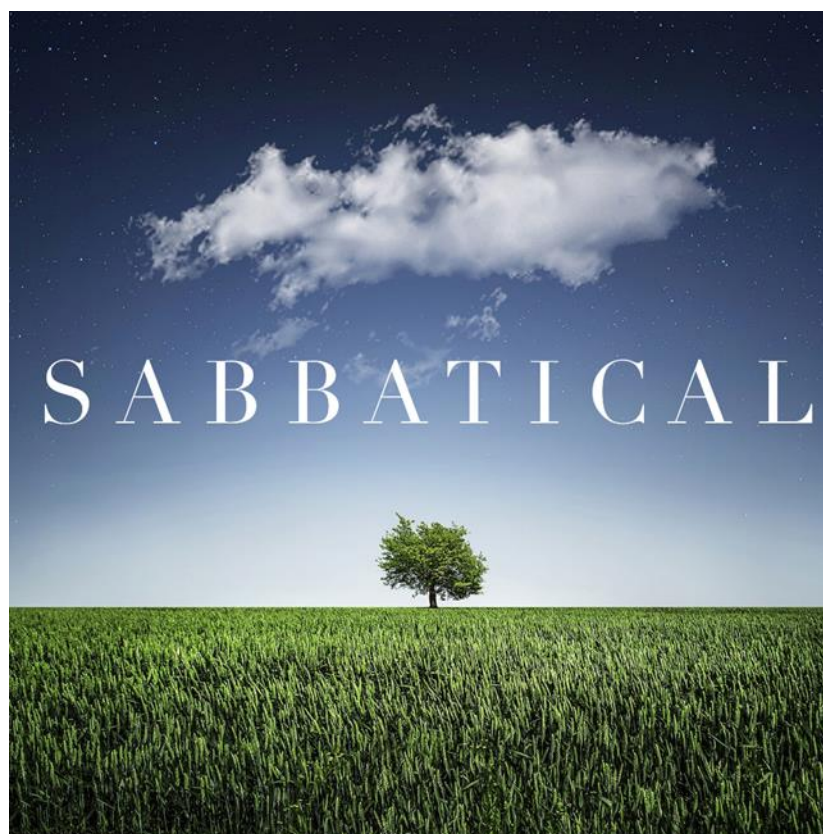


# **Information for the Congregation**

## **Rest in Creation**



**March 22, 2024 – July 22, 2024**

**St. James Episcopal Church  
Keene, NH**

**Rev. Elsa Worth, Rector**



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# *Sabbatical*

## *A Time for Congregational Renewal and Refreshment*

***“When we move toward our own creativity, we move toward our Creator. When we seek to become more spiritual, we find ourselves becoming more creative. Our creativity and our spirituality are so closely interconnected they are in effect one and the same thing. Speaking of God, we often use the words “Maker” or “Creator” without recognizing that those terms are for the “artist”. God is the Great Artist. We are creations and we are intended, in turn, to be creative ourselves.”***

***- Julia Cameron***

### **Why Sabbaticals?**

The idea of sabbaticals is rooted in the Old Testament. God worked for six days creating the universe and its inhabitants, and then rested on the seventh day. Throughout the Old Testament, God instructs the people to follow that pattern: work six days and rest on the seventh. The pattern was further reinforced by God's command to allow the land to rest every seventh year. This meant no farming - no working the ground - every seven years.

While the clergy sabbatical is rooted in the Old Testament, during the Middle Ages, schools of higher education began to grant their instructors a leave of absence every seven years. This was done to help teachers renew their passion for their subject. This practice continues today in most colleges, seminaries and in some churches.

Clergy sabbaticals are meant to be a time of rest and renewal for the priest, but also for the congregation. When Elsa is away on her refresher leave, we'll be having a time of refreshment ourselves here in Keene. We hope this time of sabbatical will bring us all:

- New Perspectives
- Spiritual Renewal
- Rest
- New Learnings
- Renewed Passion and Vision for ministry

## **Why Is Elsa Taking a Sabbatical At This Time?**

Elsa's letter of agreement with St. James states, "In accordance with the guidelines of the diocese, it is expected that clergy will take a Clergy Refresher Leave of three months after each 5-7 years of continuous service to the congregation." The complications of the pandemic interrupted our plan to offer Elsa her sabbatical time sooner. In her almost 30 years since ordination, she has not yet been in a position to take a sabbatical. We are grateful to be able to provide Elsa with a time to rest, reflect, renew and to do what makes her heart sing. Elsa will be adding her yearly vacation of four weeks to her sabbatical period, and will be away for four months.

