



**First Parish Church
on the Village Green
Manchester-by-the-Sea**

February 2015

Pastor Rev. John Hughes

“Keeping in Step with the Spirit”

“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”

Galatians 5:25

Strategic planners know that to “*meet in the middle*”, picking a point halfway between the 2 parties that want to meet, is an effective, efficient way to get things done. There are now websites to help people find coffee shops, restaurants, and points of interest mid-way between friends or business associates for just such meetings.

Our Trustees created another version of “*meet in the middle*.” People see the steeple and clock restoration and repair underway at the same time our foundation is being insulated (*and firebreaks installed*), new thresholds for our door, and new railing up the stairs to the front doors. It is as if our Board of Trustees is working “*from the Heavens down*” and “*from the Ground up*”, with plans to someday meet in the middle, a complete restoration and preservation of our sanctuary.

Our Trustees keep in step with the *Spirit of Vitality*, our Church’s goal. The Apostle Paul writes about “*living in ... and keeping in step with the Spirit*” in *Galatians 5:25*. We come alive by the Spirit that pervades our life as we live out and create “*The Fruits of the Spirit*”. Those fruits seem to be blossoming all around us!

In two years, **2016**, our church will celebrate that we have gathered for **300** years, having first gathered as a church in **1716**. Our community has always looked to the Church as a place to gather and join two realities, our secular lives with our witness of faith, a place where heaven and earth join together. We all look to “*meet in the middle*”.

Rev. John J. Hughes

The Newsletter of the First Parish Church Congregational

Church Bell

Happy Valentine's Day to everyone – may your sweethearts be extra sweet on February 14th!

Now that we are in February we are busy visiting the Parable lessons of the Great Pearl, the Good Samaritan and Parable Games. Parable lessons question our everyday lives and allow us to see things in a way that we may have missed before. They are lessons that will result in your children having questions and comments about their morning in Sunday school. I will make sure that I send home the parent pages each week so that you have an understanding of what was shared.



There will be no Sunday school on February 15th or 22nd due to the February vacation. In January we started a new Sunday school choice for the many skiers/athletes that have conflicts with Sunday mornings. You are invited to attend a mid-week session from 5-6pm. We hope that this will allow your families to stay involved with First Parish Congregational during these winter months. In February we will meet on the 11th and the 24th.

In March we will meet on the 10th, the 25th and on April 8th.

The first Communion class will begin on February 8th and will conclude on April 12th when the class will participate in communion with First Parish church during worship. If you are in 4th grade or older and would like to participate please contact me – everyone is welcome and I promise you a wonderful program with numerous exciting lessons and events!

We have re-scheduled the Birthday bash for March 15 and will combine it with the Heifer Talent show – if you have not attended this in the past please come as it is a wonderful fun filled celebration of everyone's birthday – combining this with the Heifer talent show will be epic!!!! More details will follow about this very special birthday/ fundraiser for the International Heifer project – a program which helps third world countries through providing livestock to improve their standard of living. Watch for more as we get closer!!

I am always looking for new ideas for our Sunday school so please feel free to contact me with any comments.

Happy Valentine's Day
Priscilla

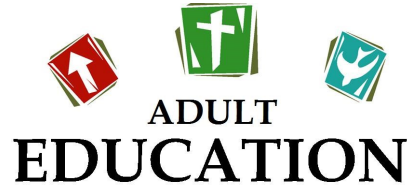
Christian Ministry Coordinator

Priscilla Duda

“Friday Bible Study”

Rev. Hughes guides a group on Friday afternoon as they take a closer look at the scriptures for the upcoming Sunday. Please join in as we prepare for worship by studying the lectionary. Everyone is welcome to start their weekend with this wonderful time of fellowship.

Join us Friday from 4-5:30 in the Conference room – there is a cozy seat waiting for you.



“10 Best Ways”

Judy Haley continues to guide us in the “Ten Best Ways to Live: The Ten Commandments for Today’s World.” Far from an outdated code of do's and don'ts, the Ten Commandments still offer God’s expansive perspectives and anchoring practices that bring life and joy to families and communities. Combined with Jesus' incisive enactment of them, they provide a framework for making decisions, guiding children and living a vibrant life together. Please visit the [CE Web Page](#) to sign up and link to The Ten Best site for more information. We will have our next Friday session on February 6th and webinar on February 9th – we hope you can join us.

“The Art of Prayer”

There are many types of prayer in the Christian tradition, including intercession (praying for others), petition (asking God for something), thanksgiving (giving thanks to God), and penitential prayer (expressing sorrow for your sins). Another type is meditation, which has been described as simply "listening to God." Most Christians throughout history have probably prayed using a mix of types and styles. Please join us in the conference room from 5:30 – 6:15 on the following dates. *Immediately following the program head to the church for the “Hour Of Tranquility” for reflection and prayer.*

The Sessions are: ~~January 28th – Feb. 4~~ “Make Prayers Count” – a discussion on the prayer bead system – the history and traditions, why it is so meaningful and how you use beads to pray. Everyone will receive a set of beads and will have the option of creating their own prayer bead design in the Narthex during the Hour Of Tranquility.

