

The Messenger 2021

*First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

The Church with Love and Hope to Share



Opening the Church June 20, 2021



**See Page 5 for guidelines and
registration information**

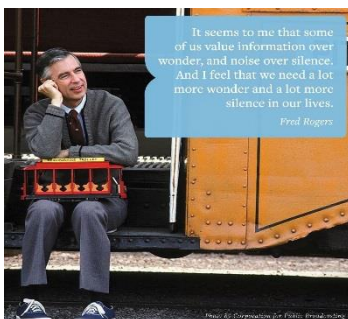
Community Memorial Service Laurel Hill Cemetery



**June 5, 2021
11:00 AM**

See Page 14 for more information

Children's Sunday



May 30

Pride Sunday



June 13, 2021

Register for VBS



July 6th – 9th

[Register Here](#)

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

scott.cousineau@firstparishsaco.org
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12 Beach Street, Saco Maine 04072 207-283-3771 www.firstparishsaco.org



Pastor Scott's Message...

A number of years ago, Renee and I enjoyed a vacation in California visiting my brother, Gregg, who lived in Oakland at the time. While we were there, we did many of the typical touristy things that people do in California. We spent a day in wine country, visited the Redwood Forest, drove down the coast and spent a day on the Monterey Peninsula. And we ate out at a lot of fabulous restaurants. On Sunday, we went to worship at First Chinese Baptist Church in San Francisco. At the time, our good friend, Reverend Don Ng, was the Senior Pastor. We walked into the sanctuary and took our seat. As the service began, Don stood and walked to the pulpit and offered the announcements. Then he said, "We have some visitors here with us today." At that point, everyone in the sanctuary turned and looked at us!

How did they know? I am certain that First Chinese Baptist is a close-knit community that would recognize any new faces in the crowd. However, I think that it was more likely that there was only one other person in the sanctuary that was not Chinese ... and he was married to Don's daughter!

Growing up as a white man has meant that I am rarely in a position to be the only one of me in any given location. I do not typically have to scan the room to see if there are other people that look like me. More often than not, I blend in, I do not stick out in the crowd. I do not have to explain or defend my presence.

The congregation at First Chinese Baptist was lovely and welcoming. In no way did they treat us as if we were not welcome or make us feel as though we did not belong. Sadly, many of them have not received the same from the world in which they live. In recent months, many of them have been verbally attacked and assaulted because of who they are, including my friend Don and his daughter. It grieves me that such wonderful and caring people have been treated with such ugliness.

There is plenty of ugly to go around. I have never been denied access because of the color of my skin. I have never been attacked because of the country of my heritage. I have never been turned away because of who I love or to whom I am married. But I have been yelled at, sworn at, and given the one finger salute when I have stood in support and solidarity with those who have been denied, attacked or turned away. I have never been hated simply for being me.

There is plenty of ugly to go around. And that is why First Parish Pride is so important. We are a loving community, but there may be those who do not know that is the case. There may be those who have been abused, assaulted, rejected simply for being who they are, and believe that we are like those others who have denied them, attacked them, or turned them away. We need to let them know that this is a safe place. We need to let them know that this is a place of welcome. They need to know that when we say, "Love is love, is love, is love, is love, is love," we mean it, and even more ... we embody it. Pride Sunday is June 13. Let us share the love.

God bless you all.

Scott



Moderator Update



What a blessing it is to be planning worship together again in the sanctuary! I think I can speak for all of us in sending an enormous THANK YOU to FPC's amazing staff, media team, and dedicated volunteers who have tirelessly kept us virtually connected, worshipping together, and serving God in our communities during a very challenging past fifteen months. The reopening team developed a reopening plan that will evolve as necessary, and Pastor Scott and the Diaconate will be passing more details along as they are finalized.

As mentioned in last month's messenger, the Church Council conducted a SWOT analysis during our April meeting. At our May meeting, we will compare the outcomes to 2019's Team SWOT analysis results and the 2019 FPC Sustainability Task Force recommendations. The next step in our process is to gather input from you. At the beginning of June, we will send out a short survey via email to ensure we capture important and valued input from the Congregation. Our preliminary review revealed 3-5 strengths and weaknesses that were consistently identified, and the survey will ask for your opinion and any additional input. The survey will include an overview and instructions and should not take more than five minutes to complete. This analysis will help us strengthen the church and missions by using the results to create efficiencies in our programs and processes to make our service more impactful, more sustainable, and more aligned in FPC's service to God, the church, and the community.

