

The Messenger

urch, Saco

First Parish Congregational Church, Saco "A Christ-centered Inclusive Community of Faith with Love and Hope to Share"

August 2023

Access to Lower Level during week days...

Spurwink School rents most of the lower level of First Parish Church for their therapeutic school. In order to provide the environment needed for the children of the school we are asking that nobody enter the lower level until after 2:30 pm during the weeks/days that Spurwink is conducting classes. The **only** exception is if a vendor or repair company requires access to a specific area of the lower level. Thank you for understanding.



Writers Group

New Fellowship Opportunity

Do you enjoy writing? Would you like to spend time with other people that do as well?

If you would be interested in starting a Writer's Group here at First Parish Church, please speak with or email Pastor Scott

(<u>scott.cousineau@firstparishsaco.org</u>). We will set up a date and time when interested individuals can gather together.



If you have other fellowship interests e.g. walking group, movie group, dinner group, etc. please contact Pastor Scott.





Keep your eye out and mark your calendar! Something special will be happening on September 17!



Rev. Scott W. Cousineau, Senior Minister Kristine Galasyn, Director of Christian Education Jacqueline Savage, Music Director Sue Burgess, Office Administrator 12 Beach Street, Saco, ME 04072 207-283-3771 www.firstparishsaco.org email - office@firstparishsaco.org Facebook - First Parish Saco UCC Instagram - @FirstParishSaco



Pastor Scott's Message...



The Pastor's Perspective ...

How can it possibly be? This month will mark the fourth anniversary of the beginning of our shared ministry at First Parish Church, Saco. On the one hand, it seems impossible that we have already been together for four years. And on the other hand, it seems impossible that it has ONLY been four years. We have shared a lot together.

As I mentioned in my message several days ago, many of you donated funds to support the renovation of the parsonage, and then a number of you labored in ninety-degree heat to clean, paint, and repair the house in preparation for our arrival. You made us feel welcome from the moment we walked in the door. The entire church family was very supportive as my wife, Renee, went through her cancer surgeries and treatments. You were steadfast and faithful through two and a half years of a global pandemic. You reached and stretched and not only maintained the ministries of the church, but expanded our outreach, mission, worship, and education ministries. You gave of your time and your treasures during the most difficult of circumstances. I cannot possibly express the depth of my gratitude for all that you have done to serve God and your neighbors. Thank you all!

We begin our fifth year together with renewed energy and passion for ministry. While the specter of COVID is still with us, it is not nearly as terrifying as it was this time last year. Let us start dreaming of what it means to be a Christ-centered inclusive community of faith with love and hope to share. How is that reflected in our ministries? How is it reflected in our fellowship with one another? How is it reflected in the way that we share our resources? How is it reflected in the ways that we care for one another?

The world around us is changing, but the WORD within us is steadfast and true. We love. The things that we do as a church family ... our ministries, events and programs may change, the ways that we do the things that we do may change, but the heart and spirit with which we do them will not change. We may experience some growing pains along the way. There may be days when we feel uncomfortable or uncertain. Those feelings are natural. And the beautiful part of it is that we will love and support each other every step of the way.

Someone shared a story about their home church at a meeting that I attended last night. At that church, there is an older woman that sits alone in the balcony on Sunday mornings. There is also a young boy that slides over and talks with her every Sunday his family attends worship. The older woman started bringing cookies in her purse which she gives to the young boy. The individual that shared the story said, "That is what being a church family is all about!"

That sweet story is about this church ... our church! That is love in action, and that is what being a church family is all about.

Please accept this challenge if you will. Think of one thing that you can do to offer love or kindness to someone in your circle, whether it be here at the church, at work, or among your peer group. Let us share the love wherever we go. Your act of love may change the world!

Pastor Scott





Vice Moderator Update...



We continue to search for a Moderator.

We continue to advertise for a new Sexton. Guy has been providing occasional consulting support with building infrastructure (Heating, vent, A/C) systems.

