

# THE MESSENGER

FIRST PARISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*THE CHURCH WITH LOVE AND HOPE TO SHARE*

**HAPPY FEBRUARY! 2021**



[Click Here to hear First Parish Virtual Choir](#)

**Office Closed on Feb 15<sup>th</sup> for Presidents' Day**



**Lenten Sermon Series, "God's Story, Our Story"**



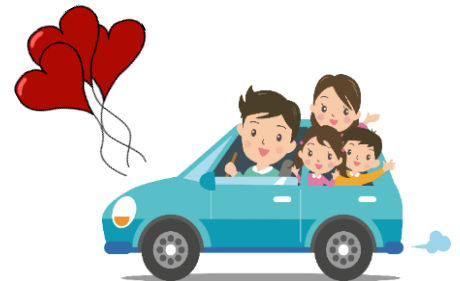
**Peter Gray**  
**February 21<sup>st</sup>**



**Carleton Gunn**  
**February 28<sup>th</sup>**

See pg. 3 for more information and the list of Guest Ministers that will be telling their stories.

**Church School Valentine Drive Thru**  
**February 14, 2021 From 11:15-12:15**



See pg. 6 for more info



**Order your Subs by Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> .**  
**Order Forms**  
**on Page 7**

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

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## Pastor's Perspective ...

When you begin a new job, or a new pastorate, they say that the first year is the honeymoon period. This has been a very strange honeymoon. We spent our first seven months together ... and we have been apart ever since! I suppose that is one way of making sure that you do not get sick of me!



This has been an unprecedented year. None of us has ever been through anything even remotely like this. There is no class in Surviving a Global Pandemic in seminary. Churches, and families, and businesses all around the world have tried to find their way through this, and tragically many did not survive. We mourn the millions of people around the globe that have died from COVID. We grieve for families devastated by prolonged illness and after-effects. We grieve the thousands of businesses that had to close their doors for good. We grieve the churches that had to do the same.

In the midst of this global crisis, I am thankful for this congregation, this gathering of the faithful. You did not use this crisis as a reason to withdraw into your shells. You did not allow the fear and uncertainty to prevent you from supporting the ministries of this church. Every time that we put out a call ... you responded. Without fail.

Not only did you keep the lights on with your pledges and contributions, but you also enabled us to serve our community and the world in meaningful ways.

Through the Discretionary Fund we have fed hungry families, bought heating oil, helped get homeless individuals into safe and stable housing, helped others stay in their housing. I am so thankful that I have not had to say to anyone that came to us for assistance this year, "I am sorry, we do not have any funds available."

You gave over \$2000 to support Daisy's Children.

Your donations for the MLK, JR. Day of Service enabled us to serve over sixty people that day ... AND ... send boots to Seeds of Hope, health and hygiene products to the food pantry, and clothing to Esther House women's shelter.

You completely funded phase one of our Audio/visual system replacement so that we can get the live-stream up and running, and also provided a good head start for phase two ... the upgrade of the audio system.

Even more than your financial support, you have supported and encouraged the staff and the membership. Loneliness and isolation are two of the most serious afflictions related to stay-at-home orders. And you have responded by reaching out to one another through calls, cards, and safely distant visits.

Your support for the staff has been greatly appreciated. I know many of my colleagues in ministry have not experienced the support and encouragement that you have offered. We are extremely grateful.

I am very excited about the year ahead. With all of the challenges that we overcame this year gone by, I cannot wait to see what the coming year will bring. I have enjoyed looking at your photos taped to the pews, but I look forward to seeing you faces in person.

We still have some work to be done to get through the next few months, but I am confident that God will see us through. God has blessed us richly, and I thank you for the blessing that you have been to one another and to our community.