## **Is A Sabbatical Just A Long Vacation?**

A sabbatical is much more than a vacation from meetings, sermons, budgets, pastoral care and all that Elsa does. It is a time of rest, reflection and self-care. A successful sabbatical is re-energizing and a time to deepen and strengthen relationships with God, family, church and oneself. It is a time for the congregation to do the same. Sabbatical periods often re-energize parishes to move forward in new and creative ways.

## **What is the Cost of the Sabbatical for the Church?**

When a clergy person goes on sabbatical, they continue to receive their usual compensation from the church. In addition, the church pays for supply clergy coverage. Churches put aside money each year to save up for clergy sabbaticals.

St. James has been very fortunate to receive a Lilly Clergy Refresher Leave Grant for 2024. Not only does it cover all the costs of Elsa's planned travels, it also covers the cost of the supply clergy, as well as the special programming planned for the church while Elsa is away. Therefore, our refresher leave in 2024 will not create any additional costs to St. James above and beyond our regular budget. It is a profound gift to us to receive this grant, which will help us create an exceptional sabbatical experience for both Elsa and the church. Many thanks go to our Rest In Creation sabbatical team!

## **What Will Elsa Do On Sabbatical?**

Elsa will begin her Sabbatical by spending Holy Week with the brothers at the monastery of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA. She will then fly to Mirepoix, France, where she will stay for 6 weeks. In mid-May she will travel to Stockholm, Sweden to spend 6 weeks there, exploring the country of her heritage. After returning at the end of June, she will spend time at her family cottage and then conclude the sabbatical with another silent retreat at SSJE. All during this time, she will focus most of her attention on deepening in her art practices of drawing and painting, recording what she sees in her travels. Elsa's art practice has become a prayer practice for her, powerfully bringing her into the present moment with the Creator. She will be deepening in her faith as she explores her creativity.

## **How Will We Honor Elsa's Departure?**

On the Sunday prior to Elsa's leaving, March 10, 2024, we will have a special coffee/social hour for the congregation to wish her well and to pray both for her journey and the congregations.

## **Who Will Celebrate Sunday Service While Elsa Is Gone?**

There will be a refresher leave clergy team working together to cover the Sundays that Elsa is gone, as well as any pastoral emergencies that may come up. Our pastoral emergency priests will be available to tend to St. James parishioners who are seriously ill, hospitalized or in crisis. They will also tend to families who have experienced a death and contact St. James for a funeral. Info about our clergy team is below.

## **Can We Contact Elsa While She Is On Sabbatical?**

No. The purpose of a sabbatical is to take a complete break from all church responsibilities. Our refresher leave clergy team is well equipped to handle our weekly worship and any emergency that may come up that requires professional clerical attention.

## **Will Baptisms or Weddings Still Take Place during the Sabbatical?**

No. Baptisms and weddings will wait until Elsa returns in August.

## **What About Summer Worship?**

Many of our 2024 summer worship services will be inside the building, particularly when creative activities are being offered after the service, but there will be some special Sundays planned for outdoors, weather permitting.

## **Will Our Ministries Continue While Elsa Is Away?**

Yes. Our community ministries, and all other ministries performed by lay people will continue as they normally would during the refresher leave.

## **Will The Vestry Continue To Meet?**

Yes. The vestry will meet as usual with the wardens chairing the meetings in Elsa's absence. Please contact one of our wardens if you have a topic or concern to discuss.

Deb Ganley [dganley@rr.ne.com](mailto:dganley@rr.ne.com) 603-313-8613

Kathy Frick [kathyafrick@gmail.com](mailto:kathyafrick@gmail.com) 603-357-3307

Canonically, the wardens are in charge of the church and of the staff when the rector is away. Please make sure one of the wardens is informed of issues that arise, or if there is any kind of emergency at St. James, even if you have already contacted one of the clergy.

