

*First Parish Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
The Church with Love &*



*"Let Everything that Hath Breath"*



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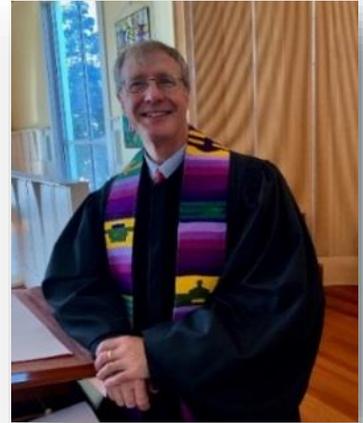
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## Pastor Scott's Message...

Hello First Parish Family,

I would like to begin by expressing my deep and sincere gratitude for your support and encouragement over the course of the last two months. You have been patient and faithful as we have journeyed through these days.

The Deacons and I meet every Friday morning to discuss the pastoral needs of the church as well as our current situation. We all miss our church family and look forward to the day when we can gather together in worship and fellowship.



As states begin relaxing guidelines and lifting 'stay safer at home' orders, the conversations have turned toward the resumption of in-person worship services. We have been gathering guidelines and recommendations from other regions and religious associations, as well as those developed by the administration here in Maine. In all of our conversations one thing has remained our first and foremost priority ... the health and safety of our church family and our communities. We will continue to meet every week and evaluate where we are on the coronavirus curve, and we will prayerfully consider how and when we will resume in-person worship services.

We have chosen to maintain a slower is better course of action. As of right now, we will continue offering online worship only. The logistics of trying to gather combined with the strict guidelines to which we would have to adhere would not make for a meaningful worship experience. In addition, there are still too many variables regarding transmission and infection rates to allow us to feel comfortable that we can ensure everyone's safety.

The duration of this time of separation is extremely difficult and it appears as though we must remain apart for a little while longer. The saying is true, "We stay apart now so that we can ALL gather when this is over."

We are going to establish a task force to plan our reopening. Their charge will be to assess and evaluate guidelines and data, and then devise a protocol that will enable us to gather comfortably and confidently. We will communicate with the church family and elicit your input and feedback as we proceed. This is not something that one person or one team will develop; it will be a communal effort. In the meantime, we will "gather" as we have via social media. We will continue to reach out and connect with one another. We will check in and make sure that no one is feeling isolated or abandoned. Please share any pastoral care needs or concerns with me or the Deacons. We will create new opportunities to connect, create and communicate. (Look for the article in this edition of The Messenger.) Next month we should be able to resume some of our in-person team and committee meetings, and there may be other ways that we can gather in small groups.

Grace and Peace to you all,

Scott



## Church in A New Age

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all of us into a new way of life. We work differently, shop differently, socialize differently, and we worship differently. We have missed the intimacy of in-person interaction but recognize the need to mitigate the threat of spreading the virus. As a result, we are all learning new skills. Technology has become a new and necessary friend.

As we look at what the next few months will hold, we realize that some of the things that we do in the church may have to change. We may have to gather in smaller groups. We may have to employ more virtual or online platforms for our ministries.

The leadership of the church has the health and safety of our membership as our first priority. Since we will be looking at different ways of being “church” we have an opportunity to engage in new and exciting ways. Here are some of the ideas that have come up:

- A Movie Club. Similar to the Book Club, people can view and discuss selected movies.
- A Podcast in which I interview church members about certain topics.
- A Video Directory. People creating and sharing short videos from their homes or other special places in their lives, giving us an opportunity to get to know one another a little better.
- A Poetry Group. Tom Kircher has offered to lead a group for those interested in writing poetry.

These are just a few examples of the creativity and thoughtfulness of the members of our church family. If you have any thoughts, please share them! I would love to hear the possibilities!

Pastor Scott



# Music Ministry

Jacqueline Savage: Music Director

[jacqui@firstparishsaco.org](mailto:jacqui@firstparishsaco.org)



## Summer Choir!

Well, the end of our choir year wasn't exactly what we were expecting but the Senior Choir really stepped up into the virtual world and made some amazing music. We will be taking a break through June and Summer Choir will start on Thursday July 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Summer Choir Plans

- 🎵 We will meet on Thursdays at 6:15PM over ZOOM to warm up, rehearse, and plan music for Sunday services
- 🎵 All are welcome to sing with us! Email Jacqui if you are interested in doing some Virtual Choir Projects or solo recordings for online services
- 🎵 Youth Choir will also be meeting on Thursdays @4PM to do some virtual choir pieces for summer services

## Cherub Choir

- ♪ Miss Delaney and Jacqui will continue to pre-record Cherub Choir Music and Movement Classes for Sundays after church through June
- ♪ There will not be classes in the summer but the recorded classes will be available to watch anytime on First Parish's Youtube Channel!
- ♪ We will continue to include **bubble songs**, **silly rhymes** and **singing**, **scarf play**, **shaker songs**, **instrument exploration**, **storytime**, **Name Songs**, and **more**. Please join us online after church!

