



# The Messenger



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

April 2026



Do you have any baskets you would like to recycle? Sally Pratt would be interested in collecting some from you. Please connect with Sally at [oneseaglass@gmail.com](mailto:oneseaglass@gmail.com) or see her after church.



**Financial Update for 1st quarter after service on April 19**

### Coffee Hour Hosts for April

- Apr 5 – Mission Outreach
- Apr 12 – Pie Sunday
- Apr 19 – Flower & Altar
- Apr 26 – Church Council

Rev. Scott W. Cousineau, Senior Minister  
Kristine Galasyn, Director of Christian Education  
Jacqueline Savage, Music Director  
Sue Burgess, Office Administrator  
Kyle Blay & Jon Towle, Sextons

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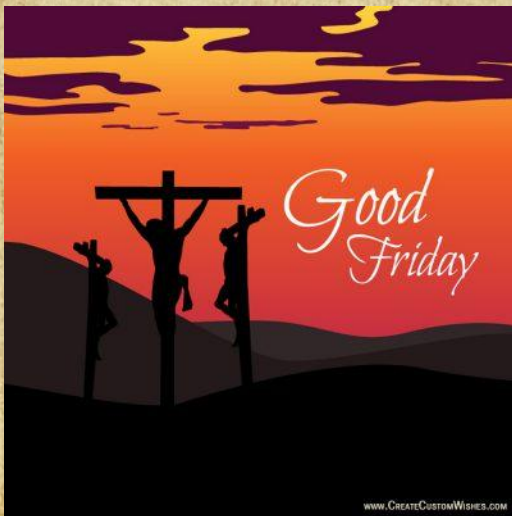
# Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday, March 29th  
10:00 am Service



Maundy Thursday,  
April 2nd  
7:00 pm Service  
Communion and  
Tenebrae



Good Friday, April 3rd  
Sanctuary will be open  
9:00 am – 3:00 pm



Easter Sunday,  
April 5th  
10:00 am Service

## Pastor Scott's Message...



### The Pastor's Perspective ...

We begin April with the joyful celebration of Easter! We look forward to the sanctuary decorated with lilies and tulips. We look forward to the glorious, uplifting music. We look forward to seeing the pews filled with old friends and new. We look forward to the excitement and the energy of our children. We look forward to an inspirational message from the pastor. (Well ... maybe 'look forward to' is a bit of an exaggeration.) We look forward to the promise of the empty tomb because it tells us that Jesus is the completion, the fulfillment of the vision that God has for the world.

Every year as we approach Christmas Day, we always hope and pray that the Spirit of Christmas will last beyond the gift-giving. We pray that it will extend beyond that day when the decorations are put away and the tree is unceremoniously placed at the curb for disposal. It is the same hope and prayer as we approach Easter Sunday. We pray that the promise of salvation will last beyond the candy in the Easter baskets being eaten. We pray the joy of the good news of the empty tomb will extend beyond Easter dinner.

The reality is that we live in a world in which we have a short attention span. Part of that is because we have so much access to the news of the world, the news of today is already yesterday's news. The other day a photo of the empty sanctuary from the first weeks of COVID popped up on the "memory" tab on my social media feed. That was six years ago, but in some ways, it felt as though it never even happened. Even though the Bear and his friends still populate the pew in the balcony, it is still difficult to wrap my head around the fact that we worshipped in isolation from one another for two years. And please allow me to say that I am still proud of the way that this church family pulled together and supported one another during those two long years.

The point is that as we celebrate Easter, then move onto the next line of boxes on our calendars, may we not lose sight of what Easter means to us and the world. May the spirit and the promise of Easter extend beyond.

Here is our challenge.

Let us consider what it means to receive the gift of love? And what does it mean to give it to others? What does it mean to be offered grace and mercy? And what does it mean to offer them to our families, or our friends, or to ourselves? What does it mean to be able to sing, "Hallelujah! Christ is risen!?" And what does it mean to offer that same joy to someone else?

