



**First Parish Church, Congregational
On the Village Green
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts**

*Awaken to the Light and Love of God;
Be a Joyful Beacon to the World*

**First Parish Church, Congregational
United Church of Christ
Worship, Sunday, February 12, 2023
10:00 AM**

Prelude Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart – Frederck C. Atkinson (1841-1896), arr. Lloyd Larson

Welcome by Deacon Sue Parker

Opening Hymn Arise, Your Light Is Come #164

Prayer of Invocation together

We thought we knew where to find you; We hardly needed a start to guide the way, just perseverance and common sense; why do you hide yourself away from the powerful and join the refugees and outcasts, calling us to follow you there?

Wise God, give us wisdom.

We thought we had laid you safe in the Manger; We wrapped you in the thickest sentiment we could find, and stressed how long ago you came to us; why do you break upon us in our daily life with messages of peace and goodwill, demanding that we do something about it?

Just and righteous God, give us justice and righteousness.

So where else would we expect to find you but in the ordinary places with the faithful people, turning the world to your purpose through them. Bring us to that Manger, to that true rejoicing, which will make wisdom, justice, and righteousness alive in us.

Children's Moment (for young and young at heart) Jeanne Westcott
(Children will leave for Sunday School following)

Anthem If Ye Love Me – Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, the He may abide with you forever, ev'n the spirit of truth.

Prayer Intentions

Time of Silent and Spoken Prayer with 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

Thank you, God, for the opportunity to share in your creative and restorative work among people because you have blessed us, we have much to give. These offerings express our gratitude and our aspiration to be more fully your own loyal community. Amen

Meditation You Must Believe in Spring – Michel Legrand (1932-2019), lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

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.

Prayer of Dedication together

Our spiritual ancestors offered sacrifices to glorify you, O God; so would we honor you by these gifts. May they express the depth of our love for you. As your church, we put them to work on your behalf in programs of outreach toward those who long for meaning as well as for life's other necessities. Grant your joy to all who give and all who receive. Amen

Scripture Matthew 5:21-37 Steve Carhart

²¹ 'You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgement." ²² But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, "You fool", you will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³ So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the

judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷ 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." ²⁸ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

³¹ 'It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." ³² But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ 'Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord." ³⁴ But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ Let your word be "Yes, Yes" or "No, No"; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Sermon "Rules, Rules, Rules" Rev. Kurt Herber

Anthem Canticle of Fellowship – Craig Courtney (1948), text from Col. 3:12-14, and John Fawcett

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Forgive each other as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. Before the throne we pour our prayers; our hopes are one, our comforts and our cares. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts, that binds our hearts in love. We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear; and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear. When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain; we shall still be joined in, joined in heart, and hope to meet again. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts, that binds our hearts in love. From sorrow, toil, and pain and sin we shall be free; and perfect love and joy shall reign throughout eternity. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts, that binds our hearts in love.

Hymn We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness #179

Blessing

We thank you, for you are our God, and God of our fathers and mothers forever. You are the refuge of our life, the shield of our help. From generation to generation may we thank you and count your praises -- evening, morning, and noon -- for our lives which are committed into your hand, for our souls which are entrusted to you, for your miracles which are with us every day, for your wonders and goodness at all times. O Good One, your compassion does not fail. O Merciful One, your loving kindness never ceases. Forever we hope in you.

Closing Song God Be with You – Ralph Vaughn Williams (1872-1958)

The altar flowers this morning are, given by her family, in memory of June Nickless.

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.

Sunday School meets in the first classroom on the right in the Sunday School wing in the Chapel building. After the Children's Message in the 10:00 am Sunday Service, the children and teachers walk to the Chapel building for prayer, story, song, games, art, and fellowship. We use a multi-age group model allowing older children to serve as models and assistants for younger ones. Each lesson reflects on biblical ideologies that can be applied to real life, such as caring for others, making good choices and accepting responsibility for mistakes. Sunday School is available for children ages 3-12. Registration can be done by contacting Jeanne Westcott, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries, at jeanne.fpchurch@gmail.com

To join our mailing list, fill out a "Welcome Card" to place in the collection plate.

Learn more about First Parish online:

Facebook www.facebook.com/FirstParishChurchManchesterMa/

Instagram www.instagram.com/fpcmanchesterbythesea/

Website www.firstparishchurch.org/

YouTube Worship Services

Thursday Bible Study led by Rev. Kurt Herber, Thursdays, 4 PM, on Zoom. Beginning again February 16. The Zoom link to join in is sent on Thursday mornings. Questions can be directed to Rev. Herber at 603-520-8602.

Contribute to the work of First Parish Church by going to <http://www.PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester> and clicking the “send” button.

Readers and Greeters are always needed. To volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up [online](#).
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-diaconate>

First Parish Staff

Rev. Kurt Herber, Interim Minister, 603-520-8602.
Dr. Herman Weiss, Director of Music, hweiss05@comcast.net
Jeanne Westcott, Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry
jeanne.fpchurch@gmail.com
Nancy Klebart, Office Manager, office.fpchurch@gmail.com
978-526-7661 ext. 1

First Parish is looking for help with streaming. Full training is provided! Not sure? Sign up to be an assistant to the volunteer who is streaming. We need your help to continue to provide online access to Worship services. Sign up [here](#) or contact Richard Smith at richard.w.smith@gmail.com.