Grace and Peace,

Scott



### **Lenten Sermon Series, “God’s Story, Our Story”**

We are excited to offer a special sermon series during the Lenten season this year. First Parish Church is blessed to count a number of retired ministers among our membership. In addition, some of our former ministers live in the area. We will welcome several of them to share their reflections and meditations on how God’s story, God’s Word and vision has impacted and shaped their lives and ministries, and our lives and ministries together.

The schedule of participants will be:

February 21 – Peter Gray

February 28 – Carleton Gunn

March 7 – Bill Donoghue

March 14 – Merle Steva

March 21 – Rick Huleatt

March 28 – Doug Nielsen

It will be a wonderful to hear their stories and will give us the opportunity to reflect upon our stories. Mark your calendars!

### **A Time to Reflect ...**

The companion to the sermon series will be the opportunity to reflect on the messages. At 11:30 AM on the Sundays during Lent, those who are interested will be invited to gather via ZOOM to discuss the morning message. Each week we will send an email with the invitation and link. Grab a cup of coffee, tea or cocoa and join us for fellowship and reflection.



### DEACONS' CORNER

Dear family and friends of First Parish,  
It's February already! The new year that we anticipated so eagerly is already a month old. And we are still dealing with a deadly pandemic and some very turbulent times. We face a few more months of cold, socially distanced winter. We need to remind ourselves that there is reason to be hopeful!

February has come to be known as Black History Month, a very appropriate time to acknowledge the painful past endured by our Black sisters and brothers, to examine our own hearts and minds, and to look forward to the fulfillment of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, great dream of brotherhood, wherein people will "not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

First Parish Church advertises itself as "the church with love and hope to share." We strive to live up to this vision of ourselves in many ways, none more visible than our Day of Service on MLK's birthday. This year, because of COVID-19 restrictions, we had to do it in a somewhat limited way, but we were still able to offer clothing and food and personal hygiene items to over 60 people. What an outpouring of love that is! We deacons are so grateful to Kris Galasyn (who started this annual event some years ago) and her volunteers/donors who made this event happen once again. It is truly an act of love and hope.

Let us be open to reaching out to our fellow humans... of all races and creeds and personal preferences... in love, not just in February but throughout the whole year. Let us truly be the church with Love and Hope to share!

Love and blessings,  
Nadine Russell and Dan Carter  
Co-chairs, FPC Diaconate



## Happy Valentine's Day Everyone

January can be a long, cold month and February can follow suit, however, this year seems to be going at a quicker pace or maybe that is wishful thinking. I know I want the days to go faster, I wish to be able to be outside more, since that is safer in this covid time, I know I want more people to get vaccinated at a quicker pace, I really want to be together again in our sanctuary and in our Church school classrooms. So even though the days are getting longer, covid still keeps us apart. We will be apart for our Spring quarter so we are going to make the best of it and have a Valentine drive thru for our Church school families. We want to see our families if only through car windows. We need to know that you are all okay. We need to keep connected. Our Valentine's Drive thru will be on Sunday, Feb 14 from 11:15 to 12:15. At that time we will hand out our spring curriculum along with Valentines and other fun stuff. We can't wait to see you. Spring quarter begins March 7<sup>th</sup> and runs through the end of our program year which is May 30<sup>th</sup>.



I am hoping to hear some good news from Pilgrim Lodge very soon. I will get that information out as soon as I get it.

Stay safe and stay well,  
*Kris*



## Fellowship

**Superbowl Subs** order form was in the **January** Messenger and is also on the web site. Subs will be available after church on **Sunday, February 7, 2021** from **11AM to noon curbside**. Just park in the church lot and we will be right with you. You can pay at that time. The exact amount would be appreciated.



We will also be taking a special offering for **Souper Bowl Sunday**.



This offering will stay in our community. Our offering this year will be given to Stone Soup Food Pantry in Biddeford. Stone Soup had to shut down due to covid recently but have now reopened. They serve a huge population in the area. Stone Soup has for many years been one of our service opportunities during our MLK day of service. We invite you to donate by making your check out to First Parish UCC, memo line Souper Bowl offering. Checks may be sent to the church office or checks/cash given at the time of sub pickup.