February 25th “The Power of Prayer” – a discussion on the impact of prayer – what happens when we tell someone we are praying for them? Are your prayers powerful – how

do we know?

March 18th – “The Process of Prayer” – a look at the rituals, routines and many different ways we pray. We will examine the 7 different ways to pray and identify the role they play in our lives.

We hope you can join us for this special program

“Soup and Conversation”

Yes it is coming back!! I am currently setting up dates and speakers so watch for announcements in the near future. If you have any ideas for a program please let me know and I will check into it. I look forward to sharing some delicious soup and friendly conversation with everyone!

I thank you all for your support and help with the programs we are running – I look forward to wonderful programs in the future and the memories we will create.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please contact me at cedirector.fpchurch@verizon.net

Happy February! Priscilla Duda



Hour of Tranquility

Each Wednesday Evening

An Hour of Tranquility in our sanctuary

6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

As a way of giving back to the community, we open our candlelit sanctuary for anyone seeking a place of tranquility to enjoy peaceful music and private meditation.

All faiths are welcome to join in this space.

ACOLYTE-BELL RINGER The Candle Lighting Ritual remembers Jesus’ words, “**Wherever 2 or 3 gather in my name, there I am in the midst of you.**” As we gather to worship, our faith becomes our “**burning**” reality. The bell is struck 3 times for the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At the end of the service, the “**flame**” does not remain on the altar, but goes back out into the world, into our very lives. Only when what we have read, what we have sung, what we have reflected upon becomes acted out is our faith a true reality. Contact youthdirector.fpchurch@verizon.net to sign up.

Youth Director

Emelia Attridge

Youth Group February Calendar

Sunday, Feb. 1 10–11 a.m. Solace MSYG

No HSYG

Sunday, Feb. 8 10–11 a.m. Solace MSYG

4:30–5:30 p.m. Teen Cafe HSYG

No Youth Group on Sunday, Feb. 15 — Enjoy the break!

Sunday, Feb. 22 10–11 a.m. Solace MSYG

4:30–5:30 p.m. Teen Cafe HSYG

Friday, Feb. 27 Celtics Game in Boston

Celtics vs. Hornets



Game at TD Garden on Fri., Feb. 27. The game starts at 7:30 p.m. We'll meet earlier, take the commuter rail into North Station and grab dinner before the game. Contact Emelia to purchase a ticket; cost \$55. All youth welcome.

Email youthdirector.fpchurch@verizon.net

What are we learning about?

During Solace Middle School Youth Group on Sunday mornings, we continue our journey through prayer as we ask questions like: why pray? Is God listening? What ways can I pray? How do others pray? In February, we'll be learning about different forms of prayer, even how to pray without words!



If you have a student in grades 6 through 8, you will have received a letter in the mail describing our newest addition to our Youth Group programming in Christian education and faith formation.

Mission Years are the years between First Communion and Confirmation. This month, students will be making Passports that will be stamped when they complete service learning projects. **On March 1**, we will meet a special guest from The Open Door to talk to us about the topic of *hunger*, and what we can do to eliminate hunger on Cape Ann. Then on **March 8**, after church all youth are invited to prepare and serve a meal at The Open Door (this will also be our High School Youth Group meeting that Sunday).

How can I help?

We are always looking for adult volunteers to help on Sunday mornings/afternoons or to chaperone events and programs. If you haven't yet, please sign up to volunteer for at least 1 program before the end of the school year if your teens are involved in Youth Group.

Thank you!

*First Parish Church, Congregational
Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA, UCC*

**WARRANT FOR ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
February 8, 2015**

TO: Active Members of the First Parish Church Congregational, United Church of Christ,
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts

*You are hereby notified to meet in the Church on Sunday, February 8, 2015 immediately following the
Worship Service, for the following purposes:
To wit:*

ARTICLE I: To accept the report of the Annual Business Meeting held on February 9,
2014

ARTICLE II: To see what action the Church will take in regard to the budget proposal for
2015 as submitted by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE III: To hear and act upon the reports of the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary,
the Board of Trustees, the Investment Committee, the Christian Education Committee, the
Diaconate Board, the Missions Committee, the Music Committee, the Stewardship Commit-
tee, and the Membership & Growth Committee (Vitality Committee).

ARTICLE IV: To authorize the Board of Trustees and Treasurer to transfer up to \$10,000
from the Endowment Fund to the General Operating Fund if it becomes necessary during
2014 and until the 2015 Annual Business Meeting.