Our Online Prayer Wall Give it a try! Request prayers and pray for others through the Prayer Wall on our website. Feel more connected to the Joys and Concerns of our congregation and hear what's on each other's hearts. You will be touched to receive notifications every time someone prays for you. <https://www.firstparishchurch.org/prayer-wall/>

We will enjoy another great **Jazz Sunday Celebration** on February 19. Join us as we raise the Sanctuary roof in song and praise! Featuring the First Parish Choir singing a rousing version of the spiritual, "I'll Fly Away" and the soulful jazz classic "Cristo Redentor," plus New Orleans-inspired hymns and solos. Led by vocalist Rebecca Shrimpton with guest musicians Brian Price (tenor sax), Tom Palance (trumpet), Carolyn Wilkins (piano), Dave Landoni (bass), and Russell Lane (drums).

The Seaside Parish Knitters meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday (Feb 2 & 16) of the month at the Chapel, from 1-5 pm. We welcome all to stop by anytime during that time. We are always looking for knitting needles and yarn that you might be considering “casting” aside, especially wool. Contact Penny Lapham at 978-526-7128.

The Outreach and Service collection continues drop any of these items at the Church before Worship or at the Chapel, there is a box outside the Church Office door.

The Open Door and The Grace Center items needed:

Baking Mixes - Cake, Brownie, Cookie, Muffin, Pancake
Peanut Butter Canned Tuna, Chicken, and Turkey
Healthy Snack Items 100% Juice/Juice Boxes
Breakfast Cereal Hearty Soups
Spaghetti Sauce Canned Vegetables and Fruits
Macaroni and Cheese Rice, Noodles, Pasta
Pet Food
Gift Cards from local grocery markets (Shaw's, Stop & Shop, Market Basket, etc.) so they can purchase butter, cream, and other perishables.

Troop items for February Crossword puzzles, books, playing cards, electronic games.

Book Group is a time for church members as well as non-church friends to come together and engage with one another, build relationships, and share in a discussion of books that are of interest to people of various backgrounds. We have fun visiting, conversing about the book and sharing stories and would love to have you join us! Book Group meets on the last Monday of the month and hosting is shared among members.

Monday, Feb. 27, 6 PM we will discuss "Leaving Lucy Pear" by Anna Solomon at Mary Lumsden's home, 18 Woodcrest Rd. Manchester. RSVP to Mary at 978-500-4571 for planning purpose.

A big, heartrending novel about the entangled lives of two women in 1920s New England, both mothers to the same unforgettable girl. One night in 1917 Beatrice Haven sneaks out of her uncle's house on Cape Ann, Massachusetts, leaves her newborn baby at the foot of a pear tree, and watches as another woman claims the infant as her own. The unwed daughter of wealthy Jewish industrialists and a gifted pianist bound for Radcliffe, Bea plans to leave her shameful secret behind and make a fresh start. Ten years later, Prohibition is in full swing, post-WWI America is in the grips of rampant xenophobia, and Bea's hopes for her future remain unfulfilled. She returns to her uncle's house, seeking a refuge from her unhappiness. But she discovers far more when the rum-running manager of the local quarry inadvertently reunites her with Emma Murphy, the headstrong Irish Catholic woman who has been raising Bea's abandoned child—now a bright, bold, cross-dressing girl named Lucy Pear, with

secrets of her own. In mesmerizing prose, award-winning author Anna Solomon weaves together an unforgettable group of characters as their lives collide on the New England coast. Set against one of America's most turbulent decades, Leaving Lucy Pear delves into questions of class, freedom, and the meaning of family, establishing Anna Solomon as one of our most captivating storytellers. goodreads

Monday, March 27, 6 PM, at Jill Auld's home, 53H Trask St. Beverly. Members are encouraged to car pool due to limited parking. RSVP to Jill for planning purpose at dsajill1@yahoo.com. "Mad Honey" by Jodi Picoult will be discussed.

Manchester Seniors - Drop in *for Coffee and Conversation* Mondays 10 AM-12:30 PM (except holidays) at the First Parish Hall located behind Santander Bank. Hospitality provided by *The Friends of The Manchester Council on Aging*. Come sit down and talk!

Visiting Nurses Health Clinic, free. Held the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the month, 10 - 11:45 AM at First Parish Chapel Hall. Services offered include: health assessments, blood pressure screenings, B12 administration, pulse, heart and lung monitoring, blood sugar screenings for diabetics, medication and diet consults. Drop in.

A **Stephen Minister's** objective is not to "solve" the challenge but rather to ensure that none feel alone in their struggles. (Jesus, after all, did not come to "fix" all of our challenges, but rather to be with us in our struggles.) At the same time, the Stephen Ministry in a congregation develops a network of specialized services suitable to assist individuals with specific problems. For example, someone struggling with alcoholism would be introduced to a local AA group, while the Stephen Minister would continue to meet with that individual as a friend and witness. For the near term, as the leadership is trained and the program develops, our intention is to augment the work of the Care Team, support Rev. Kurt, and develop our network of local services to which we can refer people for specialized support. Our tentative expectation is that during the current program year we will assist people within the congregation, with the goal of offering a fully trained and developed service to the broader local community in the following program year. Currently the group meets virtually at 5 pm the first and third Tuesdays of each month to develop the program. In person training and social events will follow! There are many ways to participate depending upon your gifts and availability, so if you think you might be interested, email scarh10428@aol.com to receive and email Zoom invitation. If you would like to discuss call Linda Crosby at 978-314-1526 or Steve Carhart at 978-407-8454.