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



Thank you to everyone who is still bringing your recyclable bottles to church. We are grateful for your support. We recently took 2 dozen bags back. Thank you.





Martin Luther King  
Day of Service  
January 18, 2021

Not A Day Off, But A Day On

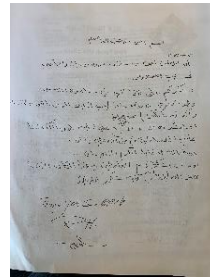
Life's most urgent question is?

**“What are you doing for others?”**

-Martin Luther King

Our 13th annual MLK Day of Service has come and gone but what a GREAT day it was. In spite of very cold temperatures and covid protocols approximately 60 “clients” came through our doors for services offered. This year was different. We were unable to have any services provided but we had an incredible amount of winter/warm clothing, new underwear and socks and all sorts of health and beauty items. First Parish Shoe Ministry found boots/shoes for 50 pairs of feet. People were as grateful as ever. Everyone understood about why our services were absent this year and they understood why we limited numbers in various areas, why there was one way traffic, why there was no hot breakfast. They understood why we took their temperature and why they had to wear a mask. Yes, it was very different. However, we were able to provide a hot to go lunch. Thank you to Sue Burgess and the food crew. We did all of this with a smile on our faces and a compassionate heart. We had many less volunteers helping out due to covid but the hands were very much appreciated. Thank you everyone for the donations, the set up, the cooking and the organizing. Our sanctuary turned into a clothing outlet with bins of every kind/size.

On Jan 3 we invited people to donate, at our Donation a thon. It did not stop there. We were still getting donations on MLK day. A couple sweet stories. Part way into our day a mother and daughter from Waterboro stop in with a cart full of new donations. They saw our MLK day on our Facebook page and wanted to help. They went shopping that morning and then dropped everything off. Another story consists of an older couple and his sister from Iran who are now



our neighbors, here in Maine. They were all extremely grateful. The man, who speaks limited English wrote us a note in Arabic. At this time we are trying to find someone who can translate it for us.

Any items that were not taken on MLK day were donated to the following organizations: Seeds of Hope, Open Hands, Open Heart, Esther House, Grace Street Ministries, Saco Food Pantry, Goodwill and a home for people that were involved in Human Trafficking.

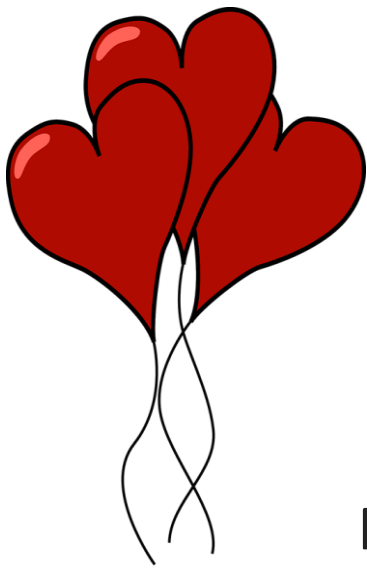
Another great quote from MLK is this: **“Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”**

**--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

We did that at MLK Day of Service. We did it in spite of the cold temperatures and covid. We did it and the people came. Here's to hoping that next year Covid will be in our past.

**Next MLK Day will  
be January 17, 2022**





# Church School Valentine Drive Thru February 14, 2021 11:15-12:15

Please make a Valentine,  
(card, drawing, note)  
to share with your church family  
and bring it with you  
These will be put on our Wonder Wall

Waiting for you

- Valentine cards from your Church friends
- Valentine Bag with Treat, Craft and Fun stuff
- Celebrate Wonder spring curriculum
- Spring Quarter Family Activity Book



# **FPYF Super Bowl Sub Sale**

The First Parish Youth will once again be making their delicious SUPER SUBS!!!! **Order now** so that on February 7th you can relax and enjoy the Super Bowl, and not worry about dinner.