At the last Council meeting, Doug Macrae, with a representative from Revision Energy presented a proposal to consider installing Solar panels on the church roof. Saco has approved our request to install Solar Panels in a Historic District. We will again talk about it this month at Council.

The topic of exterior repairs to the building's siding was brought up and several felt that the repairs should supersede any roof panel work. We will discuss this further as the solar panel proposal has a rebate for roughly \$40K and is only good for 12 months.

As for the exterior work, we will need to get professional estimates for the necessary work, or minimally do a walk around noting those areas that need attention. John Brockington has requested in the past budgets for money to be set aside for large or emergency projects but the monies were not set aside due to the revenue shortfall toward the budget.

As you know, Bill Donoghue and Bob Mohlin attended a security conference and hosted Homeland Security to perform a walkthrough and advise on additional safety measures we may want to take. Bob has recently received the report and Bob and Bill will report to Council.

The review of the Bylaws has begun and a team is assembled to meet twice (July 29 and Aug 13). The church's current operation is not in compliance with our Bylaws so the changes will bring our church operation in compliance with our new Bylaws. The team will meet to make review recommended changes and determine what should be adopted. The changes will be presented to a Congregational meeting for a vote.

With all the rain over the last couple of weeks, the hallway at the bottom of the stairs off the Atrium, mechanical room and several other areas in the lower level have been damaged. The insurance company has been notified and there is a \$10K deductible to repair the project. The work has been done by ServiceMaster to dry the space and remove damaged drywall.

We will be starting the budget review next month and have an earlier Stewardship period so we won't be racing through the holidays to be prepared for Annual Meeting in January. You will be hearing more in the coming weeks. If anyone would like to help with Stewardship this year, please let the Finance Team know (Glenys Salas, Dale Siulinski, Patrice Tripp, Amy Chute, Bob Condon).

Bob Condon Vice Moderator





eacon Minis

As Pastor Scott mentioned in his sermon recently, we are all Children of God; we are all loved by God.

Speaking of children, as we approach the remaining(!) weeks of summer, we are fortunate to see children in variety of settings, whether in our home, during family visits, on the beach, at church, among others!

Children continue to be my teachers, always providing me with a fresh or new perspective. Here are some "childlike teachings" that you may want to integrate into your life, as you enter the lazy days of August!

"Look up!"

Turning my head in the direction my third grade student was pointing, I noticed the intricate ceiling pattern for the first time in the bookstore we were visiting. "Wow!" I remember exclaiming. "That's beautiful!"

Since then, her words, "Look up!" often come to mind, causing me to indeed, look up and notice much of the world that exists above me. What images of beauty and complexity I would miss if I never looked up! Stunning sunsets, intricate patterns of tree branches, architectural wonders, as well as a lone hawk perched on a telephone pole, and students waving goodbye through departing bus windows in the afternoon.

Slow down...

Have you ever noticed how engrossed a child may be while building a tower, creating a Lego structure, or wrestling with a math problem? Totally immersed, to the exclusion of anything else; these children are experts at being totally in the moment! How refreshing to be able to "single task", rather than feel a compulsion to manage multiple activities at once.

Listen to me, please!

As humans, we all like to be listened to; to have our thoughts and feelings validated; to share our experiences, and feel that we matter! Children remind us of this, by their sometimes relentless bid for attention. Children are continuously demonstrating their basic need for listening ears, such as when a student climbs down the bus stairs in the morning, exclaiming, "I lost a tooth!" or rushes into a classroom, eager to share her weekend outings with a caring teacher. We can never be too good at listening!

Laugh!

When a toddler plays Peek a Boo, with an attentive grandparent, and lets loose a full-fledged belly laugh; how wonderful to laugh like that with no restraint! In that moment, those feel good endorphins are circulating around this gleeful child!

Wonder!

As a former teacher, I worked hard to instill a sense of wonder in my students, and encouraged them to share their "I wonder" about anything. Without this prompting, I found that many students became inhibited in sharing things they may have been curious about as they grew older.

