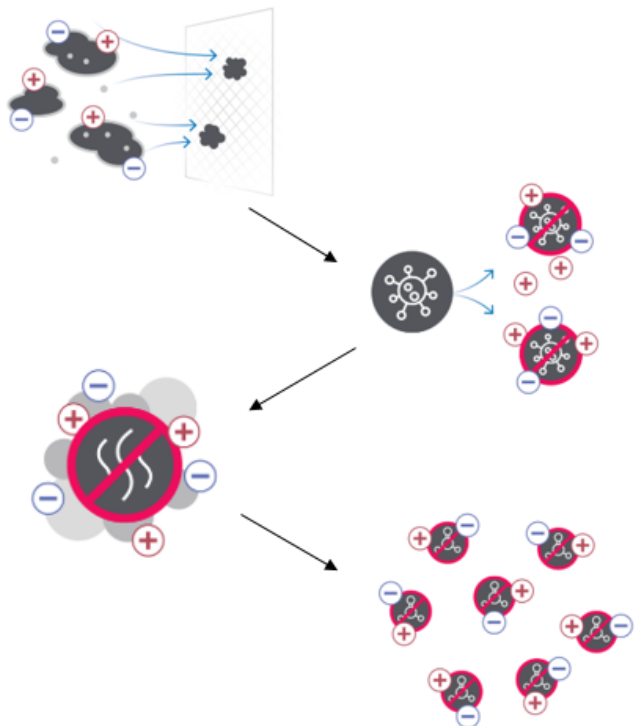
He also made adjustments to allow more fresh outside air into the building. Guy is learning the operation of the system. If you have any questions or concerns regarding temperature or comfort in the rooms, feel free to ask Guy if he can look into it.

Regards, Dale Siulinski

Plasma Air How it Works



- Airborne particles are charged by the ions causing them to cluster and get caught in filters
- As they divide and reproduce bacteria and virus cells bond with oxygen ions and are destroyed
- Odorous gases and aerosols oxidize on contact with oxygen ions and are neutralized
- Oxygen ions cause a chemical reaction with VOCs breaking down their molecular structure



JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
2 8:50am CE Team Service 10am Service 1pm TV Service	3 9am Counters 7pm Big Book	4 9:30am Women's Fellowship Workshop 6:30pm Facilities 7:15pm Men's Fellowship	5 4pm Diaper Bank 6:00pm Girl Scouts	6 9am TOHG 4pm Jr Choir 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm GNT	7 3:30pm Guiding Eyes	8
9 10am Service 11:30am Budget Meeting 11:30am Youth Choir 1pm TV Service	10 9am Counters 7pm Big Book	11 9:30am Women's Fellowship Workshop 7:15pm Men's Fellowship	12 4pm Diaper Bank 6pm Girl Scouts	13 9am TOHG 4pm Jr Choir 6:30pm Choir 6:30pm GNT 7:30pm Maine Steiners	14	15
16 10am Service 11:30am Budget Meeting 11:30am Youth Choir 1pm TV Service	17 Office Closed 9am – 1 pm MLK Day of Service 7pm Big Book	18 9am Counters 9:30am Women's Fellowship Workshop 6:30pm Mission Team 7:15pm Men's Fellowship	19 10am So ME Theological Round Table 4pm Diaper Bank 6pm Girl Scouts 6:30pm Diaconate 6:30pm Council	20 9am TOHG 4pm Jr Choir 6:30pm Choir	21 3:30pm Guiding Eyes	22
23 10am Service 11:30am Annual Meeting 11:30am Youth Choir 1pm TV Service	24 9am Counters 7pm Big Book	25 9:30am Women's Fellowship Workshop 6:30pm Personnel Team 7:15pm Men's Fellowship	26 4pm Diaper Bank 6pm Girl Scouts	27 9am TOHG 4pm Jr Choir 6:30pm Choir	28	29 Red Cross Blood Drive 9:00 am through 2:00 pm
30 10am Service 11:30am Snow Date for Annual Meeting 11:30am Youth Choir 1pm TV Service	31 9am Counters 6pm Big Book					

NOTIFICATION OF 2022 ANNUAL AFFIRMATION MEETING

To All Members of First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ:

You are hereby officially notified that the Annual Affirmation Meeting of First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Saco, Maine will be held on Sunday, January 23, 2022, at 11:30 AM (snow date is January 30, 2022) at First Parish Congregational Church, 12 Beach Street in Saco, Maine to act upon the following business:

First: To receive a statement and a prayer by our Minister, Rev. Scott Cousineau

Second: To receive information and take action if required on the reports of the various officers and teams of the church, specifically:

1. Approve the minutes of the Annual Affirmation Meeting of January 24, 2021.
2. Accept the Report of the Clerk.
3. Accept the Financial Reports of the Treasurer and the Investment Team.
4. Accept the First Parish Council Report on mission, vision and planning.

Third: To receive and act upon the proposed 2022 Mission Plan (budget).

Fourth: To elect all Officers, Church Council Members, and Delegates of the Church as required by the by-laws of the organization.

Fifth: To ratify the actions taken by the Church Council, its officers, and all teams on behalf of this church from January 24, 2021, until this date.

All members of First Parish Congregational Church are urged to attend this meeting in person. The Church supports a safe gathering environment following CDC guidelines for masking and social distancing. A new bi-polar ionization air filtration system installed for the entire building in April 2021 provides improved air quality and ventilation, where airborne particles such as dust and viruses are captured and rendered inert by the system.

To convene this annual meeting, a quorum of at least 20% of the active and associate membership is needed to attend which is 60 members.

The meeting will be live streamed online directly after the worship service for those unable to be present but will not be counted for the quorum or able to vote. A chat feature will be available. If you would like to attend but need assistance, call the office at 283-3771 by January 22.

The Messenger
First Parish Congregational Church
12 Beach Street
Saco, ME 04072

