



First Parish Church, Congregational
On the Village Green

Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts

Rev. John G. Hughes, II, Pastor
Priscilla Duda, Christian Ministry Coordinator
Jessica Skidmore, Youth Director
David Reid, Sexton
Nancy Klebart, Office Manager

Church office: 978-526-7661 ext. 1 Fax: 978-526-7882

Email: office.fpchurch@verizon.net

Website: www.firstparishchurch.org

12th Night Vesper

January 6, 2016

Litany of Darkness and Light:

Jennifer Powers

We wait in darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.
The darkness is a womb, from which
we all have been nurtured and protected.

*In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-Child
was made ready for the journey into light.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

It is only darkness that allows us to see
the splendor of the universe – blankets of stars,
the solitary glow of distant planets.

*It was the darkness that allowed Magi to find
the star that guided them to where the Christ-child lay.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

In the darkness of the night, desert people find relief
from the cruel, relentless heat of the sun.

*In the blessed desert darkness, Mary and Joseph
were able to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

In the darkness of sleep, we are soothed and
restored, healed and renewed.

*In the darkness of sleep, dreams rise up.
God spoke to Jacob and Joseph through dreams.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

In the solitude of night, we remember those in need –
the sick, the unemployed, the bereaved, the persecuted,
the homeless, those lost in cynicism and bitterness.

*In darkness, we remember our colleagues, partners,
parents, children, neighbors, friends. We thank God
for their presence in our lives.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

In solitude, our fears and concerns, our hopes and visions
rise to the surface and we realize them face to face.

*In that darkness, we allow ourselves to worry
and to wonder where we are going.*

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

EPIPHANY READINGS:

Narrator:	<i>'who are the Magi?'</i>	Candle 1 Zachary Edwards
Astrologer:	<i>'what is the star?'</i>	Candle 2 Andrew Milne
Babylonian Jew:	<i>'the part we played'</i>	Candle 3 Megan Peterson
Caravan Driver:	<i>'what was our role?'</i>	Candle 4 Victoria Potter
Magi:	<i>'what gifts?'</i>	Candle 5 Nico Rerisi
Herod the Great:	<i>'my response'</i>	Candle 6 Connor Duda
Great Scribe:	<i>'giving directions'</i>	Candle 7 Philip Cicala
Magi:	<i>'unexpected results'</i>	Candle 8 Nathan Duda
Epiphany Carol:	<i>"We Three Kings of Orient Are"</i>	<i>PH #143 (blue)</i> Candle 9 Rev. John Hughes
Mary:	<i>'a new born prince?'</i>	Candle 10 Grace Porter
Joseph:	<i>'using what we had'</i>	Candle 11 Heather Holley
Narrator:	<i>'what does this season mean?'</i>	Candle 12 Elizabeth Klebart

Post Service Music

Matthew 2:1-8; 11-12

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east (when it rose) and have come to worship him.'

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ (Messiah) was to be born. 'In Bethlehem in Judea', they replied, for this is what the prophet has written:

'But to you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."