

**First Parish Church, Congregational
United Church of Christ
Worship Celebration
Sunday, January 31, 2021
10:00 am**

Prelude

"E Phrygian"

Krieger

Welcome

Hymn

"Be Now My Vision"

Be now my vision, O God of my heart
Nothing surpasses the love you impart
You are my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light

Be now my wisdom, and be my true word
Ever within me, my soul is assured
Mother and Father, you are both to me
Now and forever your child I will be

Riches I need not, nor life's empty praise
You, my inheritance, now and always
You and you only are first in my heart
Great God, my treasure, may we never part

Sovereign of heaven, my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all

Opening Prayer

Holy One, You call us to be a community of Your people. You call us to be Your voice, hands, heart and spirit in each others' lives, this nation, and Your world. You call us to model a different way of life. A better way of life. A way that refutes violence of hand and tongue. A way that refuses to take part in the hatred and rejection of those who look, pray or believe differently than we do.

Help us to sever the thread of harm and trauma caused by that violence of hand and tongue; by that hatred and rejection – the harm and trauma that continues to haunt us and others, generation after generation, in ways seen and unseen. Bring us to remember and acknowledge those failures from our past. Give us the courage to bring the failures in our present to light. And lead us to the wisdom we need to be on guard against repeating those failures in the future.

We pray all this in the name of the One - Jesus – the light You sent to show us the way to severing that thread of harm and trauma. We pray 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.

Piano Solo *"Nocturne" (from "Midsummer Night's Dream")* Mendelssohn
Dr. Herman Weiss, pianist

Prayer Intentions

Time of Silent and Spoken Prayer

Music Meditation *"Meditation" (from "Thais")* Massenet
Margarita Varga Nadj, violin

The Hebrew Scriptures Genesis 3: 8-19 **(New Revised Standard Version Bible Translation)**

⁸ They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." ¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate."

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." ¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children,
yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷ And to the man he said,
“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and have eaten of the tree
about which I commanded you,
'You shall not eat of it,'
cursed is the ground because of you;
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
¹⁹ By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread
until you return to the ground,

for out of it you were taken;
you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

Message

Solo *“You Must Believe in Spring”* Legrand
Rebecca Shrimpton, soloist lyrics, A. and M. Bergman

When lonely feelings chill the meadows of your mind, just think when
winter comes, can spring be far behind?

Beneath the deepest snows, the secret of a rose is merely that it knows
you must believe in spring.

Just as a tree is sure its leaves will reappear, it knows its emptiness is just
a time of year.

The frozen mountain dreams of April's melting streams. How crystal clear
it seems you must believe in spring.

When angry voices drown the music of the spheres and children face a
world that's far beyond their years, above the darkest sky the far horizons
lie, with all the reasons why, you must believe in spring.

You must believe in love and trust it's on its way, just as the sleeping rose
awaits the kiss of May.

So in a world of snow, of things that come and go, where what you think you know, you can't be certain of: you must believe in spring and love.

Blessing

- A word about our guest soloist this week: Margerita Varga Nadj: Margerita's musical journey began when she was 6 years old. Raised in a family where both parents were professional musicians, she graduated with a masters degree in violin performance from Music Academy of Belgrade in Serbia. She continued her education at The Kodolanyi Janos Music Institute of Budapest (Hungary) and Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA. Among other orchestras Margerita has performed with are Symphony of New Hampshire, The Palace Theatre Manchester NH, North Shore Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonic of New Hampshire, Royal Strings of St. George (Serbia/Germany). She is on faculty at Marblehead School of Music and musical director at North Shore Music Center in Lynn, MA.
- 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://www.firstparishchurchmanchester.org)
- 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