## **What Will We Be Doing for Our Own Refresher Leave At St. James?**

This refresher leave is for us all. A number of special opportunities for creative rest and refreshment will be provided for the congregation while Elsa is away. We hope you'll remain active at St. James while Elsa is away and take advantage of this exceptional

programming. It has been made possible by the funding of the Lilly Grant. The schedule of events is below, and may be added to as the time draws closer.

### **How Will We Celebrate Elsa's Return?**

A few weeks after Elsa's return, on August 4, 2024, we will hold a celebration event with food and space to share what both Elsa and the congregation have been doing and learning during the sabbatical time. Elsa will display her artwork and members of the congregation will share their experience as well.

### **Do You Have Additional Questions?**

Please contact a member of the Rest in Creation Sabbatical Team:

Deb DeCicco	<a href="mailto:debdecicco@gmail.com">debdecicco@gmail.com</a>	603-801-0323
Theresa Ford	<a href="mailto:theresaford@mac.com">theresaford@mac.com</a>	210-608-1195
Deb Ganley	<a href="mailto:dganley@ne.rr.com">dganley@ne.rr.com</a>	603 313-8613
Chris Hadlow	<a href="mailto:cphadlow@yahoo.com">cphadlow@yahoo.com</a>	603-399-4412



## Refresher Leave Clergy Team

### The Rev. Hannah Anderson

*Hannah will be with us to celebrate our worship once a month while Elsa is gone, offering in person creativity workshops after church each time. She will also be offering online creativity workshops on Monday evenings.*



The Rev. Dr. Hannah Anderson with colleague, the Rev. Aaron Jenkyn

Hannah Anderson is an Episcopal priest, life coach and artist living in Concord, NH. with her husband, the Rev. Bob Anderson. They have three grown sons and six grandchildren, giving them many opportunities to travel between the East and West coasts of the U.S.

She retired from active church ministry in 2018 and began her own company, Golden Thread Coaching and Consultation. Using the symbol of the golden thread as one's truest self, Hannah weaves together life coaching, pastoral care, art and compassion as she supports children, teens and adults in discerning and following their own golden threads. Her intention is to offer a welcoming, safe space where people can discover their life purpose, build on their giftedness and celebrate resiliency.

Hannah is looking forward to coming alongside the people of St. James during their time of Sabbatical to lean into the intersection between art and theology. She will be preaching and celebrating at the parish as well as offering small and larger workshops that will focus on creativity and faith.

## Brother Luke Ditewig

*Brother Luke will celebrate 2 services with us and conduct workshops on each of those days. His visits will echo Elsa's silent retreats at the monastery at the beginning and end of the sabbatical.*



A native of Orange County, California, Br. Luke Ditewig studied in Boston and Princeton before serving a parish in western Nebraska. He entered The Society of St. John the Evangelist in 2009 and made a life-commitment in 2016. The Brothers focus on prayer and teaching others to pray as they host retreats, preach, teach, and serve as spiritual directors. Having been formed by attending a camp on a desert island, Br. Luke muses that Monastery life is rather like an adult silent camp. He enjoys long walks in the woods, making snow angels, kayaking, arranging flowers, and ushering folk into holy rest and play.

## The Rev. Duncan Hilton

*Duncan will be our celebrant on most of the Sundays of the Sabbatical.*



Duncan's current priestly vocation is writer, prison chaplain, and online teacher and prayer leader (visit [duncanhilton.net](http://duncanhilton.net) for offerings) while he and his wife Bethany build a house in Chesterfield with their toddler and infant sons, Charlie and John.

Duncan served as Priest-in-Charge at St. John's Walpole for two years from 2020-2022. Before that he served as been Priest for Discipleship and Discernment at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Brattleboro, VT. At St. Michael's he was commissioned to raise up leaders inside and outside the church to listen and follow their call through prayer and action. Out of a small group ministry he developed there sprung initiatives around praying the Daily Office, discernment and decision-making retreats, partnering with the Community Justice Center to support people transitioning out of prison, and beginning to create a L'Arche Community in Southern Vermont (an international network of communities that help care for people with intellectual disabilities).