When I am in Northern Maine, the child in me reemerges, as I begin to ponder things in nature, such as the tiny size of cedar pinecones, the call of loons, the physics of lake currents, and the ever changing clouds. What have you taken the time to wonder about recently?

I can do it myself!

Parents and educators have all heard the words, "I can do it myself!" These words are frequently heard as a child masters tying his/her sneakers. As we know from experience, often the child may not yet have mastered the activity, but wants to persevere independently.

As adults the words are a good reminder, especially when deleting the word myself (as many work in collaboration with others); thus, "I can do it!" Reminding ourselves of both our past experiences and potential promotes the confident "can do" attitude that is so necessary for success. What positive words have you selfaffirmed recently?

Margery Condon, Co-Chair, Diaconate



This article in "The Messenger" will focus on our different teams and groups here at First Parish. We hope this will bring more understanding to you and provide information as to what each team does, when they meet and the current members of the team. Perhaps it may pique your interest enough to join a team and help First Parish keep the light shining for all to see.

The Johnson/Atkinson Spiritual Growth Fund

The Johnson/Atkinson Spiritual Growth Fund is a fund created by Bill and Mary Johnson. The fund is overseen by the Investment and Endowment Team and is professionally managed.

The intent of the fund is to promote spiritual growth within our church community. There is no limitation to "how" we define spirituality. Mary and Bill wanted members of the congregation to come up with ideas on what would promote and increase our own spirituality.

This is one of the most precious gifts I have seen as a life-long church member of several former churches.

One stipulation of the fund is that the principal of the fund will never be touched. Only the fund's growth will be available. Any growth funds that are not used by December 31st of that year will be returned to the fund.

Requests for funding for your spiritual project is made in February and August each year by filling out an application and sending it to the office administrator. The JA Fund Team, led by the Vice Moderator, will determine how the available funds will be delivered within the pool of requests.

We will be looking for new members of the Fund Team in the fall as long term members have stepped down.

With the stock market being down, there were no growth funds available for 2023 so no applications were requested.

As I said earlier, this is one of the most wonderful gifts made to our church for us to give serious thought of how we may increase our spirituality within our church community.

Bob Condon Vice Moderator





August is upon us. We hope that everyone is having a safe and fun summer with family and

friends. Homecoming Sunday is on September 17th. There is a possibility of adding another church school class. We do have someone who is willing to teach but would need another person per our safe church policies. If you are interested, please see Kris. This is very exciting to know we have enough children (families) to add another class. We have four little boys who will be leaving the nursery to attend an age level Church school class in the fall.

Homecoming Sunday, the beginning of our age level Church School classes, will begin on **Sunday September 17th**.

This begins our 2023-2024 Program year. Church school registration will be available on the church website soon It is never too early to register your child(ren) for Church school. Parents please fill out our Church school registration form. It only takes a minute online. You can find this form on the Church website under Christian Education. Printed copies will be available later in the month and located in the slots next to the office.

We ask that you fill out a form for each child, birth (nursery) through Twelfth

grade. This is helpful for many reasons.

- 1. It helps us in the purchasing of curriculum
- 2. Helps us determine class size vs. room vs. adults needed
- 3. Helps to organize age level events, Bible Sunday, Acolytes, VBS, Youth Fellowship.
- 4. Helps us report attendance to our Church conference.

5. Helps us to know if there are parents wanting their children Baptized.

See you at Church,

Kris



Jesus says: "Let the little Children come to

me -Matthew 19:14

Helping **Lisa** and **Mary** in the Nursery for the month of **July** was:

- **2** Glenys Salas
- 9 **Carrie Jahns**
- 16 Lindsey Martel
- 23 Mercy Hayward
- 30 Carrie Jahns

Thank you to all who have signed up for helping in our Nursery. Our sign-up sheet for the Spring and Summer is up and we hope you will continue your generosity by signing up. The First Parish Christian Education Team appreciates your time

"It's Only One Sunday!"





Baptisms

July 9 Philip and Jack Salas Parents: Glenys and Jay Salas



July 16
Benjamin Thomas Hanscom
Parents: Heather and Thomas Hanscom
Grandparents: Kris and Jim Galasyn





Pilgrim Lodge

Saco First Parish UCC has had the following people recently attend Pilgrim Lodge for June and July.



