

First Parish Church, Congregational

On the Village Green

Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts

Rev. Dr. Marlayna Schmidt, Interim Pastor

Donald R. Dunn, Director of Music-Organist

Jessica Skidmore, Christian Ministry Coordinator

Tori Potter, Sexton

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MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, December 23, 2018, 10:00 AM

ORGAN PRELUDE: *“The Holy Boy” (A Carol of the Nativity)*
John Ireland (1879-1962)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP/ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING:

The Angels’ Candle The Stefanovich Family: Peter, Ana, Lily, Ethan and Mia

READER: This morning we light the fourth candle of Advent, the Angels’ candle. *[READER lights candle]*

PEOPLE: This candle reminds us of the angels that told the good news to the shepherds.

READER: The angels sang so that all who heard would be filled with the joy of the birth of the Christ. Today is a time to reflect on Mary’s words “let it be” and remember that we do not decide when or how Christ will come into our lives.

PEOPLE: If we open ourselves to God, God will come to us.

READER: We re-light the first candle remembering that we wait for Christ. *[READER lights candle]*

READER: We re-light the second candle remembering that we must also prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.
[READER lights candle]

READER: We light the third candle to remind us to bear witness to Christ’s Love. *[READER lights candle]*

READER: Let us pray.

ALL: Dear God, our time of waiting is nearly over. We pray that we have prepared well, and have born witness to your love. Help us now to welcome Christ in our hearts, and live a life filled with joy. Thank you for the angels, and the message they brought to the world. Amen.

***CAROL:** *“Joy to the World! The Lord is Come”*

PH #130 blue (all verses)

OPENING PRAYER: Unison (written by Thomas McNair, Taiwan)

God of hope and joy, we sing for joy because you have given us hope. Our world is full of problems, yet the coming of the Messiah is reason for hope. We have come to worship in your special presence. Give us wisdom as we go to our places in daily life. Teach us and guide us as we deal with the problems of our world. Thank you for Jesus, in whose name we pray...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI:**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

MORNING PRAYER

Joys and Concerns Pastoral Prayer Silent Prayer

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 1:67-79

Paul Nickerson

Zechariah's Prophecy

⁶⁷ Then John the Baptist's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty savior for us

in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,

and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,

to grant us ⁷⁴ that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,

might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness

before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸ By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

ANTHEM: *“Canticle of the Turning” (Magnificat)*
Text: Rory Cooney (b.1952) based on Luke 1:46-58
Tune: “Star of the County Down”, an Irish hymn tune
Arranged by Hal H. Hopson (b.1933)
Alice Miller, flute
Rebecca Shrimpton, soprano

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servants plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?
Refrain
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn!
2. Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
And your mercy will last from the depths of the
past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to
those who would for you yearn,

You will show your might, put the strong to
flight,
for the world is about to turn.
3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev’ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
There are tables spread, every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn.
4. Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God’s mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror’s crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which, holds us bound,
‘Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 1:46-55

Bethany Woods

Mary’s Song of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

CAROL SING

In our sermon-time today—INSTEAD OF THE SERMON—you will be invited to call out the name and number of your favorite Christmas Carol—and which hymnal it is in—and let us know which verse (or two) you would like the congregation to sing.

A “PAY IT FORWARD” STORY

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *“In the Bleak Midwinter”*

Text by Christine Rossetti (1830-1894)

Hymn tune “Cranham” by Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Arranged by Robert Lau (b. 1943)

Alice Miller, flute

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Heaven cannot hold him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable place sufficed,
And there the Lord God incarnate,
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels
Gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But his mother only,
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped and beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb.
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

***DOXOLOGY:**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below, Praise God above ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

***CAROL:** *“Good Christian Friends Rejoice”* *NCH #129 black*

*[The “Removal of the Flame”, which symbolizes the Spirit of God accompanying us out into the world]

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL RESPONSE**

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *“Noël in G”*
 Louis Claude Daquin (1694-1772)

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After the service join us for hospitality.

The flowers on the altar are given by the Alsop Family in loving memory of their grand-/fathers Dr. Joachim Kraft and Stewart J.O. Alsop.

The greeters and lay readers are Bethany Woods and Paul Nickerson.

The Deacons are John Feuerbach and Christiane Alsop.

Readers and Greeters are always needed, to volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up [online](#).

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0444aca629a5f94-diaconate>

Listening devices are available for those in need; they are at the back of the Sanctuary. Feel free to address a Deacon should you need help.

Welcome to all who are new to our worship. To join our mailing list please fill out a "Welcome Card" to place in the collection plate or contact office.fpchurch@gmail.com , 978-526-7661 ext 1.

FPCC CARE TEAM *Have you shared the experience?*

We support FPC families with meals, rides, & visits through times of illness and loss. Please contact Sue Pick (suepick1@me.com or 978-548-0145) if you would like to share your ideas, time, and talents with the FPC Care Team.



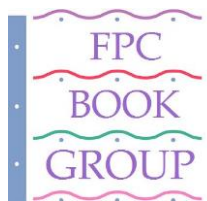
MISSIONS Brown Bag Lunch on Friday, December 28, sign up to [help online](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-brown6)
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-brown6>

Serve Dinner at The Open Door, today, Sunday, December 23rd

Pies needed! Prep & Servers needed! Please contact Jim Brennan after worship or at 978-879-4595 or [sign up](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-open4) online
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-open4>

SEASIDE PARISH KNITTERS Meeting 1st and 3rd Thursdays, (**January 3 and 17**) of the month 3 - 5 PM, at the Chapel Conference Room. We all love to

knit/crochet, but more importantly we have been rewarded with helping others by sharing our handwork. We would love to have you join us!



BOOK GROUP Next meeting, **Monday, January 28, 6:30 PM** at Marianne Round's home, 3 Greenbrier Rd., Manchester, the book for discussion will be "Alias Grace" by Margaret Atwood.

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY Thursdays, **4:00 to 5:30**, at the home of Vin Terrill, 37 Beach Street. Scripture for Dec. 27: Luke 2:41-52. We will be studying the lectionary texts for the following Sunday's worship.

Format of the study is as follows: we begin with sharing joys and concerns, we have a time of prayer (where people are free to pray silently or out loud), and then 2 volunteers read the text out loud, while we all notice which words the Spirit draws our attention to. (This way of reading Scripture is called “Lectio Divina.”) We each have the opportunity to share with others the words “speak” to us, as well as ask questions about the text. We also discuss how the text might apply to our lives today. The study is led by Rev. Marlayna. All are welcome to join us! No prior knowledge of the Bible is necessary. Email or call Rev. Marlayna for more information.



SOUP & CONVERSATION Save the date, **January 6, 2019**, for a conversation about Jordan B. Peterson and a Psychological Approach to Scripture. While there are many approaches to understanding scripture, Canadian psychologist Jordan B. Peterson has recently received considerable attention for his lectures which look at scripture nontraditionally, from a psychologist's point of view. Simply summarized, Peterson posits that the Biblical stories can usefully be understood as a distillation of human wisdom garnered through millennia which address fundamental psychological questions which we face today, independently of one's religious beliefs. Join us as we share highlights of Peterson's lectures and their practical applications in our daily lives. Presented by Steve Carhart and Richard Smith.

Sign up to bring soups, salad and more [here](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-soup5)

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Monday Christmas Eve - Offices Closed

5 PM Christmas Eve Family Candlelight

7 PM Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight

Tuesday Merry Christmas!

Wednesday Christmas Holiday - Offices Closed

7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Thursday 4 PM Bible Study

Sunday 10:00 AM Worship