After pondering those questions, let us then consider what our answers may mean for the life of the church. Are there conversations that we need to have? Are there ministries that we need to create? Are there ways that we can embody the love of Jesus Christ in the world around us? Are there ways that we can be Love Incarnate ... Love in the Flesh? What is your heart saying to you?

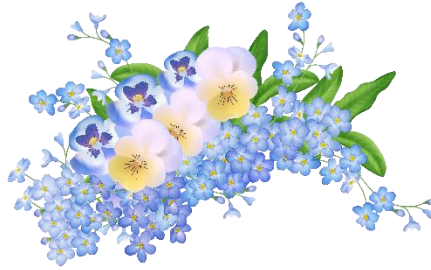
May the Love and the Peace of Christ be with you.

Pastor Scott





## From the Moderator...



Spring Greetings! I still see snow in my backyard, but it is retreating steadily...Jane saw some robins the other day and the plovers are returning to Biddeford beaches. By the time this makes print I'm pretty sure we'll have some seeds started for the garden. To me, this all adds up to Spring in Maine.

There is a lot happening at the Council level and I wanted to use this column to share some of these activities. These activities all support the strategic vision developed last year which has three areas of focus:

- Increased community outreach and engagement
- Increased participation in the life of the church
- Practicing genuine engagement with each other

On the first topic, the Program Development Team will be hosting a screening of the film, *Saving Walden's World*, in May. The trailer for this beautiful and touching film can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an4LqG9mLIM&t=4s>. It's definitely appropriate for all ages and will be open to the community. Stay tuned for more details.

On the second topic, the Council is moving ahead to help create the Pastoral Search Team for finding First Parish's new Associate Pastor. Six or seven individuals will be donating their time and energy towards this search which can take the better part of a year. As Confucius said, "the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step". We are grateful to these individuals for their gift of service to our church community.

On the third topic, on May 24 and June 14, there will be a two-part discussion series on ***The Christian and the Government***. This will take place within the framework of the Deep Discussion group formed earlier this year. This group has been meeting on the second and fourth Sundays after worship, exploring open-ended questions brought by members of the group. For this special two-part series, the topic emerged following a six-month Council discussion last year about how First Parish could best respond to UCC Synod resolutions on the issues of genocide in Palestine and treatment of immigrants by the Federal Government. Art Morrisette will be leading this two-part discussion. All are welcome.

With kindest regards,

Tom Kircher  
Moderator, First Parish Church





## From the Director of Christian Education

Spring has finally sprung. There are signs of new life everywhere. In Church school we have already started to learn about the different events that happened during the week of Palm Sunday to Easter. With all the somberness of Lent it is nice to know that **Jesus has Risen Indeed.** Many people give up something during Lent, but how nice it is when people do a little extra. So many good things are happening, like all the love and care given to Makengo and his family after his detainment. We are so grateful.



March has five Sundays so we had a Sunday Funday on March 29<sup>th</sup>. On this Sunday Easter Funday there was cookie decorating, face

painting by Miss Heather, our annual Easter Egg hunt and a special guest appearance. This was also Palm Sunday. The day we remember as Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We had a high energy participation for our traditional Palm Processional at the beginning of the worship service.



Stay safe and stay warm  
See you at Church.

*Kris*

## April

- April 5 **Peter Galasyn**
- April 12 **Liam Wiggins-Mehlman**
- April 19 **Angela Makengo**
- April 26 **Nathaniel Cummons**



## Vacation Bible School 2026

Coming this summer.

**July 6-10, 2026**

**"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."** -Philippians 4:13, NRSV

Registration will be on the website later this month.

Our team is excited to accept the Snowball Mountain Challenge with your children. All children ages 4 through fifth grade are invited to VBS. We have 5 fun days of Bible stories, music, crafts, snacks, science, recreation, reflection on the Bible story and a service project.