Before arriving in Vermont and being ordained, Duncan worked for five years as Executive Director with the Leadership Development Initiative (LDI), where he trained Episcopal parishes in team-based leadership practices in order to help them launch local mission projects. He also worked as Training Director for Life Together, the Boston-based Episcopal Service Corps program, and as a Teaching Fellow with Professor Marshall Ganz at the Harvard Kennedy School in his class, "Organizing: People, Power, Change." Duncan's career shifted from congregational ministry in the United Church of Christ, where he served as a minister for youth and children, to leadership and organizing through his experience in 2010 as Field Coordinator for the Promise Arizona campaign, which registered over 15,000 new voters in the state.

Duncan enjoys leading singalongs on guitar, gardening, and playing and watching sports.

## **The Rev. Fred Chisolm**

*Fred and Susan (below) are our pastoral emergency team. Fred will also celebrate one of our Sunday services early on in the Sabbatical.*



The Rev Fred Chisolm currently serves as the Priest In Charge at St John's Episcopal Church in Walpole. He was ordained to the Priesthood in Dec 2023 after a career of almost 40 years in a variety of engineering and manufacturing management roles. Raised as a Presbyterian, Fred was ordained to the lay offices of Deacon and then Elder in the Presbyterian tradition before moving to NH where he became an Episcopalian. Fred is a graduate of the Episcopal Diocese of NH School for Ministry. He has completed the Episcopal Preaching Foundation's Preaching Excellence Program's level I & II training. He holds an MBA from University of Chicago and an Engineering Degree from Yale.

Outside of the church Fred serves on several boards. He enjoys listening to jazz and Gregorian chants, and driving through the beautiful small towns of NH and VT with his wife Alison.

### **Fred's Contact Info:**

Cell Phone: (603) 991-6777

Email: [RevFredChisolm@gmail.com](mailto:RevFredChisolm@gmail.com)

## **The Rev. Susan Eibner**

*Susan and Fred (above) are our pastoral emergency team. She will also celebrate one of our Sunday services early on in the Sabbatical.*



The Rev. Susan Eibner retired from Parish Transitional Ministry after Easter 2023. She has continued serving at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center as the Episcopal Chaplain. Susan is a past Faculty Member for the Interim Ministry Network, an organization that trains interfaith clergy how to be successful as Intentional Transition Ministers. Her ministry for the last 20 years has been all about raising up Lay Leadership in the churches she has served.

In retirement Susan is looking forward to continuing her mission toward healthy transitions through consulting/coaching with churches and individuals. She loves leading Retreats and Bible Studies. And she is giving lots of time to reading, writing and spending as much time as possible with her 3 grandchildren. Susan and her husband, Jim, love riding their bikes on the rail trails of NH and keeping their gardens around their home in Grantham flowering.

### **Susan's Contact Info**

Cell phone: (603) 498-1315

Email: [susaneibner@gmail.com](mailto:susaneibner@gmail.com)

# Refresher Leave Schedule

March 17 Elsa's last Sunday at St. James before leaving with a festive potluck coffee hour.

March 24 (Palm Sunday) The Rev. Duncan Hilton

Holy Week and Easter - March 28-31

Maundy Thursday	7pm	Bishop Rob
Good Friday	7pm	Bishop Rob
Great Vigil	8pm	Bishop Rob
Easter Morning	9:30am	Bishop Rob