## *A Musical Note from Jacqui...*

In a very short time we have completely changed our way of singing and worshipping together. While it may not be ideal, I'm thankful that we can still SING. We can still see each other on-line, we can still talk on the phone, laugh over zoom, and worship God through word and song during our online services in the comfort of our own homes.

Every week has brought new projects, new and innovative ideas, and more people stepping up to help make online worship more meaningful. I am thankful for this amazing group of people.

- ♥ I love how Susan Marston said it on our Music Sunday Service so I will say it again. "God be with you until we sing again!"



# Sweet Hour of Prayer

By: William Batchelder Bradbury

Sweet hour of prayer  
Sweet hour of prayer  
That calls me from a world of care  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known  
In seasons of distress and grief  
My soul has often found relief  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare  
By Thy return, sweet hour of prayer  
Sweet hour of prayer  
Sweet hour of prayer  
The joys I feel, the bliss I share  
Of those whose anxious spirits burn  
With strong desires for Thy return  
With such I hasten to the place  
Where God my Savior shows His face  
And gladly take my station there  
And wait for Thee, sweet hour of prayer  
Sweet hour of prayer  
Sweet hour of prayer  
And wait for Thee  
Sweet Hour of Prayer



This beloved hymn was written by William Batchelder Bradbury who was born on October 6, 1816 in York, ME

Where his father was the leader of a church choir.

He is best known as a composer and publisher of a series of musical collections for choirs and schools.

His most famous compositions include "He Leadeth Me", Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us", the music for Jesus Loves Me", and of course "Sweet Hour of Prayer".



# DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our Church school summer quarter ended last Sunday and we hope many of you enjoyed the service and were able to drive by and pick up your plant.



Since last month's Messenger came out we have since learned that Pilgrim Lodge will not be open this summer. In the closing paragraph of a letter from Jen Paty, PL Director she says "...the thought of a year with no summer camp is heartbreaking, and we know your camper and family will likely be disappointed as well. Pilgrim Lodge is a summer home for so many of us—a place to breathe fresh air and connect with friends, both old and new. It's a place to walk in the forest and share songs and worship; to fall asleep listening to the loons on the lake and discover new things about ourselves. Please know that we hold these things in our memories all year long, and we can't wait to join our camp community back on the boardwalk next summer." Every year First Parish designates money to PL in the way of camperships. This money was sent to PL as a way to support them financially during this time of uncertainty. Please hold PL in your prayers and that next summer we will be back together again.



## Vacation Bible School

As of this writing the team is in discussion as to whether or not we can hold VBS in a manner that is safe to everyone. We will be making our final decision this in the next few weeks..

I recently saw this on Facebook and wanted to share it with you. I miss our Church school children and their families so much but am glad that people are staying home and staying healthy. We will be together soon.

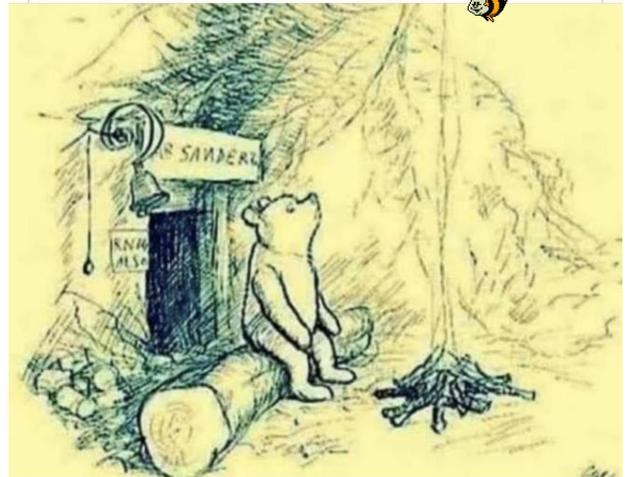
5:53



"Do you think this will ever end?" asked Pooh in a small voice.

"This too shall pass," confirmed Piglet. "And I promise you, one day, you and I shall once again sit together, close enough to touch, sharing a little smackerel of something...under that blue gold sky."

This was originally written by a blogger called I Know I Need to Stop Talking.