April 12<sup>th</sup> is Pilgrim Lodge Sunday

Please join us for all things Pilgrim Lodge as we celebrate our Church's church camp. Special guests from PL will share with us their PL stories around the campfire as well as many First Parish campers. We will sing camp songs and there will be camping info after. Camperships will be available at this time.



*Jesus says:  
"Let the little  
Children come to  
me"* - Matthew 19:14

Helping **Abby** and **Heather** in the Nursery for the month of March:

- 1st **Marcia Lord**
- 8th **Patrice Tripp**
- 15th **Donna Hobbins**
- 22nd **Aldene Walters**
- 29th **Mary Coyne**

Thank you to all our Nursery volunteers.  
*"It's Only One Sunday"*

First Parish Christian Education Team appreciates your time. **Thank you**



Our youth have been working on sharing through "peeps" and other yummy Easter candy, the events of Holy Week. We hope you have had a chance to walk with them through this special timeline.



## March Kindness Project

Our younger elementary class, under the direction of Church school teachers, Linda Lambert and Joanne Howard made these beautiful Easter table decorations for our Friday Friends. The children had fun making the craft for this sweet group of widows/widowers who come together for a noontime meal the third Friday of the month



## April Kindness Project

On Sunday April 12<sup>th</sup> we will highlight Pilgrim Lodge, our Church's Church camp. PL is in the process of replacing the old mattress with better ones through their Mattress Drive. Can YOU help?? They have only \$1000.00 left to go. There will be a jar on the Welcome Table labeled PL Mattress Drive. You can give cash, check, please put "Mattresses" in the memo of your gift. If you prefer to mail a check, you can send it to [103 Pilgrim Lodge Lane, West Gardiner, ME 04345](mailto:103 Pilgrim Lodge Lane, West Gardiner, ME 04345) or donate online:

[www.pilgrimlodge.org](http://www.pilgrimlodge.org)

The Great 2026 Mattress Drive!

**PILGRIM LODGE MATTRESS DRIVE**  
Sponsor new mattresses for our cabins!

**SWEET DREAMS GIFT: \$50**  
**ONE MATTRESS: \$150**  
**FULL BUNK BED: \$250**  
**FULL CABIN: \$1,150**

**GOAL: 135 MATTRESSES**  
sleep well, camp well!

PUT "MATTRESS" IN THE MEMO LINE OF YOUR GIFT!  
PILGRIMLODGE.ORG/GIVING

# Flower and Altar Update

As you read this, Easter Sunday is almost here. The team wants to thank you for the tulips, lilies and daffodils that you ordered to beautify the church and enhance the atmosphere. Did you know that if you take them home, let them die off, and dry the bulbs, you can replant them in your own garden in June when the soil warms up? They won't rebloom this summer, but they will next summer. Plant the bulbs about 4 inches deep. The team planted leftover daffodils in the garden near the main entrance. You will see them blooming in May or June.

The team had a quilting day in February and made great strides on our Family Tree of Life Banner. There will be over 200 names of Church family and friends. And who knew that Mari Warner would get so excited about learning to use a rotary cutter. Here is a sneak peek.



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There are upcoming open Sundays for Altar Flowers! If you wish to remember/honor/celebrate a loved one or an event by providing flowers for the altar, the sign-up sheet is on the wall outside the church office, or you may contact Patrice Tripp @ [rtripp@maine.rr.com](mailto:rtripp@maine.rr.com) or 207-590-1109 or Marcia Lord @ [mvlord@aol.com](mailto:mvlord@aol.com) 207-768-1699.

### Sunday Flowers for March

- March 1 -
- March 8 - Mary Johnson and her sisters Jane and Nancy in Loving Memory of our Mother, Helen M. Atkinson
- March 15 - Edward Olsen to bless the First Parish Community
- March 22 - Charles and Debra Clark Memorial Flower Fund in memory of Fred Clark
- March 29 - Stephen Boardman in Memory of his wife, Tracy Kay.

