

The Messenger 2020



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



Registration is Open
Please [click here](#) to register

SHARE GOD'S WORD



Live Services every Sundays at 10:00 am on our
YouTube channel... [Click Here](#)

Or watch us every Sunday at 1:00 pm on
Channel 85 (This service runs one week behind)



Stay Tuned for More Information
about Bible Sunday

For up to date information about First Parish, make
sure to "Like" our Page



Scott Cousineau Senior Minister
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Pastor Scott's Message...



Pastor's Perspective ...

CELEBRATE WONDER is the new curriculum for our Sunday school program this year. I was very excited when Kris showed it to me! I have always been a big fan of wonder, and now we get to celebrate it for an entire year!

Wonder brings two things to mind for me. The first is having an inquisitive mind. The inquisitive mind is curious, open, and eager to try new things. Wonder encourages us to explore. "I wonder how this works." "I wonder what would happen if we tried it this way." "I wonder how many marshmallows I can fit in my mouth." Not every idea is a great idea! But the only question that never gets answered is the one that does not get asked.

The second thing that wonder brings to mind is awe. I will never forget the first time that I saw the Rocky Mountains. I stood there with my mouth hanging open, and all that I could say was, "Wow!" Wonder invites us to see the intricate beauty in our world. Wonder encourages us to embrace a more expansive understanding of God.

The events of this year have forced us into uncharted territory. Every aspect of our lives has changed. In many ways, we have all travelled through the five stages of grief:

Denial ... This virus is not that bad. We will be back to normal in no time.

Anger ... Why did this have to happen?! Look at all the things that I had to miss! Stupid virus!

Bargaining ... Okay, how about if I give up this much? Can I do the things that I love?

Depression ... No. This is terrible. Everything is terrible. I miss my life so much.

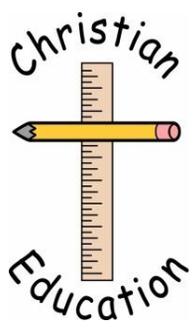
Acceptance ... This is our new normal. I cannot change what is happening. But I can do what I can to be happy and help others to be happy.

We all experience this situation in our own unique and personal ways depending upon our circumstances. Perhaps you have moved through all five stages. Maybe you are stuck somewhere in the middle. Know that God is with you, and your church family is with you. We are all in this together. We can help each other through those sticky stages.

Of course, this year has also given us the opportunity to embrace wonder. We are constantly adjusting how we make our way through the world. We often find ourselves asking, "I wonder if we can do it this way ..." That certainly has been the case here at First Parish Church. Thankfully, we are blessed with a staff and a membership that are willing to accept the "let's try it and see what happens approach." Our wondering has resulted in creative and innovative ideas and wonderful results! I wonder what will happen next!

May God bless you all,

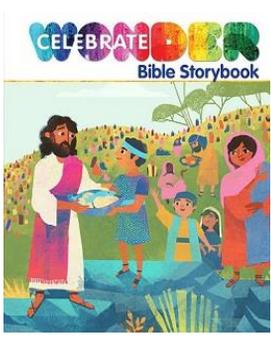
Scott



Everyone loves October. The leaves make God's creation beautiful, the air is cooler and we feel rejuvenated after the hot summer and our routine begins again. Of course, this year our routine is different but it is still a routine, just a new one. Yes,

October is here and yes, Church school is still looking different. We still

- are not together in person.
 - are using a new curriculum
- are having part of Church school virtually- through our children's messages and have take home packets available for our Church school families.



Celebrate Wonder is our new curriculum this fall. Pastor Scott and I are having so much fun sharing the Bible stories with the children and adults.

September was all about **Creation** and our special word was **Creativity**. This month we will be focusing on the story of **Abraham** and our special word is **Faith**.

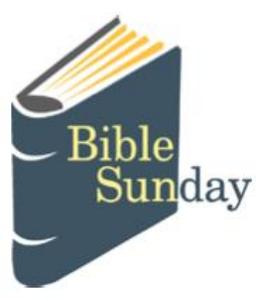
Swag Bags are at the church. Please email/call me so that we may figure out a way to get them to your children so they will be able to follow along with our Bible stories during our Children's Message. There are other fun and exciting items in the bag.

