

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3

As we prepare for Good News Club Easter Parties this month, I marvel at all that the Lord is doing here in Eastern Maine. In December, the Lord opened the doors to having nine Christmas Party Clubs, with 133 children attending and six children accepting Jesus as their Savior! We also were invited to present the Christmas Story and Gospel to 130 children attending the Annual Penny Sale at Franklin Baptist Church. Volunteers were able to reach a total of 263 children this past Christmas Season with the gospel! Please continue to pray for seeds that were planted in the hearts of these children who heard the gospel, maybe for the first time, for them to come to know and believe in Jesus.

Thank you for all your prayers for the Good News Clubs that are ongoing in our area. We are excited to celebrate the end of the school year with a Good News Club Rally in April. This is a special event that brings all the clubs together for a fun-filled day of skits, games, songs, and Bible time in which the gospel will be shared and kids invited to respond. Please continue to pray for the Lord to give us strength and wisdom in reaching these precious children with the gospel.

We had a wonderful Good News Club training of volunteers in Hancock County this past month and are praising the Lord that He brought 17 people to participate in this training. Please pray for these volunteers as they seek the Lord's direction in where He would like each one to serve. How wonderful it would be to have a Good News Club in every school in Hancock and Washington Counties!

Our Downeast Day Camp dates have been set and we will have two weeks of camp this year: July 15th-18th and July 22nd-25th! Please pray for the Lord to send volunteers to staff the two weeks of camp and for His guidance and provision for all our day camp needs. Please also pray for the hearts of the children who will attend camp, that they will be open to receiving the gospel and that lives will be changed for God's glory!

We are praising the Lord for expanding our team with the addition of Gene and Carrie Philbrook serving with Eastern Maine! Both Gene and Carrie have helped with Downeast Day Camp and Carrie has been involved with the Good News Club ministry. They have hearts to reach the children in our area with the gospel. God is so good! Thank you for all your support and prayers for the ministry in Downeast Maine!

MEET

GENE PHILBROOK





My name is Gene Philbrook and I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve the people of Downeast Maine through CEF. I was introduced to CEF through my wife who volunteered to help Kathrin Hastey do a Christmas party at Mountain View elementary school. My personal experience with CEF has been limited- but from what I have seen of the camps and clubs offered, I am truly impressed with the organization. I'm impressed not just because of their vision and implementation of their goals, but because of the people who work and volunteer for CEF. Each person has such a heart for the children and CEF does a fantastic job of preparing them to teach and lead the children of this area to Jesus. And for the last two summers I have been blessed to be a volunteer at Downeast Day Camp and had a blast doing it!

I was born in a small town in the Mid- Coast of Maine and grew up in the small fishing village of St. George. I went to high school at Georges Valley where I met Carrie and we dated for a long time before we got married-which is a major part of our personal salvation testimonies. I went to the University of Maine at Farmington where I studied to be an elementary teacher and graduated in 2000. Carrie and I have four wonderful children: Genevieve 21, Emma Grace 20, Asher 18, and Jude 15. Each one of them has such amazing talents and I can't wait to see how the Lord will use them as they mature! Seventeen years ago, Carrie and I felt God calling us to move Downeast and we have lived in Surry (just outside of Ellsworth and Blue Hill) ever since that call.

After becoming a follower of Christ in 2000, I wanted to "do something" for Jesus. And I thought pastoring was the gift he had given me. However, each door I attempted to open, closed in my face. And because I am a little thick in the head, God had to show me three separate times. And the last time it was obvious that His plan for me was something different. It wasn't until recently that I "saw" how God has been working in my life for the last thirty years. I realized He has given me a heart for children and a desire to see them come to know Christ so they can have a life that is far better than the best this world can offer! I have been working with children of all ages for the last 30 years in a variety of settings; everything from a youth leader to elementary teacher to a soccer coach.

Recently, I was hired by CEF to be a part time field worker in Eastern Maine, with the hopes of becoming full-time soon. And Carrie has recently offered to volunteer her time to assist in the administrative work of Eastern Maine. After twenty years of waiting for the Lord to open the right door for me to go through, I am very excited to serve the children, families, and communities of this area. The Lord is working in Downeast Maine!!



A LOOK BACK AT CHRISTMAS!

Christmas Craziness at its best!!

