

**First Parish Church, Congregational
United Church of Christ
Worship Celebration
Sacrament of Communion
Sunday, February 7, 2021
10:00 am**

Prelude

"Air" (from "Suite in D")

Bach

Welcome

Hymn

"As We Gather at Your Table"

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word
Help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own
Teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's victory known

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life
Send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave
May we still behold your image in the world you died to save

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
Where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least
There no more will envy bind us nor will pride our peace destroy
As we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy

Opening Prayer

Holy One, we come before You in this time seeking understanding, guidance and renewal. We come to immerse ourselves in our personal and shared spiritual journeys.

But when we leave here, we will return to the sometimes overwhelming demands of family, job, and simply existing in these continuing days of isolation and uncertainty; days when it is harder at times to stay focused on how You call us to live in these days; harder to keep Your priorities our priorities; harder to keep first things first; harder to find and keep a sense of balance.

Help us to remember that You created us for fullness of life – that You created us for lives of work and rest; study and play; speech and silence; action and reflection; individual pursuits and community engagement. Lead us away from becoming so focused on any one way of being that the totality of all You have created us to be is diminished. Lead us away from grounding our lives in the extremes of the world and our culture, and instead center them in You.

We pray all this in the name of the One - Jesus – You sent to teach us and show us the spiritual balance that is at the heart of wisdom. We pray now with the words he gave us...

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 *"Than Eye Hath Seen"* Lovelace, text Tindall
Rebecca Shrimpton, soloist

God, help my heart to comprehend, to feel the promise of Your word: of things more wonderful, more grand than eye hath seen, or ear hath heard.

O God, your spirit shows those things to all Your children far and near; uplift all hearts to know Your truth, to live Your love right here.

Prayer Intentions

Time of Silent and Spoken Prayer

Music Meditation *"Cancion de Luna"* (from *"Suite Andalusia"*) Lecuona
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

The Hebrew Scriptures Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 **(Common English Bible Translation)**

- ¹ There's a season for everything
and a time for every matter under the heavens:
- ² a time for giving birth and a time for dying,
a time for planting and a time for uprooting what was planted,
- ³ a time for killing and a time for healing,
a time for tearing down and a time for building up,
- ⁴ a time for crying and a time for laughing,

a time for mourning and a time for dancing,
⁵ a time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,
a time for embracing and a time for avoiding embraces,
⁶ a time for searching and a time for losing,
a time for keeping and a time for throwing away,
⁷ a time for tearing and a time for repairing,
a time for keeping silent and a time for speaking,
⁸ a time for loving and a time for hating,
a time for war and a time for peace.

The Gospels

Luke 10:38-42

(Common English Bible Translation)

³⁸ While Jesus and his disciples were traveling, Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him as a guest. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his message. ⁴⁰ By contrast, Martha was preoccupied with getting everything ready for their meal.

So Martha came to him and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to prepare the table all by myself? Tell her to help me."

⁴¹ The Lord answered, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. ⁴² One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won't be taken away from her."

Message

The Sacrament of Communion

Solo

"Knowing You"
Paul Knox, soloist

Kendrick, arr. Larson

All I once held dear, built my life upon, all this world reveres, and wars to own. All I once thought gain I have counted loss, spent and worthless now compared to this:

Knowing You, Jesus, knowing You, there is no greater thing. You're my all, You're the best, You're my joy, my righteousness, and I love You, Lord.

Now my heart's desire is to know You more, to be found in You and known as Yours. To possess by faith what I could not earn, all-surpassing gift of righteousness.

Knowing You, Jesus, knowing You, there is no greater thing. You're my all, You're the best, You're my joy, my righteousness, and I love You, Lord.

Oh, to know the power of Your risen life and to know You in Your sufferings. To become like You in Your death, my Lord, so with You to live and never die.

Knowing You, Jesus, knowing You, there is no greater thing. You're my all, You're the best, You're my joy, my righteousness, and I love You, Lord.

Yes, I love You, Lord.

Blessing

- We will be celebrating "Virtual Communion" today. You are invited to prepare and have ready a piece of whatever kind of bread you wish, as well as any kind of juice you have available (or if you wish, coffee or tea). Then at the appropriate time you will be invited to consume those.
- Members of First Parish Church Congregational, United Church of Christ, Manchester by the Sea, MA
You are hereby notified to meet online (virtual) on Sunday, February 21, 2021 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 02, 2020

ARTICLE II: To see what action the Church will take in regard to the budget proposal for 2021 as submitted by the Church Council.

ARTICLE III: To hear and act upon the reports of the Financial Secretary, the Board of Trustees, the Christian Education Committee, the Diaconate Board, the Missions Committee, the Music Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and the Vitality Committee.

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

George A. Nickless, Clerk

- 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.

- The Stewardship Committee thanks everyone for their pledges to our Annual Fund Drive 2021. Your commitment to our church helps us to continue our vision for First Parish Church in this new year!
- "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 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/donate/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.firstparishchurchmanchester.org)
- Click to read *The Church Bell Newsletter* of First Parish Church Congregational, [February 2021](#).

- 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>.