2

1 Share



Everyone, stay home, stay healthy. Hope to see everyone in church in September. Until then Be Well,

Kris



# Meet our Graduates 2020

## High School

### Celia Chandler-Smith

Graduate-Thornton Academy  
Future- Taking classes in the U Maine system  
Parents: David and Joyce Chandler-Smith

### Sadie Gray



Graduate- Thornton Academy  
Future-University of Maine @ Farmington  
Major- Environmental Science  
Parents: Cheryl and Kyle Gray  
Grandparents: Nancy and Rick Twomey

### Vy Hjort



Graduate-Thornton Academy  
Future- University of Southern Maine  
Parents: Deborah Hjort and Nancy Niven

## College



### Taylor Lamarre

Graduated from the University of Vermont  
Bachelor of Science in Biology  
Future: Research while applying to Medical School  
Parents: Wayne Lamarre and Christina O'Neal



### Eric Lemay

(Eric is the one in the beard)

Graduated from Thomas College, Waterville, ME  
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science  
Parents: Carol and Richard Lemay



### Abigail Worster

Graduated from the University of Rhode Island  
Bachelor of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology, Microbiology  
Future: Working as a Preschool Teacher while pursuing a Master's in Secondary Education  
Parents: Sue and Cleve Worster  
Grandmother: Aldene Walters





## Feeding the Hungry locally

**Saco Food Pantry**, 67 Ocean Park Road, Saco (468-1305 or [sacofoodpantry.org](http://sacofoodpantry.org)) is grateful for the donations! The cart for donations will remain outside the church 10 am to 4 pm weekdays, and if you want to volunteer, contact Lynn Steed at [lsted203@gmail.com](mailto:lsted203@gmail.com) or (207) 494-8662.

**Bon Appetit**, Second Congregational Church, 19 Crescent St, Biddeford, ([bonappetitmealprogram.com](http://bonappetitmealprogram.com)) remains in operation for 4:30 pm carry-out dinners. Contact Laura Cortwright at [llccmb@yahoo.com](mailto:llccmb@yahoo.com) for more information.

**Seeds of Hope**, 35 South St, Biddeford, continues to feed the hungry for breakfast and lunch on weekdays. For more information visit [seedsofhope4me.org](http://seedsofhope4me.org) or phone (207) 571-9601,

**Youth Full Maine**, P.O. Box 745 Biddeford, ME, provides food for hungry children and families in York County by distributing food at many school locations. This non profit organization is continuing this work during the Pandemic, and now is delivering groceries in certain locations. Contact Katie Brown at [info@youthfullme.org](mailto:info@youthfullme.org) or (207) 391-0185 for more information.



**Feeding the  
Community**



## Deacons' Corner

DEACONS' CORNER Dear family and friends of First Parish, You probably know that the Deacons have been meeting regularly, via ZOOM. We share concerns and plan, as much as we can, for the future. One of our constant concerns has been how and when to reopen the physical church for worship and other events. We are all anxious to get back to "normal" and we certainly miss seeing you all at church.

Of course we are not permitted to meet for worship at this time, because of Maine's social distancing guidelines. But even with the projected easing of some restrictions in the coming month or two, we recognize that a church sanctuary is not the safest place to be. We would have to limit the number of attendees, necessitating some tough decisions on WHO gets to attend; we would have to totally sanitize the building between services; we would have to give up congregational singing (one of the easiest ways to spread viruses!) and we would have to forgo coffee hour... so many things to consider.

So, along with Pastor Scott, we made the difficult decision to carry on with live-streaming worship services and ZOOM church meetings only for the foreseeable future. We will be reevaluating as time goes by, as we get a better sense of what's happening with COVID-19 in our part of the world.

Meanwhile, please continue to participate in our inspiring Sunday services (thanks to Scott and Jacqui and the Media Team for all they do!) and stay tuned. We will definitely keep you posted.

Thanks and blessings,  
Dan Carter and Nadine Russell,  
Co-chairs

Have You Been Watching "The Bored Pastor"  
On Our "You Tube" Channel?



Don't Miss Any Of Pastor Scott's Fun Antics During Quarantine! [\(Click Here\)](#)

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

## **A Pandemic Prayer**

May we who are merely inconvenienced  
remember those who are vulnerable.

May we who have no risk factors  
remember those who must choose between healthcare & paying their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when schools are closed,  
remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips  
remember those who have no home

A tear grips our nation – let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,  
dear God may we be Your loving embrace to those who may be in need.

by Norma Gorham



# A Celebration of our Christian Education Ministry



I Heart You!

I just HUGGED  
you in my  
thoughts...

I hope you felt  
the squeeze!

Healing Hugs  
Poster by Loann