ARTICLE V: To authorize the board of Trustees and Treasurer to borrow up to \$8,000
from the Endowment Fund to the General Operating Fund on a temporary basis solely for
cash flow issues and not as a permanent withdrawal and only if it becomes necessary during
2015 and until the 2016 Annual Business Meeting.

ARTICLE VI: To hear and act upon any other business of a financial nature that may
come before the meeting.

George A. Nickless, Clerk

Read the Annual Business Report [Online](http://www.firstparishchurch.org) at www.firstparishchurch.org



All knitters are welcome when the Seaside Parish Knitters meets on the first and third Thursdays of the month (Feb 5 and 19) in the Conference Room from 3 PM to 5 PM. Call [Penny Lapham](#) at 978-526-7128 for more information.

Annual Fund Drive

Our Stewardship and Annual Fund Drive Committee would once again like to thank everyone who participated in our annual drive. It was our most successful ever thanks to our generous congregation!

Lots of hard work was done with Rev. Hughes and our coach , Paul Nickerson to have an efficient, and meaningful outreach!

We had a celebration of pledging for our church.

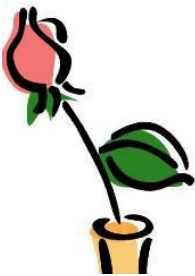
Mary Ellen Cook, Chair of Annual Fund Drive

Diaconate

The deacons met at the end of December, happy that our busiest season with all the holiday services went smoothly.

John and Jeff met to ease the transition in financial matters.

Vespers



At the sign of the rose, we're happy to announce that our new season of *Vespers* quiet time for prayerful meditation and peace, wonderful reflections from the Reverend John Hughes, candle-lighting at the altar, and perfect music, resumes in March

All are welcome. The Sanctuary opens at 6:30 for meditation & prayer; our service is from 7 – 7:30 pm, followed by ten minutes of music.

For further information, call 978-526-7661.

Wednesday, Mar. 4th – Vespers: “who may ascend?” psalm 24

Wednesday, Mar. 18th – Vespers: “lives ebbed away” psalm 107

Thursday, April 2nd – Maundy Thurs. Tenebrae of Lights



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02/02	SCARAFONI, BEN 5 ALLEN AVE MANCHESTER	bscarafoni@gmail.com
02/03	SCHMIDT, ISABELLA 448 SUMMER ST MANCHESTER MA 01944	mariaalschmidt@yahoo.com
02/04	HUGHES, MARILYN 28 ROCKWOOD HEIGHTS ROAD MANCHESTER	mfhughes4@comcast.net
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02/15	MONDELLO, MARISSA 44 ENGLEWOOD RD MAGNOLIA MA 01930	magnoliashores@comcast.net
02/16	DOWNING, LILLIAN 56 JOHNSON ST WEST ROXBURY MA 02132	
02/19	JOHNSON, CARLY 25 BRIDGE STREET MANCHESTER	
02/21	DECKER, JONATHAN 11 PICKERING ST #2 ESSEX MA 01938	thedeckers3@verizon.net
02/22	POTTER, JULIA 15 NORWOOD AVE MANCHESTER	pottermark@comcast.net
02/23	BENINCASA, BONNIE 25 HICKORY HILL ROAD MANCHESTER	bonnie.benincasa@gmail.com
02/24	HESLOP, ANN 34 NORWOOD AVENUE MANCHESTER	ann@heslopfamily.com
02/26	MULVEY, MEILAN 5 KNIGHT CIRCLE MANCHESTER	jjmulvey3rd@yahoo.com
02/28	WILKINSON, BENJAMIN 47 FOREST STREET MANCHESTER	duncan.wilkinson@verizon.net

Membership, Growth & Vitality

Your Vitality Group thanks YOU for your interest in Rev. Paul Nickerson's sermon and presentation on January 4. More than 50 of you remained after Sunday service to hear what he had to say about Vitality at First Parish. What a great shot in the arm and proof of how much we all care about our church, its vitality and future. Thank YOU!



Rev. Nickerson shared many interesting facts and figures, which we'll share with you here in the Bell in the coming months.

Here's one simple thing he encouraged us to each try: invite a friend to attend a Sunday service with us. His research states that 66% of those asked to attend a Sunday service would, in fact, attend. But only 2% of people are invited! It's a small tweak in behavior and attitude, but it could have a big impact on the vitality of our church.

So, we ask you: will you consider inviting a friend to Sunday service? Rev. Nickerson stressed the importance of extending the invitation, picking up your guest, sitting with him/her during worship, and accompanying them to Fellowship. We'll all be there to greet you and your friend with open arms and hearts.

Thank you for your interest, support and openness to new ideas as we continue our coaching relationship with Rev. Paul Nickerson.