Women's Spring Weekend Lu Kachmar attending



Faith Foundation Ava Morin and Emily Savage attending



Camp Pride
Alexis Brochu and Dexter Roberge
attending



Vacation Bible School 2023

Our theme for this year was **Hero Hotline**

Called Together to Serve God.

This summer at Hero Hotline VBS, the children enjoyed learning that God takes ordinary people and helps them to do extra ordinary things. Since our theme was about Heroes, we invited some local, real life heroes to come share with us. Thank you



Lt. Ted Gagne from the Saco Police and Firefighter Carl Finley from the Saco Fire and EMS Department.



Each day we learned a new Bible Story told by Pastor Scott and Peter Gray. We learned some fabulous songs with the help of Susan Marston. Crafts were shared and explained by Judy Gray, Madeline Sylvester and Charlotte (Tulip) Whittemore. Our delicious snacks were provided by Aldene Walters and some very cool science projects by Nadine Russell. Danielle and Dexter Roberge provided an outlet for all that extra energy with games. Kris Galasyn, directed the week. For our Service projects we provided a case of water and treats to the Police Department, Fire Department and to the teachers that serve the children at the Spurwink school located on the lower level.





2024 Vacation Bible School Theme is:



A summer camp adventure with God. "...but even when I am afraid, I keep on trusting you." -Psalm 56:3 See you all then.



Music & Arts Ministry

From Our Music Director
Jacqui Savage

Summer Pick-Up Choir

July 9th - August 27th

All Are Welcome!! Rehearsals are 9AM on Sunday Mornings!









AUGUST DIAPER BANK NEWS

The First Parish Diaper Bank celebrated its second "birthday" in May. With the help of the congregation and the community, we have remained sustainable and continue to serve the most vulnerable in our community, the babies. The bank serves 25-40 families each week. With donations from friends and members of the congregation, we are also able to offer baby wipes and menstrual supplies.

Additional volunteers to help on Wednesdays from 4-6p.m. are badly needed. The schedule is made up 3 months in advance and volunteers usually participate once in that period. The volunteers are a helpful, flexible group and can usually find someone to trade Wednesdays with if need be.

We are also asking for volunteers to "hostess" in the atrium during diaper bank hours. This entails directing newcomers to the lower level and ensuring the atrium is orderly. Bring your knitting, a good book or a friend to chat with. The bank would welcome men of the congregation to volunteer in both capacities.

Don't forget to grab a box of diapers next time you are in Target (or anywhere) The diapers fly out the door each week. Lately we have been giving out approximately 2000 diapers each week. A financial gift honoring a mom in your life is always appreciated.

In June, Biddeford Saco Rotary Club presented First Parish with a Humanitarian Award "For recognizing a significant need and working tirelessly to help Maine families and their children". The Plaque is hanging to the right of the office door. Check it out and be proud that your church family has created, sustained and staffed the only organized diaper bank in York County.

Several times this summer, The Altrusa Club has donated huge bags of hand-knit and hand sewn baby items and brand-new baby supplies. The moms are surprised and so grateful to walk away from diaper bank with lovely brand-new "gifts" in addition to diapers and wipes. They simply lack the funds to buy these "luxury" items themselves. Thank-you Altrusa friends!

The Diaper Bank always welcomes visitors and potential volunteers. Stop by and see where the magic happens!

Thank-you. Pam Mohlin





DIAPER BANK MOM WORKS TIRELESSLY AS A MAINE STATE PARENT AMBASSADOR

First Parish Diaper Bank is proud to tell you about April Tardiff, one of our long-time diaper bank moms. April was nominated by Maine Families to become a Maine Parent Ambassador.

The Parent Ambassador program is a year-long leadership and advocacy program for parents with children eight and under living in Maine. The goal is to develop parent leaders and empower parents to advocate for themselves and their children. Each year parents are selected to join the program using a competitive process.