There is a lot of energy and excitement in the air as we look toward reopening. After 15 months of virtual operations, there may be a few growing pains with getting back to a more normalized church schedule. The staff and team are doing an amazing job researching and planning in order to maximize participation while managing risk. The reopening team is working on reopening procedures and will get those out as soon as possible. There will also be an updated space reservation form on the website for teams and groups, and we will let you know when it is posted for use. In the meantime, please be patient, read the guidance that is published in the messenger and on the website, and help spread the word to our parishioners who may not have access to electronic media.

I am looking forward to meeting you all and grateful to be part of this family.

In His service,
Jen

Facilities

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

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 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.

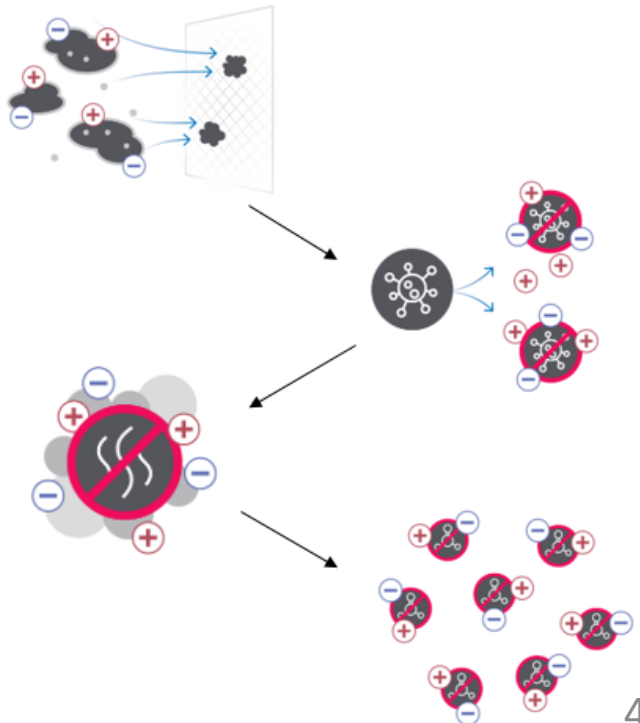
He also made adjustments to allow more fresh outside air into the building. Guy is learning the operation of the system. If you have any questions or concerns regarding temperature or comfort in the rooms, feel free to ask Guy if he can look into it.

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



Opening the Church Guidelines as of May 20, 2021



Here is the wonderful news that you have all been waiting for ... we plan to resume in-person worship on **Sunday, June 20!** But what will our post pandemic “in-person” worship service be like?

With the new bi-polar ionization units installed in the ventilation system and the air quality in the entire building being greatly improved we will be able to slowly reopen the church.

1. In the beginning, **seventy-five people may attend the in-person service.** That number will include staff.
2. The service will **continue to be live-streamed every Sunday.**
3. Those wishing to attend “in person” worship services will have **to register online or call the church office by Thursday of the previous week.** People will be admitted on a first come first serve basis. To register using the online function please go to www.firstparishsaco.org and click on the registration link. The Church Office phone is (207) 283-3771.
4. Everyone **must wear a mask.** Yes, we did say mask. Churches include many unvaccinated people including those who are medically compromised and cannot receive the vaccine, as well as young children who are currently ineligible for vaccination. It is important that everyone feels safe and is respected whether they are vaccinated or not.
5. Everyone will **sanitize their hands** when checking in.
6. Everyone will observe **physical distancing** with six feet intervals.
7. **Families will sit together.** Each family will sit in **every other pew.**
8. Everyone will **sign in** with name and phone number.
9. Everyone **must be symptom free.**
10. We must be cautious about singing indoors based on science and mixed-vaccine-status-groups. Therefore, **the choir will be the only people permitted to sing.**
11. There will be **no paper bulletins.**
12. Upon completion of the service, **everyone will exit the church with physical distancing** once outside, people are free to visit with your friends at First Parish Church.

We thank you for your patience during this long journey. Worshipping in person is a big step to returning to normal.

DEACONS' CORNER



Dear Family and Friends of First Parish Church,

We are so happy to be nearing the end of the Covid pandemic (although we still need to exercise caution!) It is awesome to be contemplating a return to in-person worship, at least on a limited basis. It has surely been a long, long time! The diaconate has resumed in-person meetings (as Rev. Scott says, we are all zoomed out!) and we are making plans for serving you again on Sunday mornings. Stay tuned!

Meanwhile, the deacons have been busy with other service projects, most recently (with the enthusiastic help of Cathy Baillargeon) the Deacons' Diaper Bank! Perhaps you haven't thought about diapers for a while, but you should know that there is a tremendous need for assistance with diapers among some of the young families in our community. Diapers are very expensive and they are not paid for by MaineCare or other general assistance agencies. We began distributing diapers on May 12, in our atrium, and we were able to help a few young mothers with disposable diapers that we had purchased with seed money from the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. We buy them in bulk (tax-exempt) and repackage them in bags of 20, in diaper sizes 2 through 6. They were very gratefully received; we expect the response to grow each week as word gets out.