Church school Registration is now open. Our Church school registration form is ready to be filled out. Visit our website: www.firstparishsaco.org click on Christian Education at the bottom of the page, then

click on the Registration button. We encourage all children to be registered, birth through age 18. These forms are important for the following reasons

1. Helps us determine class size vs. room vs. adults needed
2. It helps us in the purchasing of curriculum
3. Helps to organize age level events, Bible Sunday, 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
6. It gives us written permission to use your child(rens) picture on our website, Facebook page, and for church use (slideshows etc.). Names and faces will never be put together.

At this time we are working on a way to celebrate Bible Sunday. We will be in touch with all of our families of our third graders soon. Thank you for your



patience.

Stay safe, Stay well,

Kris



A few fun pictures from our **Homecoming Sunday.** Thank you to our families for driving by and to all our helpers.



🎵 Music Ministry 🎵

jacqui@firstparishsaco.org



How Do You Make a Virtual Choir?

Jacqueline Savage

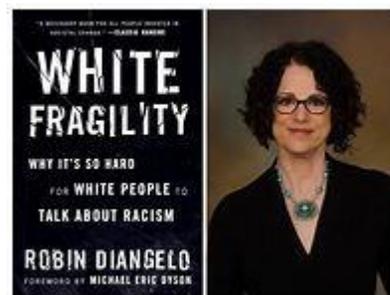
Week after week the choir has continued to surprise us with amazing virtual music. Many have asked me how we do this. Do I record them over zoom and stream to our services?! Unfortunately it is not that easy and takes many hours of editing.

Each week the choir meets on zoom to rehearse our upcoming music. Whenever we all sing together, I have to actually mute everyone. Because of lag we cannot sing together at the same time and hear each other. After rehearsal I send home practice tracks so choir members can continue practicing at home. I encourage 10 min. A day to prepare for the virtual choir pieces. Once a singer feels they are ready to do their recording, they set the stage.

Singers must think about their surroundings for their recordings, what they are wearing, what devices they will be using, and warm themselves up. Once ready they will put headphones in to listen to the practice tracks I have sent. While listening to these tracks they use another device to record themselves. All of these videos are sent to me and on Thursday mornings I upload all the media to my computer into a movie editing program called "Final Cut Pro". I have to align every video so that they play at the exact same time and then I use some effects to blend the voices. Lastly I edit all the videos to go where I want on the screen and add lyrics or photos if I'm going to use those. It usually can take anywhere from a couple hours to 8 hours, and sometimes even longer if it's a bigger project. Luckily I love working with media and have had a ton of help from Freddie Connelley.



Deacons' Corner



Dear First Family Members and Friends,

I recently finished reading the New York Times #1 best seller, *White Fragility*, written by Robin Diangelo. Robin's work involves leading mostly white audiences in race discussions.

Based upon her work, Robin begins by explaining the ideology of race, and how it's been perpetuated throughout many years in our country. Using her experiences as a white person, Robin defines whiteness, and ultimately, white fragility.

White fragility is the process by which whites become defensive during conversations about race, considering any negative feedback an attack on their identities as good and moral people.

Robin goes into depth, describing how white fragility develops, how it protects the inequality of race, and what whites can do about it. Robin identifies the varied feelings, behaviors, claims, and assumptions that may be held by whites that constitute white fragility. She then describes the effects of such actions on people of color.

Describing different experiences in her work, Robin provides an informative look at white fragility in action. With her educational approach, including examples of her own personal growth in confronting white fragility, it allows the reader an important opportunity to reflect upon one's own experiences in relation to white fragility. Robin then shows ways in which whites can shift the paradigm away from defensiveness towards white fragility, changing feelings, behaviors, claims and assumptions, and allow themselves to grow and change, and to work actively towards ending racism, in either small or large ways.

Although this particular book has been in great demand, it may be found in local bookstores and online. (I have a copy, as well, if someone would like to borrow it.)

I appreciate the opportunity to share this book with you! Blessings,

Margery Condon,
First Parish Deacon



Flower and Altar



Fall has arrived. Even though we are not physically worshipping in the sanctuary it's bright and colorful, thanks to Marcia Lord & Jim Wheater.

Sunday Flowers

Would you like to remember, honor or celebrate a loved one or event? The following Sundays are available: **October 4th, 11th & 25th**. If you wish to provide flowers, contact Marcia Lord at mvlord@aol.com or 207-768-1699 or Patrice Tripp at rtripp@maine.rr.com or 207-590-1109.