April has worked to effectively advocate and influence lawmakers and agency leaders on the need for access to affordable childcare. She has used her skills to educate, train and mobilize parents in her community and beyond to work together on this issue that is a huge stressor for families with children. Contacting state lawmakers and developing grassroots mobilization has given her a voice in key policy making. She has become an activist at the state level and testified during childcare legislation hearings and taken part in coalition meetings.

Fellowship Workshop formerly known as Women's Fellowship



The Gingerbread Fair December 2, 2023!!!





The date is set for the 2023 Gingerbread Fair: December 2nd from 9:00 -2:00

We are in the planning stages during the Tuesday morning workshop sessions. Several people gather between 9:00-11:00...men and women...our group is growing each week. Some of us knit, sew, do needlework, drink coffee, tea, and discuss local issues. We are looking to use the space in the church in a safe and creative manner. After some time off, we had a very successful event in 2022 with lots of new people involved! Do you have some new ideas? Let us know. Are you willing to do what you did last year? Let us know.

The proceeds from the fair allows Fellowship Workshop to sponsor Camperships to Pilgrim Lodge, support H.E.A.L., support the Diaper Bank, and get gift cards for groceries for our neighbors in need. Coffee, tea, and punch provided at each Coffee Hour and at funeral receptions along with flowers, plates, and napkins are also purchased.

Basically, everything comes back to help the needs of the community, so it really is an ALL CHURCH event!!!

Questions or ideas????? Contact us!!!

FAIR PLANNERS: Glen Ellen Roth & Sue Neumyer



Flower and Altar Update

Thank you to those who provide flowers for the altar.

Altar flowers for the month of July:

Edward Olsen in Memory of his Grandmother, Frances Olsen

Rosemary Guptill and Family in Memory of and Love for Robert Guptill, Sr.

Sundays in August through December are open for altar flowers. If you would like to provide flowers on a Sunday, you can sign up (sheets are hanging outside the office). You can also contact Marcia Lord @ 207-768-1699 or Patrice Tripp @ 207-590-1109.

WEB HOSTS NEEDED FOR LIVE STREAMED 10AM WORSHIP SERVICE



Web Hosts are essentially the ambassador from our church to our online audience. You're there to help guide online visitors through the LIVE 10am Worship Service as well as be there to help answer questions or direct people to where they can find answers.

We have openings on our Web Hosting Team and need your help! This is one volunteer position you can do from your couch while wearing your PJ's!

The commitment is simply to be online for the 10am Worship Service one Sunday a month and lead the LIVE Chat feature (a YouTube/Google account is needed to participate in the chat). Tasks involved during the service are:

- · welcoming people who participate in the chat
- provide updates from the bulletin
- asking for volunteers to donate things like our alter flowers
- inform people how to submit prayers
- how to facilitate financial donations

We are also willing to train a volunteer as needed!

If you are interested in being a Web Host, please e-mail Carol Connelly at





Mission Team Update

FMI - Carol Spencer-Lemay



Thank you for your support of the Saco Food Pantry!

Don't forget to donate to the Saco Food Pantry if you are able. The need is great.

Thank you for leaving your non-perishable donations in the shopping cart in the Atrium!

All non-perishable food donations or hygiene items are gladly accepted. Summer items needed are mayo, salad dressings, pancake syrup, complete pancake mix, canned meat, boxed mac and cheese and peanut butter.

The Saco Food Pantry, located at 67 Ocean Park Road, is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM, and the last Tuesday of the month from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM.







It is almost time for the AUGUST 19 BACK TO SCHOOL GIVEAWAY!

<u>What donations are needed?</u> Clothing and shoes in very good condition in all sizes, (please no stains or rips), and new school supplies like backpacks, crayons, pens, pencils, notebooks, binders, paper, rulers, glue sticks, tape, scissors, staplers and facial tissue. Please leave the donations in the shopping cart in the Atrium.