What a blessing to be able to share the true meaning of Christmas with 130 children in under 3 hours. The annual Penny Sale at Franklin Baptist Church is a time of organized chaos that reaches so many families. Before the kids head downstairs to do their Christmas shopping, they have time to get a snack, get their faces painted, but most importantly, hear the gospel. Kathrin and I shared the story at least 10-12 times on a tiny, crowded stage with so much activity swirling around the church. Some of the kids couldn't focus, but there were definitely many that were listening. You could see it on their faces that they were very interested in the Story.

At the end of the sale, our throats were scratchy and tired, but we were blessed beyond measure to be a part of this important ministry.





-Jen Brennan

This past holiday season I had the privilege of teaching at a Christmas Party Club in Mountain View Elementary School. We had eight children attend, most of whom someone from the team running the party knew through prior Good News Clubs, Downeast Day Camp, or from their ownchurch. The kids had a blast playing many Christmas themed games and eating wonderful snacks. They heard the true Christmas story and learned how their loving Savior died on cross for them. I had the blessing of being able to counsel one of the kids after the lesson, and she came to know Christ as her personal Savior! Praise God! The party came to a close with the kids receiving small Christmas gifts. Through this humble and simple Christmas Party Club, a young girl believed in Jesus for the first time, and seven other children heard the gospel. God is so GOOD!

-Addie Jaffrey



For Christmas party clubs in December 2023, I prayed the Lord would allow me time and opportunity in my work schedule and personal life so that I could go wherever He sent me. As always, He is a faithful rewarder of good gifts and my schedule was open to go and share the Gospel.

I love how the Lord has knit together a team of like-minded, Spirit-lead servants in Washington County from various churches. We ventured in faith to multiple places. The first school had no children registered. We went anyway and spent time in prayer and did the party with the children whose parents were leading it. It was precious.

Since I started helping with Good News Clubs (GNC) last December, I've wanted to visit an established club, such as, Elm Street School GNC in East Machias. They welcomed me to join them during their Christmas Party Club and we had a blast. As the salvation message was shared, a handful of children were interested in talking more about Jesus and their relationship with Him. One boy, Jake (not his name) had a few questions and was so thoughtful. When I asked if he'd ever prayed to receive Christ, he said "no, just now in my head in the classroom!" It was such a special moment. I assured him, "you're a child of God!"

Jake also told me he attended a Christian School last year and remembered hearing about how our sin separates us from Jesus. I was so thankful I had the chance to see how the Lord had used the previous school teachers and the Good News Club in his new school to work together to bring him to accept Jesus as His Savior! His mother was overjoyed and said, "him receiving the greatest gift we've ever been offered is the BEST gift for his mama this Christmas. I'm so proud of him."

-Jen Wood

Praises

- 9 Christmas Party Clubs in December with 6 children accepting Christ as Savior
- 263 children were reached with the gospel this past Christmas Season
- 6 Good News Clubs continuing in the new year
- Easter Party Clubs scheduled
- Gene Philbrook coming on staff
- Carrie Philbrook volunteering in office
- Quick Start Good News Club Training in Hancock County-17 participated in the training

Prayer Needs

- Pray for the Easter Party Clubs-that children will come to know Christ
- Pray for the children who came to Christ through Good News Clubs and Christmas Party Clubs-that they will grow in their walk with Christ
- Pray for more schools to open their doors to Good News Clubs
- Pray for the Lord's guidance and provision for upcoming Echo Burst Youth Trainings and Downeast Day Camp summer ministries-please pray for all the kids who will be attending.



Good News Club Training-Pictures!

Calendar reminder: CEF of Eastern Maine monthly prayer lunch on the second Tuesday of each month at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ellsworth. For more details and information, contact Nancy Whitney at nancyw1208@gmail.com

If you would like to support the work of CEF of Eastern
Maine, please consider filling out the enclosed
response card or donating online at
https://www.cefofmaine.org/chapters/cef-of-easternmaine/! Thank you! We could not do this work without all
of you!

Contact Us!

Downeast Day Camp 2024 Dates!

July 15th - 18th July 22nd - 25th

You can register your camper online at https://www.cefofmaine.org/chapters/cef-of-eastern-maine/downeast-day-camp/

CEF of Eastern Maine Committee Members:

Carol Libby - Chairperson
Paula Maker - Vice Chairperson
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Laurel Bartolomeo - Treasurer

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