September 7th by Richard & Patrice Tripp in memory of Richard's parents, Millard & Theresa Tripp

September 14th through the Hewes Flower Fund in memory of John Hewes

September 20th by Marcia Lord & Jim Wheater

September 27th through the Charles & Debra Clark Flower Fund in memory of Doris Clark



Welcome to the Neighborhood!



MISSION TEAM UPDATE

Welcome Immigrants Our New Neighbors (affiliated with members of Christ Federated Church, Kennebunk) is updating their mission. Considering the changes in the Immigrant Policies of our government, (restricting entry of new immigrants) the mission and goals of WIONN have been evolving to maintain their focus on outreach for our existing immigrant neighbors as they work to gain education and skills required to build a new life in our country.

WIONN has helped new immigrants with the process of seeking asylum in the United States, and helped pay educational costs associated with attending Community Colleges, in addition to providing furniture and clothing to new arrivals. (Until the U.S. Immigration and Customs Services accept the asylum application, asylum seekers are not allowed to work.) Once the asylum paperwork is accepted, a Federal court hearing must be set, which takes many years of waiting. While waiting for their court hearing, asylum seekers may apply to work in the U.S., and this process requires a fee and is not permanent. (The request to work in the U.S. has to be updated periodically based on the status of their asylum application.)

The Covid 19 quarantine has affected everyone, especially the most vulnerable immigrant families. Many families have had working hours reduced or eliminated and Gov't Food Stamp supplies have not kept up with the needs. For every reduction in working hours, the stamps allocated to a family are reduced almost immediately, and a family must re-apply and wait for the needed Food Stamps.

There have also been a number of immigrant families with Covid 19 illness which decrees a 14 day quarantine for all family members. Food Stamps do not cover the cost of non-food essentials such as paper products, facial masks, feminine care products, health and body care products, and diapers.

Fortunately, this month, WIONN has received their first order of new diapers supplied by a faith based Maine Charity.

If you would like to help our new neighbors, make checks out to Christ Federated Church, Kennebunk, with WIONN in the memo line. Or you may supply gift cards from local grocery stores or clothing stores. The donations can be sent to WIONN, Christ Federated Church, 6 Dane St, PO Box 87, Kennebunk, ME 04043. If you would like to sponsor a new immigrant family, contact Judy Cadmus at judy1060@maine.rr.com



United States

The Saco Food Pantry welcomes donations of non-perishable food, which (during good weather) may be left in the cart outside church from Tuesday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm. If you want to volunteer, please contact Lynn Steed at (207) 4948662 or lsted203@gmail.com.

Visit sacofoodpantry.org for more information.



Neighbors in Need (NIN) 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](http://CouncilforAmericanIndianMinistry.org) (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. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. You may make checks out to First Parish Congregational Church, with NIN in the memo line, or donate online at ucc.org/nin.

World



Daisy's Children (Also known as Feeding Forward, and in the past, Amigos) feeds and educates children in the mountains of Concepcion del Norte, Honduras. For more information, or to donate, visit daisyschildren.org. Until Oct. 31, the Mission team will double your contribution, (up to a total of \$500.00 total contribution), if you make checks out to First Parish Congregational Church with Daisy's Children in the memo line.

Good News Team

Hello first Parish,

The Good News Team has been working behind the scenes keeping the web page up to date, planning for the future IT (information technology) at First Parish, and planning events for the church family. All the IT piece of our team's responsibility is led by Tim Guerrette. He has been tireless in his efforts. Thank you, Tim!

At our last virtual meeting, we discussed a variety of subjects:

1. Should we introduce a Facebook group for members of the church to converse with each other. We are waiting now for information from one of our members and a media team member. Stay tuned...

2. We have been discussing the operating software called Power-Church. At first, we were thinking that we may need to replace this software, but now with guidance from users of the program, we are taking a closer look at Power-Church to see if it's being used to full potential and could be best solution after all. Once this is determined education and training would be our goal to our staff and other users.