April 7 Brother Luke, SSJE

Workshop After Church with Br. Luke: *Creativity: God's Children at Play*

April 14 The Rev. Hannah Anderson

Workshop After Church with Hannah: *Creativity and Faith*

April 21 The Rev. Fred Chisolm

**Monday, April 22, 7-8 PM**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Favorite Color Workshop session 1*

April 28 The Rev. Susan Eibner

**Monday, April 29, 7-8 PM**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Favorite Color Workshop session 2*

May 5 The Rev. Hannah Anderson Anderson

Workshop After Church with Hannah: *Boats for the Journey*

May 12 The Rev. Duncan Hilton

May 19 The Rev. Duncan Hilton with David Gilliam preaching

**Monday, May 20,**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Prayer Painting session 1*

May 26 The Rev. Duncan Hilton

June 2 The Rev. Duncan Hilton with Derek Scalia preaching

**Monday, June 3, time TBD**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Prayer Painting session 2*

June 9 The Rev. Hannah Anderson

**Workshop After Church with Hannah: *Vision Board Workshop***

**Monday, June 10, time TBD**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Prayer Painting session 3*

June 16 The Rev. Duncan Hilton

**Monday, June 17, time TBD**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Prayer Painting session 4*



June 23 The Rev. Duncan Hilton with Ann Carlson preaching

**Monday, June 24, time TBD**

Online Workshop with Hannah: *Prayer Painting session 5*

June 30 The Rev. Duncan Hilton

July 7 The Rev. Duncan with David Gilliam preaching

July 14 Brother Luke, SSJE

**Workshop After Church with Br. Luke: *Playing Bodies, Praying Bodies***

July 21 The Rev. Hannah Anderson  
Elsa will attend church with us on July 21 and get back to work on Monday, July 22

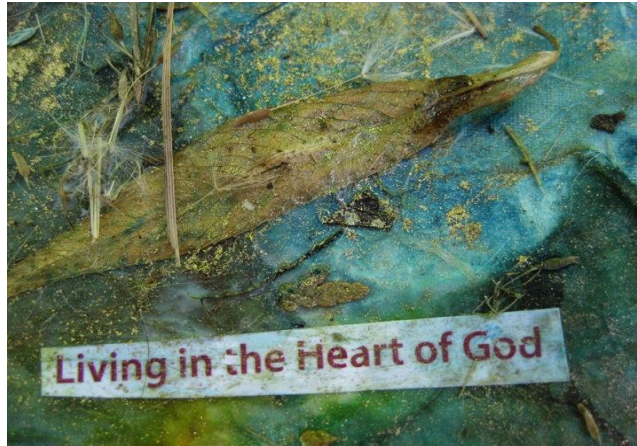
**Workshop After Church with Hannah:  
*Group Reflection on Creativity for the Congregation***

July 28 The Rev. Elsa Worth preaching and celebrating

August 4 Culminating Event with Elsa and all our visiting clergy joining us for worship and a celebratory potluck and exhibit. If you'd like to help with this celebration, please contact Beth King. (See contacts, page 18)



# Workshop Descriptions



We are excited to be able to offer these experiences of creativity and faith.  
Please take part in as many you like.

*Please note: these workshops are for anyone interested in exploring their creativity and having fun together. There is no need to have any previous experience or to be artistic in any way. God made us all to be creative, in God's likeness!*

## **Sunday Workshops - at church following the service**

### **Creativity: God's Children at Play**

-with Brother Luke, April 7th - 11:30-1:30

*Come get out of our often too-serious and word-filled heads to playfully explore, color and remember our birthright as beloved children of the Divine Artist. This is an interactive workshop that includes times for solo experience and group sharing.*

*No RSVP required - just come! And bring a bag lunch so we can eat together after we're done.*

### **Creativity and Faith**

-with Rev. Hannah, April 14th

*Following the Sunday service, everyone is invited to stay after Coffee Hour for a 45 minute Forum on Creativity and Faith offered by the Rev. Hannah Anderson. During this presentation, Hannah will share her reflections on Creativity and Faith as priest and artist. Using images and reflections from a parish sabbatical in 2010, Hannah will trace the path of a creative journey with Christ into the heart of God.*

*Reserve your spot by contacting Patrick in the office [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) by April 9th.*

## **Boats for the Journey**

-with Rev. Hannah, May 5

*Jesus and His disciples traveled often by boat from one place to another. On the Sea of Galilee they weathered storms, caught fish, hauled nets, had conversations and launched into the water to try to walk upon it. We'll practice making our own simple boats for the season of Easter into Pentecost. How would you like your boat to look? What do you want to have in your boat (symbols or written list) in order to make the journey from one place to another? No artistic background is needed! Just show up and have fun. Please bring your own lunch.*

Reserve your spot by contacting Patrick in the office [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) by May 1st.

## **Vision Board Workshop**

-with Rev. Hannah, June 9

*Join with others who are interested in making a vision board. Like a map that helps us find our way from one place to the next, a vision board is filled with ideas, intentions, images and colors that capture our curiosity for the future. No artistic training is required for this workshop. There will be plenty of images and colors to choose from to create your vision board. Along with the materials that will be provided, please bring along anything that is aligned with your personal ideas you'd like to express on your vision board. Materials offered will include: Acrylic paints, images from photos, magazines and books, fabric, colored threads, wire, glue, glue guns, clothespins and a 11 x 14" canvas/person. Dress casually for some fun!*

Reserve your spot by contacting Patrick in the office [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) by June 5.