We started too late for Mothers' Day but we are asking for your help on FATHERS' DAY, June 20. It will be **Dad's Diaper Day** and we are hoping for donations...monetary contributions will be most appreciated (checks made out to First Parish with "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" on the memo line.) You may contribute packages of diapers (sizes 2-6) if you wish but we are able to purchase them cheaper in bulk. Whatever your choice, please consider assisting us with this vital project. Thanks!

We are so looking forward to seeing everyone back in church! But please stay safe in the meantime.

Love and blessings,

Nadine Russell and Dan Carter, Co-chairs





DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our Church school spring quarter ended on Sunday, May 30. We hope everyone enjoyed the service. It has been quite the year. We all look forward to in person everything as summer begins and definitely by fall. If you missed our “Celebrating Wonder during a Pandemic” narrative and video presentation it will be on our Face Book page.



We do know that Pilgrim Lodge will not be open this summer at least not in the capacity we are used to. We are still waiting to hear if there will be any special events. We will get that word out as soon as we know. . 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. 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, that next summer we will be back together again.



Vacation Bible School

We are happy to share that VBS will be in person this summer. We will continue covid protocols because many of our children are not yet eligible for the vaccine. We want to hold

VBS in a manner that is safe to everyone. VBS will be held Tuesday through Friday, July 6-9, 2021, from 9-11:30 AM. We have a fabulous VBS team:

Susan Anton, Peggy Blood, Rev. Scott Cousineau, Judy and Peter Gray, Susan Marston, Danielle and Cam Roberge Nadine Russell, Aldene Walters and Kris Galasyn. Our stories for the week are:

- The Creation Story (Genesis 1:1-2:9)
- Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-20)
- Faith Through the Roof (Luke 5:217-26)
- The “Lost” Parables (Luke 15)

Everyday our explorers will hear a Bible story, create crafts, sing (safely), have special snacks, learn an exciting experiment and play games. It is a fun packed week for our 4year olds through 5th grade. We hope to see many of our Church school participants there.

Stay safe,

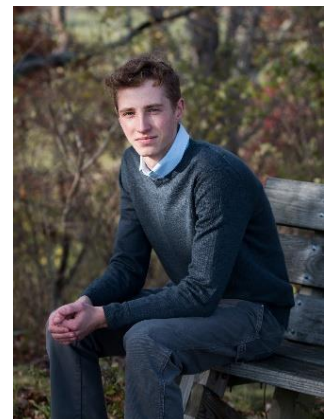
Kris



*Meet our
Graduate 2021*

High School

Eben Browne
Graduate-Thornton Academy
Future- University of Vermont.
Major- Business
Parents: Peter and Inga Browne

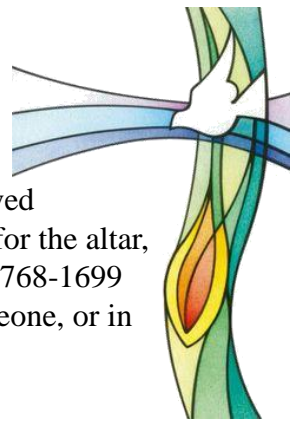




Blanket Sunday Memorials and In Honor Of

Bilodeau and Roberge Families	In memory of Muriel Lambert and Nancy Roberge
Jeff and “Chickie” Chaffee	In memory of their parents, Louise and Albert Baima Sr. and Kenneth and June Chaffee. “Chickie’s” eldest brother, Albert Baima Jr. and Mrs. Dorothy McGraw (who Championed the annual fund at FCON)
Carol and Fred Connelly	In memory of their mothers Carolyn and Rosetta
Jo and Dan Dearborn	In memory of their mothers, Florence C. Armstrong and Carolyn S. Dearborn
Kris and Jim Galasyn	In memory of Phyllis W. Vestal and in honor of Jean S. Galasyn
Faith Garnett	In honor of her mom, Deborah Lundblad
Norma Gorham	In memory of my mother, Elizabeth McQuilkin and in memory of my mother-in-law, Doris Gorham
Kathy Gupstill	In memory of her mom, Frances Grace
Jan Hryniewicz	For all those who need warmth and nurture...the mothering spirit for their survival.
Mary Johnson	In memory of her mother Helen Mitchell Atkinson
Vanessa and David Johnston	In memory of Jenny Veall and Marjorie Johnston In honor of Eva Kristi Lemieux and Abby Johnston
Linda Lambert	In memory of Carol Rancourt
Kathy Angel Lee	In memory of her mom, Margaret Anderson Angel and mother-in-law, Irene Marcotte Lee
Carol Spencer Lemay	In honor of her mom Dorothy Spencer
Cheryl Levasseur	In memory of her mother Joan Haney and her Aunt Judy Getchell
Susan Marston	In memory of her sister Julia Marston and mother, Esther Willey
Lynne and Dale Siulinski	In memory of their mothers, Nora Duclos and Jean Siulinski
Eric Steva	In memory of Evelyn Steva
Patrice and Richard Tripp	In memory of Irene Hoak and Theresa Tripp
Nancy and Rick Twomey	In memory of their mothers, Therese Petit and Elcye Twomey