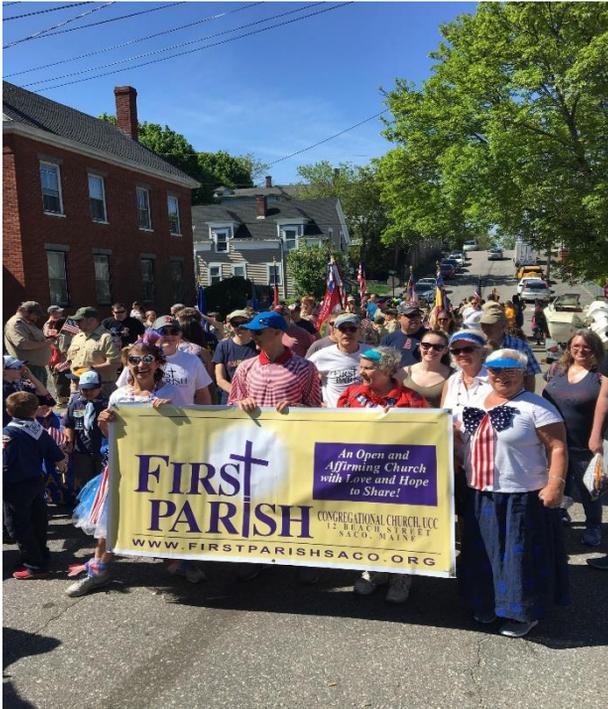
3. It was proposed and approved to form an ad hoc committee to study the IT systems throughout First Parish to identify all systems that need updating or replacement. To take a proactive approach to help us to stay ahead of the IT throughout the church.

4. Possible events for the Fall have been discussed as well. As you saw Kris, Scott, the Deacons and various volunteers had a wonderful event to start the church Sunday School for this Fall. It was safe and fun. Our ideas for events that are safe and fun are being gathered and considered. Again stay tuned...

That is all for now. Here are a few pictures to remind you of some First Parish Events.



Good News Team





A friend shared this beautiful message about love.



Wednesday at 10:46 PM · 



Tonight my daughter (she is eight years old) asked me, "What does LGBTQ mean?" And before I could answer her my mom said, "she doesn't need to know about that."

I told my daughter, "the L is for lesbian which is romantic love between two women, the G is for gay, which is romantic love between two men, the B is for Bi which is when someone has romantic love for both men and women, the Q is for questioning or queer which is when someone understands they are not hetero, and the T is for when someone transitions from one gender to another so they are living in their true form and true to their heart. All of this is about love, how people find love in the world and how people love themselves for who they are."

Aurora said, "I understand, that's really beautiful."

Part of breaking unhealthy cycles in family structure is talking to your children and teaching them love and understanding and breaking old stigmas and misinformation. I understand that some people of older generations think that it's about sex, but the question my daughter asked wasn't about sex, it was about love.



Why I Stand Out Front Every Sunday



By Freddie Connelly

If you've driven by the church building after the live service on Sundays at 11:30am, you've probably seen a few of us out on the front lawn with signs supporting peace and justice for all. Some of you may have joined us in the past but many of you have not and so I figure I'd explain my reasons for standing out there and why I hold the sign I hold which says in big letters BLACK LIVES MATTER.

Growing up in Saco was a blessing in many ways. Such a safe, kind, community full of many wonderful people. We have one of the most highly respected high schools in the state. It's a wonderful little bubble. On the other hand, living in a bubble blinds you to a lot of the world. Especially for those who are different from yourself. As a teen I would go weeks and weeks without seeing anyone who didn't look like me.

When I was a freshman walking through the doors of Thornton Academy for the first time, I knew very little about Black People because of that little bubble I was in. Through my public education and television, I knew the following things about Black People:

1. They were slaves, but Abe Lincoln and the Civil War made it all better.
2. There was segregation and racism, but Martin Luther King Jr fixed that.
3. Black People are treated just like everyone else in every way, even given advantages like Affirmative Action... but of course, you don't want to go into their neighborhoods at night.

To say I was naive would be an incredible understatement. I was wrong, dead wrong. With the aid of the Internet, I was able to step outside that bubble, I heard stories unlike anything I had ever heard from so many people that were unlike me in many ways. It wasn't just Black people, it wasn't even just racial stories, I heard stories of oppression, of bullying, of injustice from people of all different races, genders, sexualities, and religions being mistreated simply for existing as they are.

I am a straight, white, Cisgender Christian male. (Cisgender means your gender identity matches the sex you were assigned at birth)

Have I been mistreated in life before? Yes, of course. Have people said horrible things to me? Yes, they have. Have I faced bullying? I was a socially awkward fat kid, of course I faced bullying! But I have many privileges that others do not have.