## **Playing Bodies, Praying Bodies**

-with Brother Luke, July 14

*With childlike freedom practice deep breaths and simple movements to pray your pain and hope - and to pray for each other. This can be standing or seated, with any range of motion. All bodies welcome.*

*No RSVP required - just come! And bring a bag lunch so we can eat together after we're done.*

## **Group Reflection on Creativity for the Congregation**

-with Rev. Hannah, July 21

*This will be an opportunity for people to share with Elsa, who will be among us this day, what they've been learning about creativity during the Sabbatical time. Our experiences while Elsa was away will be shared through pictures and storytelling.*

*No RSVP required - just come!*

## **Online Workshops - Monday Evenings**

### **Favorite Color Workshop**

Mondays, April 22 and 29 (7-8 pm) Online via Zoom with Rev. Hannah

*We know that color can make a big difference in our lives, from what we wear to what color a room is painted, to the meals we enjoy and the places we visit. Join with a group of people who will each choose one color as a favorite for two weeks. During this time you'll gather items, materials, scraps of paper, crayons, buttons, paint chips and clothing that boast your color. You'll be surrounding yourself with this color with the intention of listening and looking more deeply into whatever message the color is bringing to you. There will be a small collage made at home (glue, items of this color, pictures, materials) and journaling for the two weeks.*

Reserve your spot by contacting Patrick in the office [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) by April 13th

### **Prayer Painting**

Mondays, May 20-June 24 (No class on May 27)  
Online via Zoom, Time TBD, with Rev. Hannah

*During our first session we'll explore the topic of prayer. What prayer resides deep within your soul? Is it one you memorized or is it one that wants to be expressed in your own words? We'll each write our own prayer on a large paper or canvas or in a sketchbook. Every day you'll read the prayer and journal about it. Each week you'll be asked to omit a word or two—anything that seems extraneous to the core of the prayer. These words will be painted over with a color of your choice. By the end of five weeks you will have created your prayer painting that reveals the word or words that are most important to you to share with God.*

Reserve your spot by contacting Patrick in the office [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) by May 11th

# Who Do I Contact?

If you have a question, a suggestion, a concern or an emergency while Elsa is away, here is the list of who to call.

**David Gilliam is our administrative intern while Elsa is away.  
Please copy him on all your emails.  
[henry.gilliam@gmail.com](mailto:henry.gilliam@gmail.com)**

For general concerns of any kind, please contact our wardens,  
Deb Ganley and Kathy Frick.  
[kathyafrick@gmail.com](mailto:kathyafrick@gmail.com) and [dganley@ne.rr.com](mailto:dganley@ne.rr.com)

For office related issues, contact Patrick at [office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com)

To promote something in the eNews or online, contact both Patrick  
[office@stjameskeene.com](mailto:office@stjameskeene.com) and Kalyn DaSilva [dasilvak14@gmail.com](mailto:dasilvak14@gmail.com)

For Sabbatical related questions, contact Deb Ganley [dganley@ne.rr.com](mailto:dganley@ne.rr.com)

For finance related issues, contact Bob Walsh at [rwalshjr1@gmail.com](mailto:rwalshjr1@gmail.com)

For building related issues, contact Kerry Ford at [kkford2@gmail.com](mailto:kkford2@gmail.com)

For music related issues, contact Walt Sayre at [wcsayre3@gmail.com](mailto:wcsayre3@gmail.com)

For Sunday hospitality and special food events, contact Beth King at [ekking@gmail.com](mailto:ekking@gmail.com)

For pastoral emergencies, contact our pastoral emergency clergy

Susan Eibner [susaneibner@gmail.com](mailto:susaneibner@gmail.com) (603) 498-1315  
Fred Chisolm [RevFredChisolm@gmail.com](mailto:RevFredChisolm@gmail.com) (603) 991-6777

To arrange a eucharistic visit to a homebound person, contact the Eucharistic Visiting Team via Elaine Carril [ecarril@twc.com](mailto:ecarril@twc.com)

**Please remember to copy David on all your emails.**