Due to Covid, Please order online or send/bring back this form to First Parish UCC.

Attn: Kris 12 Beach Street, Saco, Maine 04072 **Payment may accompany order, (checks payable to FPYF and in the memo line Souper bowl subs),** or pay at time of pick up.

Orders must be into the church office by **February 1<sup>st</sup>**.

**PRICE \$4.50 PER SUB.** All subs will be made fresh the morning of February 7th.

You may pick them up **Curbside (from 11-noon) that day.** A few extras will be made, but place an order to be sure that you won't be disappointed.

**Special Orders DON'T Upset Us!**

**Thank you.**

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Name\_\_\_\_\_ Phone#\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

#\_\_\_\_Ham with onions      #\_\_\_\_Ham –NO onions

#\_\_\_\_Salami with onions      #\_\_\_\_Salami –NO onions

#\_\_\_\_Veggie with onions      #\_\_\_\_Veggie –NO onions

All subs come with pickles, cheese, tomatoes, green peppers and black olives.

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**A Big thanks to Michael's Pizza for helping us with the fresh ingredients.**







Music Ministry

Jacqueline Savage: [Jacqui@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:Jacqui@firstparishsaco.org)



### **Special Virtual Anthems**

#### **Sunday January 24<sup>th</sup>: “Choirs Will Not Be Silenced” by Chris Maunu**

The choir anthem last week was a virtual choir piece that was composed this past fall for choirs around the country to sing between January and February. The composer was inspired by the creativity of choir directors after the pandemic hit and singers couldn't physically be together. To watch this click here → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpmDwGMpkaM>

*Through song we will carry on*

#### **Sunday January 31<sup>st</sup>: “I Believe” by Mark Miller**

The Choir worked on this piece and sent their videos in on Holocaust Memorial Day. They learned that the words they were singing were scratched on the walls of a cellar in Cologne, Germany by a Jew hiding from Nazi persecution. Hope Poore will be singing the solo and Paula Squires Maclay will be a sign language interpreter for the video.

*I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it.*

*I believe in God even when God is silent.*

#### **Sunday February 7<sup>th</sup>: “Glow” by Eric Whitacre**

Eric Whitacre is a popular composer and conductor. He was making virtual choirs before the pandemic with people all over the world bringing choirs together in song.

*Softly falls the winter snow, whispers to the sleeping world below:  
Wintertide awakes, morning breaks and set the earth aglow.*

#### **Sunday February 14<sup>th</sup>: “What the World Needs Now is Love” by Burt Bacharach**

Senior Choir, Junior Choir, and Youth Choir will sing these much-needed words for us on Valentine's Day Weekend

#### **Sunday February 21<sup>st</sup>: “Within the Shadow of the Cross” by Don Besig**

This piece will kick off Lent and we have invited Emily Savage to sing the child solo in the piece to sing along with the Senior and Youth Virtual Choir.

### **LOOKING AHEAD.....**

We will be doing another collaboration virtual choir project with Gorham Congregational Church, South Portland UCC, Westbrook Warren Congregational Church, Yarmouth Congregational Church, and Hampden UCC. The piece we are singing is “You Do Not Walk Alone” by Elaine Hagenburg. We will show this virtual choir collaboration piece on **Sunday March 14<sup>th</sup>**.





## Flower & Altar

Altar Flowers in January were given by Laurie Mooney honoring the First Parish Family as she celebrated 30 years as a member, and by Carol and Fred Connelly in honor of Freddie's 31<sup>st</sup> birthday and in memory of what would have been Carol's father's 101<sup>st</sup> birthday.

We have commitments for Sunday flowers through March 14 and March 28 and April 4 (Palm Sunday and Easter). Upcoming open Sundays are March 21, April 11, April 18 and April 25. Would you like to remember, honor or celebrate a loved one? Most Sundays are available. If you wish to provide flowers, please contact Marcia Lord at [mvlord@aol.com](mailto:mvlord@aol.com) or 207-768-1699 or Patrice Tripp at [rtripp@maine.rr.com](mailto:rtripp@maine.rr.com) or 207-590-1109.