I've never been followed through a store simply because of my skin. I've never had to hide who I love from someone else for fear they will hate me or even think there is something wrong with me. I've never had to show someone what's in my pants before I use the bathroom for the gender I identify with. I've never been worried that reaching for my identification when asked for it by a police officer could lead to my death. I've never had to worry that if I walk alone at night, even in a "good" area, I may not return home.

I've never been told I'm "asking for it" because I'm wearing what's comfortable. I've never been told I couldn't go over a friend's house with the rest of my friends because his uncle is over who doesn't like my "kind of people" without even knowing me. I remember the aftermath of 9/11 as a time when Americans from all over were uniting as one and putting our differences aside even for the briefest of moments. But an American Muslim man may remember that same time as a time when they lived in fear, when hate was more prevalent than ever before and directed at them because of the actions of a few people who look like them and claim to follow the same God as them.

There are many more stories out there, I could fill the entire messenger with these stories (and I'm sure Nadeen would be extremely happy if I filled up the entire messenger for her!) but this is just a sample of the privileges I've learned I have for reasons completely out of my control. I invite you to read stories, watch documentaries, and discover what kind of privilege you have that others may not.

So why then do I stand out front with a sign that says Black Lives Matter? Because even though I am not Black and I will never be able to fully understand what it's like for Black people in our society, I want to show that I stand with them. I want equality for all. The comment that most often gets shouted at us by those who are upset by us and in particular the sign I hold is "All lives matter." And what they never hear us say to each other as they drive away is "Yeah, that's the point." When people like Breonna Taylor, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, George Floyd, Philando Castile, and countless others are being killed because of the color of their skin, and the fallout makes it feel like their lives don't matter for one reason or another, the only thing you can say is that Black Lives Matter. Saying "All Lives Matter" in that scenario, while absolutely correct, is like if your spouse is feeling down and asks you "Do you love me?" And you reply "I love everyone." You're telling the truth, but you're hurting someone in the process.

So why do I stand out front every Sunday? Because the Jesus I learned about in our open and affirming church loves everyone and stands up for everyone. He calls us to stand up for peace. He calls us to stand up for justice. He calls us to love everyone because they are as God has made them. So I stand because I love Black People. I stand because I love Hispanic people, native Americans, Asian people, African people, any every other race. I stand because I love gay people, bisexual people, pansexual people, asexual people, transgender people, non-binary people, gender queer people, and any other sexuality and gender identity someone may identify with. I love Jewish people, Muslim people, Buddhist people and any other religions in which one may believe. I love Saints and I love sinners. If space aliens descended from the sky today, I would love them too because that is what Jesus has called me to do. Am I a perfect Christian, of course not, far, far, far from it! However, I believe in Jesus' teaching of love, and I believe in justice. And I will stand up for it. Is an hour a week standing on the street corner holding a sign going to change anything? Maybe. Maybe not. But I know that I am making a statement that I am a follower of Christ and I love everyone, especially those that are mistreated.

Continue pg. 2

Therefore, I invite you, if you love anyone of any race, gender identity, sexuality, or religion, please join us out front of the church (WITH A MASK!) and stand for peace and

justice. And if you don't support any of the above groups or don't agree with the way I feel, I invite you to join us and have a conversation with us. I won't debate you, but I will be more than happy to answer any questions about why I'm out there, and I'm sure others out there will feel the same. All I ask is that you listen with an open mind and heart, take the information you learn from us, meditate on it, pray on it, do some research with first hand stories from people unlike yourself, and consider it. It's all I can ask.

Thank you all for taking the time to read this long article, I hope to see you after church at 11:30 on the front lawn, if not to stand with us than to ask questions and to listen. And don't forget your mask!!!



First Parish Face Masks Are Here!



Check out the new Fall fashion!! You can protect your neighbors, promote the church, and look good doing it!

First Parish face masks are available at the church office.

We are accepting free-will donations to cover the cost. Thank you!





To See a Video of Homecoming Sunday
[click Here](#)



Bored Pastor
Just click on the "Titles" and enjoy the show!

[Bored Pastor 9](#)

[Bored Pastor 8](#)



A decorative arrangement of several autumn leaves in shades of orange, yellow, and red, scattered in the upper left corner of the page.

The Messenger
First Parish Congregational Church
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