<u>What do volunteers do?</u> Volunteers will sort the clothing into various categories and sizes, label and sort the shoes, and organize the school supplies. We are still in need of another person to cut hair. During the event, we will need volunteers to check in consumers and help people find the appropriate items. After the event is done, we will need people to transport the extra items to local charities. The sign up sheet to volunteer is on the bulletin board near the office, or contact Carol via the information below.

When does this Giveaway event open to the public? Saturday, August 19, from 10 AM to 1 PM at FIrst Parish Congregational Church, Saco Maine.

<u>Who should I contact for more information?</u> Please contact Carol SpencerLemay at _(207) 229-1902





There are numerous free events available during August.

Sunday evenings: Ocean Park

Bring your lawn chair to the bandstand for a concert!

https://oceanpark.org/

Mondays: beginning July 10th - Saco

Bring your lawn chair to the Burns School field - 6 pm concerts

Saco Main Street - https://www.sacomainstreet.org/

Rain location - First Parish Congregational Church - 12 Beach St

Saturday: August 5th Ocean Park

Illumination Night

Biddeford, Mechanics Park, will also have a Concert series (Wednesdays) check the city Website for time and scheduled performances. Heart of Biddeford - https://heartofbiddeford.org/

Scarborough Concerts in the Park Series

Thursdays beginning at 6:30 pm in Memorial Park

https://scarboroughcommunitychamber.com/concerts-in-the-park/

Town of Kennebunk

Wednesdays 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Lafayette Park

9 Storer St

Kennebunk, ME 04043

https://www.kennebunkmaine.us/Calendar

Look for your friends...meet new people...wear your FPC t-shirt to "SHARE THE SECRET"!!



Looking for things to do in the area?

Check out www.pressherald.com/things-to-do/do-this-calendar
You can search by date, within a number of miles... you'll be amazed at what is happening in Maine!

Join us for a First Parish Bean Suppah!!

Mark your calendars! August 12, 2023 Serving from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm \$10.00 Adults \$5.00 Children 6-12



Menu will be:

Pea Beans Kidney Beans Mac N Cheese Hot Dogs Coleslaw Breads Desserts Beverages



OMMUNITY events



Goodbye July... ** ALOHA August!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7am WANDA Camp 9:30am Fellowship Workshop 5pm SoME Dance 7pm Men's Fellowship via Zoom	2 7am WANDA Camp 4pm Diaper Bank	3 7am WANDA Camp 9am TOHG 5pm SoME Dance	4 7am WANDA Camp	5
6 10am Service 1pm TV Service 2pm Concert	7 9am Counters 7am WANDA Camp 6:30pm Big Book	8 7am WANDA Camp 9:30am Fellowship Workshop 5pm SoME Dance 7pm Men's Fellowship via Zoom	9 7am WANDA Camp 4pm Diaper Bank 6:30pm Finance Team via Zoom 6:30pm Mission Team	10 7am WANDA Camp 9am TOHG 3pm Guiding Eyes for the Blind 5pm SoME Dance	11 7am WANDA Camp	12 5pm Bean Suppah
13 8:30am Sacred Conversations 10am Service 1pm TV Service	14 9am Counters 6:30pm Big Book	15 9:30am Fellowship Workshop 5pm SoME Dance 7pm Men's Fellowship via Zoom	16 4pm Diaper Bank	17 9am TOHG 5pm SoME Dance	18 5pm – Spurwink Graduation	19 10am – Backpack Giveaway
20 8:30am Sacred Conversations 10am Service 1pm TV Service	21 9am Counters 6:30pm Big Book	9:30am Fellowship Workshop 5pm SoME Dance 7pm Men's Fellowship via Zoom	23 4pm Diaper Bank 6:30pm Council	24 3pm Guiding Eyes for the Blind 5pm SoME Dance 7:00pm GNT	25	26
27 8:30am Sacred Conversations 10am Service 1pm TV Service	28 9am Counters 6:30pm Big Book	29 9:30am Fellowship Workshop 5pm SoME Dance 7pm Men's Fellowship via Zoom	30 4pm Diaper Bank	31 9am TOHG 5pm SoME Dance	150	

Back To School

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