The Flower and Altar Team continues to work behind the scenes, changing the paraments, and watering plants. We have also ordered bundles of palms for Palm Sunday. Last year we had a drive by distribution of palms, and perhaps we will consider doing the same this year.



# 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



# Patience

After ten months of masks, hand-washing, and physical distancing we are experiencing COVID fatigue. We are sick of it! We want it to be over! We miss our lives ... our families, our friends, our church, our favorite restaurants. All of it!

We itch for the return to “normal.” We want to race back to our busy schedules and calendars full of engagements. Certainly, no one desires for this global pandemic to linger another moment longer. But as long as we are here, let us consider what we can take away from this experience.

I offer you this poem ...

**“Patience,”** a poem by Karyn Kedar

Steady yourself. Living takes time.  
Each moment is a moment to be lived.  
Each emotion is to be felt.  
We are here in this world to learn and grow.  
Fear can teach. Confusion instructs. Sadness informs.  
Love elevates.  
Take the time to experience each breath,  
Especially the ones that make you want to run.

Patience. Steady.  
Rush and race banish joy and peace.  
There is wonder to experience if you take the time.  
Step softly and deliberately.  
What lingers must be lived and  
Once lived completely passes in its own time.  
To force the natural rhythms of life  
Is to deny yourself of the  
Divine wisdom in each experience.





# Bible Wordsearch

Fit the words in the list into the diagram below reading forward, backward, up, down, diagonally, always in a straight line.

More puzzles at:  
biblewordgames.com

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | I | A | R | P | R | O | P | H | E | T | S | Y | D | H |
| O | L | E | M | R | A | C | O | W | A | T | E | R | U | E |
| H | E | A | B | R | A | H | A | M | N | U | H | N | O | V |
| S | A | C | R | I | F | I | C | E | S | A | D | V | L | A |
| I | P | E | U | B | S | L | M | A | W | R | T | O | C | C |
| K | E | E | R | T | U | D | E | R | E | H | T | A | G | J |
| N | D | O | P | N | N | R | K | D | R | E | S | S | E | D |
| F | O | R | S | A | K | E | N | Y | E | O | U | Z | T | O |
| K | R | R | M | V | C | N | I | T | T | T | E | I | I | O |
| H | U | M | O | R | O | S | V | S | H | B | S | R | R | L |
| L | O | R | D | E | L | O | E | L | E | A | R | S | I | B |
| C | F | N | G | S | L | E | S | L | A | V | J | J | P | A |
| U | Y | E | N | R | U | O | J | C | D | A | O | I | S | H |
| G | I | N | I | O | B | A | D | I | A | H | B | R | L | A |
| M | O | C | K | E | D | G | T | R | E | N | C | H | G | E |

|              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| ABRAHAM      | HUNDRED   |
| AHAB         | ISAAC     |
| BAAL         | ISRAEL    |
| BLOOD        | JEZEBEL   |
| BROOK        | JOURNEY   |
| BULLOCK      | KINGDOM   |
| BURNT        | KISHON    |
| CARMEL       | KNIVES    |
| CAVE         | LEAPED    |
| CHILDREN     | LORD      |
| CLOUD        | MOCKED    |
| CUT          | OBADIAH   |
| DRESSED      | PROPHETS  |
| ELIJAH       | RAIN      |
| ESCAPE       | SACRIFICE |
| FORSAKEN     | SERVANT   |
| FOUR         | SPIRIT    |
| GATHERED     | TRENCH    |
| GROVES       | WATER     |
| COMMANDMENTS |           |
| ANSWERETH    |           |

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Psalm 9

<http://biblewordgames.com>

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*Happy  
Valentine's  
Day*



The Messenger  
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