Flower & Altar



We are blessed to have donations for altar flowers in honor or memory of loved ones. Most Sundays in June are open. If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, contact Patrice Tripp at 590-1109 or rtripp@maine.rr.com or Marcia Lord at 768-1699 or mvlord@aol.com. Please tell us if the flowers are in remembrance of someone, or in honor of a person.

Flower and Altar provided the flowers for Music Sunday, in celebration of our fantastic music team, as well as the flowers for May 23. Jim Wheater and Marcia Lord provided Mother's Day flowers in Memory of our mothers, Norma Valliere and Helen Wheater. May 16 flowers were provided by Rae Thompson.

The final Sunday in May is Children's day, and the flowers are given by the Christian Education Team to the Glory of God and in honor of all our Church school families and leaders

Would you like to be active in a small way to help with the exterior plantings at the church? After school ends, we would like to start "Weeding Wednesdays" in an attempt to beautify and maintain the fish garden and the garden near the sign. Watch the announcements for more details.

We are all looking forward to June and being able to worship in person.

Patrice & Marcia

Missions

Please Help

The Saco Food Pantry is in need of volunteers on week-day mornings from 7:30 – 8:30 am and 9:30 – 10:30 am.

Contact Lynn Steed at lsted203@gmail.com or 207-494-8662 for more information.

The Saco Food Pantry Items Needed

- Toothbrushes
- Liquid dish soap
- Bath tissue



- Mayonnaise
- Catsup
- Ranch salad dressing

Missions

Did you know that our church participates in the United Church of Christ's **5 for 5**? What is the **Five for Five**? It refers to the 5 special offerings sponsored by the UCC every year as listed below.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING channels resources for international programs in health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response, administered by Wider Church Ministries and Global Sharing of Resources. *This offering is received on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.*

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH re-imagines and builds the future of the UCC. Half of the offering stays in Maine. Every year some of the funds have been used to support trips for our youth to attend regional UCC gatherings. In the past, some of these funds supported our local ReadMore Saco. This offering is also shared at the conference and national levels. Nationally, Strengthen the Church largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the United Church of Christ does not have a strong presence. It also provides support for existing churches' new initiatives. *This offering is received on Pentecost Sunday.*

NEIGHBORS IN NEED is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the **Council for American Indian Ministry** (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. In fact, in the past, our church received a grant from Neighbors in Need for the ReadMore Saco program. The (former) Joyful Harvest after school center in Biddeford also received a grant from Neighbors in Need. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. *This offering is often received on the First Sunday of October as part of World Communion Sunday, but our church will request this offering on the second Sunday of October.*

THE CHRISTMAS FUND The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks. *This offering is received on the Sunday before Christmas.*

OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION provides funding from congregations for conferences and the National Ministries of the United Church of Christ (Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries, and Pension Boards.) *This offering is assessed yearly from our church's budget. View videos at*

<https://www.ucc.org/giving/ways-to-give/our-churchs-wider-mission/our-churchs-wider-mission-basic-support/>

DAD'S DIAPER DAY



Please consider honoring your dad, your son, your uncle, your grandpa, your nephew or any other nice guy in your life by donating to the First Parish Diaper Bank on Father's Day Sunday. Your contribution will be added to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund which has provided seed money for the Diaper Bank start-up.

Diapers are purchased tax-exempt using the church credit card and then charged to the PDF.

1 in 3 babies will face #DiaperNeed



WOMENS FELLOWSHIP REACHING OUT TO WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY

Thank-you to the First Parish Women's Fellowship for their generous donation that will be used to purchase feminine hygiene supplies.

These sanitary products will be offered to women who visit FP diaper bank each Wednesday.

In the U.S., 25 million women live in poverty. Food stamps do not cover menstrual supplies. 35 U.S. states have a tax on menstrual products because they are considered "non-essential".