Palm trees are given by Deb and Mike Richard in loving memory of their daughter, Tracy Lynn. We so appreciate their faithful donation.



# Mission Outreach Team Update

FMI – Wylie Herzberg  
wylie.herzberg@firstparishsaco.org

or  
Diane Simonds  
disimonds001@gmail.com



The Mission Outreach Team meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Please consider joining us.

Thank you for your continued support of the **Saco Food Pantry!**



The pantry continues to accept all donations of non-perishable food and toiletries, and their current needs include **jelly, instant hot oatmeal, canned beef stew, chowders, hearty soups, complete pancake mix, syrup, canned pastas, pork & beans/baked beans, boxed rice mixes (Rice-a-Roni), pasta, hygiene products. Pop top cans are best as some folks don't have can openers.** The donations may be left in the shopping cart in the Atrium.



Fresh, perishable donations may be delivered to the Pantry at **67 Ocean Park Road, Saco, Monday thru Friday, 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM, or the First Tuesday of the month from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM.**

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

## Shoe Ministry

Now that the seasons are changing, we are in need of adult sized sneakers for our Shoe Table. Looking ahead we could use children's water shoes and sandals. New socks of all sizes are always welcome.



# Upcoming Events

## Coffee (or Tea) and Conversation

First Friday of the Month at 10:00 AM  
**April 3rd**

One of the desires that emerged from our various visioning exercises was in interest in engaging with one another. With that in mind, we are offering another opportunity for connection and conversation. On the first Friday of each month we will gather for coffee, tea, cocoa and conversation. There is no agenda other than to gather. No need to RSVP ... just join us. See you there!



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## Did you know???

Coast 93.1 and Hannaford Supermarkets partnered to identify and celebrate women in Maine. 20 women were selected who go above and beyond to make their communities a better place to live. They are the unsung heroes who are already busy yet find time to give back in big ways to help others.

Our own **Kris Galasyn** was recognized as a 2026 recipient of this award for her phenomenal work in establishing and organizing our MLK Day of Service for the past 18 years.

Kris is carrying the torch for Pam Mohlin who also received this award in 2025 for her important and incredible work with the Diaper Bank.

You can listen to their interviews on the Coast 93.1 website.

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# April Word Search

EASTER ROLLS  
BLUESKY  
LIGHT GREEN  
BIRDNEST  
CANDY  
BUNNIES

FRESH FRUIT  
PASTELS  
BIRDS  
ROSES  
CHICKS  
CHOCOLATE

SALAD  
LIGHT BLUE  
RAIN SHOWERS  
DAFFODIL  
FLOWERS  
TULIPS

YELLOW  
RAINBOW  
LAMB  
GRASS  
SPRING  
EASTER

HAM  
EGGS  
CROSS  
CROCUS  
BUTTERFLIES  
APRIL FOOLS

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



# April

## Everyday is a Holiday!

1. April Fool's Day
2. Peanut Butter and Jelly Day
3. Find a Rainbow Day
4. School Librarian Day
5. Read a Road Map Day
6. Sorry Charlie Day
7. No Housework Day
8. Zoo Lovers Day
9. Cherish an Antique Day
10. Siblings Day
11. Barbershop Quartet Day
12. Licorice Day
13. Scrabble Day
14. Dolphin Day
15. Titanic Remembrance Day
16. Wear Your Pajamas to Work Day
17. Bat Appreciation Day
18. Animal Crackers Day
19. Hanging Out Day
20. Look Alike Day
21. Chocolate Covered Cashews Day
22. Earth Day
23. Picnic Day
24. Pigs In a Blanket Day
25. DNA Day
26. Richter Scale Day
27. Babe Ruth Day
28. Blueberry Pie Day
29. Zipper Day
30. Bugs Bunny Day



| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                              | Monday                                                                                        | Tuesday                                                                                                                  | Wednesday                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Thursday                                                                        | Friday                                                                                                 | Saturday |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|                                                                                                     |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                          | 1<br>4pm JMS - Will<br>4pm Diaper Bank<br>5:30pm Jr Choir<br>6pm GS Troop<br>2196 & 277<br>6:45pm Sr Choir                                                                                                  | 2<br>9am TOHG<br>6:30pm Bible Study<br><b>7pm Maundy Thursday Service</b>       | 3<br>10am Coffee and Conversation<br>2pm JMS - Sabrina<br>3pm F&A<br>Easter set up<br>5pm Prayer Group | 4        |
| <b>5 EASTER Sunday</b><br><br>10am Service<br><br>                                                  | 6<br>9am Counters<br>10:30am WOU<br><br>2pm JMS - Will<br><br>6pm Bell Choir<br>7pm Big Book  | 7<br>9am Women's Fellowship<br>2pm JMS - Will<br>5pm SoME Dance<br>6pm Band<br>6:30pm Facilities<br>7pm Men's Fellowship | 8<br><br>4pm JMS - Will<br>4pm Diaper Bank<br>6:30pm Mission Team                                                                                                                                           | 9<br>9am TOHG<br><br>6:30pm Bible Study<br>6:30pm Beach St Band                 | 10<br>11am - Funeral & reception for Bill Johnson<br><br>2pm JMS - Sabrina<br>5pm Prayer Group         | 11       |
| 12<br>8:30am Sacred Conversations<br>10am Service<br>11:30am P & W Choir<br><br>1pm JMS - Sabrina<br>3pm POPS Concert                                                               | 13<br>9am Counters<br>10:30am WOU<br><br>2pm JMS - Will<br><br>6pm Bell Choir<br>7pm Big Book | 14<br>9am Women's Fellowship<br>2pm JMS - Will<br>5pm SoME Dance<br>6pm Band<br>6:30pm Book Club<br>7pm Men's Fellowship | 15<br>10am Theological Group<br>4pm JMS - Will<br>4pm Diaper Bank<br>6pm GS Troop<br>2196 & 277<br>6:45pm Sr Choir<br><br> | 16<br>9am TOHG<br><br>3pm GEB<br><br>6:30pm Bible Study<br>6:30pm Beach St Band | 17<br><br>12pm Friday Friends Lunch<br>2pm JMS - Sabrina<br>5pm Prayer Group                           | 18       |
| 19<br>8:30am Sacred Conversations<br>10am Service<br>11:30am P & W Choir<br><br><b>11:30am Quarterly Financial Update</b>                                                           | 20<br>9am Counters<br>10:30am WOU<br><br>5pm Bell Choir<br>7pm Big Book                       | 21<br>9am Women's Fellowship<br>5pm SoME Dance<br>6pm Band<br>6:30pm Fun Seekers<br>7pm Men's Fellowship                 | 22<br><br>4pm Diaper Bank<br><br>6:45pm Sr Choir                                                                                                                                                            | 23<br><br>9am TOHG<br><br>6:30pm Bible Study<br>6:30pm Beach St Band            | 24<br><br>5pm Prayer Group                                                                             | 25       |
| 26<br>8:30am Sacred Conversations<br>8:45am CE Team<br>10am Service<br>11:30am P & W Choir<br>11:30am Diaconate<br>1pm JMS - Sabrina<br>2:30pm Seeds Meal Prep<br>3pm Organ Concert | 27<br>9am Counters<br>10:30am WOU<br><br>2pm JMS - Will<br><br>5pm Bell Choir<br>7pm Big Book | 28<br>9am Women's Fellowship<br>2pm JMS - Will<br>5pm SoME Dance<br>6pm Band<br>6:30pm Personnel<br>7pm Men's Fellowship | 29<br>4pm JMS - Will<br>4pm Diaper Bank<br>6pm GS Troop<br>2196 & 277<br>6:45pm Sr Choir                                                                                                                    | 30<br>9am TOHG<br><br>6:30pm Bible Study<br>6:30pm Beach St Band                |                   |          |



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