

**First Parish Church, Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
Worship Celebration  
First Sunday of Advent  
Sunday, November 29, 2020  
10:00 am**

**Prelude**

*"Savior of the Nations, Come"*

Buttstedt

**Welcome**

**Lighting the First Candle of Advent – HOPE**

**Leader:** Let us share these words from Psalm 130:

**All:** I wait for the Lord; my soul waits, and in the Lord's word I hope.  
My soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for the  
morning.

Lighting of the Candle

**Leader:** With the lighting of the Candle of Hope,

**All:** We begin our Advent journey. We prepare once again for the  
Coming of God's light into the world through Jesus. God's light  
brings hope, and where there is hope there is light.

## Hymn

## *"Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"*

Come, O long-expected Jesus, born to set all people free  
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty

Israel's strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart  
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart

Born all people to deliver, born a child, you came to reign  
Born to rule on earth forever, come, be known to us again

By your own eternal Spirit, come to claim us as your own  
By your all sufficient merit, let us share your cross and crown

## Opening Prayer

Holy One, we put our hope in You. Despite the difficulties, disappointments and darkness in the world and in our lives, we place our hope in You and the One You will soon send us. And so we prepare this Advent season to open our hearts, minds and spirits to welcome Jesus – Emmanuel, God with us – into our lives. We prepare to welcome and share the hope He embodies – hope when hope seems hardest or even lost.

We promise this to You and each other, O God, as well as offer You now the words Jesus would one day teach His followers to pray...

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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**Solo**                    *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"* French melody, arr. Larson  
Paul Knox, soloist

O Come, O Come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with Heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

## **Prayer Intentions**

### **Time of Silent and Spoken Prayer**

**Music Meditation**     *"Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying!"* Bach, arr. Gerig

## **The Hebrew Scriptures**

### **Genesis 18:1-15**

#### **(New Revised Standard Version Bible Translation)**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup>He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the

tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.”

<sup>6</sup> And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” <sup>7</sup> Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” <sup>10</sup> Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him.

<sup>11</sup> Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” <sup>13</sup> The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.”

<sup>15</sup> But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

## **Message**

**Solo**

*"Mary, Did You Know?"* Lowry and Greene, arr. Schrader

Rebecca Shrimpton, soloist

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would someday walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?  
This child that you've delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with His hand?

Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?  
When you kissed your little baby, then you kissed the face of God.

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again;  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the Lamb.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy was heaven's perfect lamb?  
This sleeping child you're holding, is the great, the great "I AM!"

**Blessing**

- We encourage all members and friends of First Parish to remain with us immediately after the conclusion of our Worship this morning for our Virtual Friendship Time on Zoom. You can join the meeting by

computer, tablet, iPad, or smart phone by clicking this link

<https://zoom.us/j/720983063> Password- 244108

Dial in with your phone and join using just audio at this number 1-301-715-8592 (Meeting ID- 720 983 063, Password- 244108). We welcome you for this time of additional community connection. Do you miss gathering after worship with everyone? Check out our Virtual Friendship Time from October 11.

- Annual Fund Drive 2021 letters and pledge cards have been sent. If you didn't receive one, please call the Church Office 978-526-7661 ext. 1 or Mary Ellen Cook at 978-500-0018 to have another sent. You can also download a pledge card [here](#)
- "Deacon Fund" Support and Assistance – the "Deacon Fund" remains a vital means of assistance to FPC members in need, especially in this difficult and uncertain time. Contributions can be made "First Parish Church" with "Deacon Fund" in the memo section, and mailed to First Parish Church P.O. Box 187 Manchester, MA 01944. In addition, if a member of our spiritual community is in need, please contact Rev. Mark to discuss available support.
- You can contribute to the work of First Parish Church or pay your pledge @ [PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester](https://www.paypal.com/paytoemail?email=FPChurchManchester@gmail.com)
- Manchester Affordable Housing Trust Announces Emergency Rental Housing Payment Assistance - The Manchester Affordable Housing Trust (MAHT), in collaboration with Action, Inc., a Gloucester-based human and social services agency, is offering short-term rental housing

payment assistance to income eligible Manchester residents in response to job and income loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consistent with its mission to support and promote community affordable housing, the MAHT is reaching out to income eligible residents who are experiencing housing rent payment issues.

The MAHT can and wants to help during this difficult and uncertain time. For further information please contact Action, Inc. at 978-282-1000 or live chat at [www.actioninc.org](http://www.actioninc.org)<<http://www.actioninc.org>.