Thank you to our storytellers in "My Story"

January-
Abby Powers
Jane Pearson
Priscilla Duda

February-
George Nickless
Lynda Griffith
Emilia Attridge
Mary Ellen Cook
Nancy Petersen

Everyone has a 60-90 story. Please call the church office or Mary Ellen Cook when you are ready to share yours.

Thank you,
Mary Ellen

Worship Schedule

Sunday, Feb. 1st – *Communion*

Scripture: 1Cor. 8:1-13
Mk 1:21-28

Sermon: “*Driving Out Demons*”

Hymns: Jesus Calls Us, o’er the Tumult
Beautiful Jesus
Lift High the Cross

Wednesday, Feb 4th – *Vesper Planning*

Saturday, Feb. 7th - *Annual Fund Drive Celebration*

Sunday, Feb. 8th

Scripture: Isa. 40:21-31
Mk. 1:29-39

Sermon: “*Have You not Heard?*”

Hymns: From All That Dwell Below the Skies
God is My Shepherd
Shall We Gather at the River

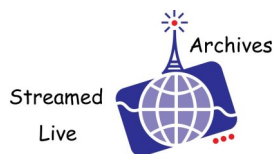
Wednesday, Feb. 11th – *Ash Wednesday Class: 1st Communion*

Sunday, Feb. 15th

Scripture: 2Cor. 4:3-12
Mk 9:2-9

Sermon: “*Hard Pressed Yet not Crushed*”

Hymns: Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain
Be Now My Vision
For All the Saints



Listen live tune in [here](#)
Or listen later, by checking our [archive](#)

Daily Lectionary



Sun., Feb. 1 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28 Mon., Feb. 2 Psalm 35:1-10 Numbers 22:1-21 Acts 21:17-26 Tues., Feb. 3 Psalm 35:1-10 Numbers 22:22-28 1 Corinthians 7:32-40 Wed., Feb. 4 Psalm 35:1-10 Jeremiah 29:1-14 Mark 5:1-20 Thurs., Feb. 5 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c Proverbs 12:10-21 Galatians 5:2-15 Fri., Feb. 6 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c Job 36:1-23 1 Corinthians 9:1-16 Sat., Feb. 7 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c Isaiah 46:1-13 Matthew 12:9-14 Sun., Feb. 8 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39 Mon., Feb. 9 Psalm 102:12-28 2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37 Acts 14:1-7 Tues., Feb. 10 Psalm 102:12-28 2 Kings 8:1-6 Acts 15:36-41 Wed., Feb. 11 Psalm 102:12-28 Job 6:1-13 Mark 3:7-12 Thurs., Feb. 12 Psalm 50:1-6 1 Kings 11:26-40 2 Corinthians 2:12-17 Fri., Feb. 13 Psalm 50:1-6 1 Kings 14:1-18 1 Timothy 1:12-20 Sat., Feb. 14 Psalm 50:1-6 1 Kings 16:1-7 Luke 19:41-44 Sun., Feb. 15 Transfiguration of the Lord 2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9 Mon., Feb. 16 Psalm 110:1-4 Exodus 19:7-25 Hebrews 2:1-4 Tues., Feb. 17 Psalm 110:1-4 Job 19:23-27 1 Timothy 3:14-16 Wed., Feb. 18 Ash Wednesday Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12 Psalm 51:1-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Thurs., Feb. 19 Psalm 25:1-10 Daniel 9:1-14 1 John 1:3-10 Fri., Feb. 20 Psalm 25:1-10 Daniel 9:15-25a 2 Timothy 4:1-5 Sat., Feb. 21 Psalm 25:1-10 Psalm 32 Matthew 9:2-13 Sun., Feb. 22 First Sunday in Lent Genesis 9:8-17 Psalm 25:1-10 1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:9-15 Mon., Feb. 23 Psalm 77 Job 4:1-21 Ephesians 2:1-10

Tues., Feb. 24 Psalm 77 Job 5:8-27 1 Peter 3:8-18a Wed., Feb. 25 Psalm 77 Proverbs 30:1-9 Matthew 4:1-11 Thurs., Feb. 26 Psalm 22:23-31 Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18 Romans 3:21-31 Fri., Feb. 27 Psalm 22:23-31 Genesis 16:1-6 Romans 4:1-12 Sat., Feb. 28 Psalm 22:23-31 Genesis 16:7-15 Mark 8:27-30

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Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA 01944
Address Correction Requested*



**Women's Fellowship---
Spring Fling!**

March 12 at 6:00 in the chapel ,
we will have a potluck dinner.
Think of your favorite dish to share
and bring a friend.



Talk to Marilyn Hughes or Mary Ellen Cook with any questions.

Contact us
Phone: 978-526-7661 Ext. 1
Website: www.firstparishchurch.org
Email: office.fpchurch@verizon.net