Women living in poverty may need to choose between buying food for their children and buying period products. One in five women in our community may miss school or work while on their periods because they lack menstrual supplies.

For more information, visit:

www.amwa-doc.org/our-work/advocacy/



DIAPER NEED DEFINED

1 IN 3  moms struggle with diaper need
8 TO 10  diapers needed each day per baby
\$100  a month needed to buy diapers



Diaper Need has adverse health affects on families, including rashes & urinary tract infections for children along with stress, anxiety, & depression for parents.

Without diapers, babies cannot attend childcare or early education programs.

Without childcare, mothers cannot go to school or work to further provide for their families.



HOW YOU CAN HELP





The Men's Fellowship group, which has been meeting each Tuesday evening at 715PM via Zoom, has decided to meet one Tuesday in person at the Church, starting in June.

Under the new schedule, the group will meet in person at the Church on the first Tuesday of the month at 715PM. The group will continue to meet via Zoom the 2nd-4th Tuesdays of the month as well as any 5th Tuesday.

We have a committed group of 8 participants but we be pleased to add more men to our group. Please contact John Grew or Bob Condon for more information.

Thank you Nadeen.

John

Prayer Group Ministry Update

The prayer group has continued holding individuals in prayer during the pandemic. Since 1/1/21, we have given 11 prayer shawls, 1 baptism shawl, 15 shawls to Wardwell and 15 shawls to MMC Cancer Center.

Grief booklets have been and continue to be sent to those in need. Please contact Brenda MacDonald, if you are in need of a prayer shawl or grief booklets.

Our knitters have continued to bless us with beautiful prayer shawls. They are truly a blessing and a heartfelt show of love. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!

If you have a prayer need, please contact Debbie Grew, debgrew1@gmail.com. There is no prayer too small to be given over to God!

*Always pray to have eyes that see the best
A heart that forgives the worst
A mind that forgets the worst
And a soul that never loses faith in God*

Hi Folks!

Spring is here and I've been working around the church doing spring cleaning. I'm keeping the church clean and making sure it looks nice for when people come to visit.

We've also been working on the air quality system for the building, this will help the air flow better and help to keep the church air clean.

As always, if you need anything just let me know!

Guy



Events, Activities and Teams



Community Memorial Service

June 5, 11:00 AM, Laurel Hill Cemetery

You are invited to attend a community gathering of remembrance on Saturday, June 5, in the rotunda at Laurel Hill Cemetery. One of the things that we lost during the pandemic was the ability to gather with our neighbors during times of loss and mourning. Some of our grieving was delayed and even denied. This is an opportunity to come together, to support one another, and to remember those that we lost. The service will be led by leaders of the faith community of Saco and Biddeford.

Pride Sunday, June 13



First Parish has starting a Pride Group to help our church better our outreach to the LGBTQ+ community! Please contact the office if you're interested in attending our meetings.

Diaper Bank



Wednesday's
At First Parish
4 PM – 7 PM

First Parish

Would you like to be part of something big? Join one of our teams or groups at First Parish and help make a difference. For more information or availability about a team or how to volunteer, call the office at 207-283-3771

First Parish Teams and Groups

Facilities
Personnel
Johnson/Atkinson Spiritual Growth Fund
Counters
Stewardship/Generosity
Good News Team
Calling Committee
Meal Ministry
Missions
Men's Club
FP Pride

Hospitality
Prayer
Christian Education
Choir
Diaconate
Women's Fellowship
Media
Flower and Altar
Music and Arts
Book Club
Diaper Bank

Thank you Kris !!!

*Thank you to all
the Christian
Education Leaders!
This has been an
extraordinary
year, and we made
it through because
of your
determination and
dedication!*



Christian Education Team

Karen Brann, Chair

Mary Coyne

Lisa Edstrom, Nursery Coordinator

Jennifer Erickson

Linda Lambert

Mary Sicard, Recorder

Eric Steva, Youth Fellowship Leader

Kris Galasyn, Director



Church School Teachers

Linda Lambert, Pre K/K/1

Lisa Edstrom - Nursery

Danielle Roberge, Pre K/K/1

Michael Remillard – Pre K/K/1

Heather Nolette—2/3/4

Jane & Rick Campbell—5/6/7

Karen Brann—8-Sr High, Youth Fellowship Leader

Brian Doyle—8-Sr High, Youth Fellowship Leader



Children's Music Programs

Susan Marston—Junior Choir

Jacqui Savage—Youth Choir

Vacation Bible School

Susan Anton

Peggy Blood

Judy and Peter Gray

Susan Marston

Danielle & Cam Roberge

Nadine Russell

Aldene Walters



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