



**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
October 1, 2023, 10 AM
Worship with Communion

Prelude Love Divine, All Love Excelling – Hans Klotz (1900-1987)

Welcome by Deacon

Call to Worship

Leader: The whole world is in God's hands.

People: Everything that lives and breathes.

Everything that simply is. Everything.

Leader: From the farthest spaces, to the inmost places!

People: God is with us and we are with God. Alleluia!

Leader: As people of Christ, gathered at table, with our siblings around the world - to remember whose we are, we praise —

People: Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

Leader: Shall we pray?

With all that we have, with all that we are, we worship you, God of all being.

Bless this day. Bless this time. Bless this gathering.

Bless this world, with your overflowing love. Alleluia!

People: Alleluia! Amen!

Hymn O, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing NCH #42

Anthem Amazing Grace – trad., arr. Ed Lojeski

Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see. 'Twas grace that taught my heart, my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; how precious, precious grace that grace did appear the hour I first believed! Thru many dangers, toils and snares I have already come; 'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home. Amazing grace, amazing grace, bright shining as the sun. We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun. Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see.

Prayer Intentions

Time of Spoken Prayer

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

Meditation Intermezzo in A, op.118, #2 – Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

Prayer of Dedication unison

Beloved God, we ask that you bless these offerings so they can multiply and be a blessing for our community, our mission, and the wider world. Holy One, accept our offerings as a testimony of your goodness in our lives. Amen

Scripture Reading Matthew 21: 23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"

Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet."

So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went.

The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go.

Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.

For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Sermon Rev. Ellie Richardson

Anthem Thou Art Worthy – Pauline M. Mills (1898-1991)

Thou art worthy, O Lord; to receive glory, glory and honor and power.

For Thou hast created, hast all things created; and for Thy pleasure

They are created, for Thou art worthy, O Lord.

Communion Celebrating World Communion Sunday

Invitation

This table is open to all. You do not have to qualify by virtue of goodness to come to this table where Jesus is the host. This holy meal is prepared for your nourishment in remembrance of Jesus who offered his whole life that we might become people of hope and peace.

Today, we're reminded that we do not live by ourselves. We're part of a global community. Today we share breads from around the world, asking God's blessings on these offerings of bread and juice.

From lives of comfort and security, we bring soft white bread.

From lives of struggle and strife, we bring crusty bread.

From lives filled with mixed blessings and challenges, we bring marbled bread.

From lives confronted with oppression and sorrow, we bring a loaf of dark pumpernickel bread.

From lives enriched by faith and remembrance of the Israelites who were saved from fear and enslavement, we bring unleavened bread.

From lives framed by physical needs, we bring gluten-free bread that all may be nourished at this sacred table.

Prayer of Consecration

God, bless these offerings of bread and juice that we may be mindful of our siblings throughout your world. Nourish us with your life-giving love and mercy. Bless each one of us as we receive these elements that our hearts will be open to welcome all your children. Amen

Words of Institution

On the night Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, lifted it up toward heaven and blessed it and then broke it. He gave it to his disciples and said, "Take, eat. This bread represents my body, my life which was given for you. As often as you break bread together, do this and remember my love for you."

Likewise, Jesus took the cup, raised it up and blessed it, then, looking at his beloved disciples and said, "Drink from this, all of you, for this is the new covenant which has been poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this and remember my love for you which never ends."

All these breads represent the world and its people; those who live in abundance and those who are oppressed. This table is open to all people. Come now, the feast is ready.

Prayer of Thanksgiving unison

Gracious God, this special communion reminds us that we are members of a global community. We have feasted at your table. As you have nourished us, may we go into the world to bring a feast of peace and hope to others, listening with loving ears and acting with loving hearts, in the name of our Savior, Jesus the Christ. AMEN.

Hymn There's a Wideness in God's Mercy NCH #23

Blessing

Closing Song May the Road Rise Up to Meet You – Robert Lau (1943)

May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rain fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand. And until we meet again, may God hold you in His hand. Amen.

Our Deacon this morning is Nancy Peterson.

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>

Click to read the most recent edition of **The Church Bell Newsletter**.

Use the links below to **learn more about First Parish Church** online

Facebook www.facebook.com/FirstParishChurchManchesterMa/

Instagram www.instagram.com/fpcmanchesterbythesea/

Website www.firstparishchurch.org/

YouTube Worship Services

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUvfURhmsH8lfE13FLaRtWcw-pOTC9T2h>

First Parish Staff

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Manchester Seniors - Drop in for Coffee and Conversation Every Monday 10 AM-12:30 PM (except holidays) at the First Parish Community 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 on 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. Free and open to all.

Our Online Prayer Wall Request prayers and pray for others through the Prayer Wall on our website. You will be touched to receive notifications every time someone prays for you. <https://www.firstparishchurch.org/prayer-wall/>

Our FPCC Compassion child, Chepkirwok always needs supporters, sign up now. Questions can be directed to Sue Parker, sueparker33@aol.com.

First Parish is looking for **help with streaming** our worship services. Can you volunteer? 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](#)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4CABA822A1F49-sunday2>
or contact Richard Smith at richard.w.smith@gmail.com.

Book Group! Book Group meets on the last Monday of the month and hosting is shared among members. 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.

The Stephen Ministry. 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 the program in greater detail, call Linda Crosby at 978-314-1526 or Steve Carhart at 978-407-8454.

Faith Formation is collecting school supplies, to benefit the Beeman School of Gloucester, the sales are currently on! If you are out and about, please consider the following to add - Spiral bound notebooks (not college ruled), Pencils, Pens, Washable Markers in thin and thin variety, Composition notebooks, Crayons in 24 pack size, Small staplers and staples, Paper clips, Dry Erase markers, Sharpies (for teachers), Construction paper, Sketch pads, Index cards, Pink Pearl Erasers. Any assorted Art Supplies: like paint brushes, washable paint, craft foam sheets, stickers, glitter glue. Let's support our educators and students by limiting their needs and preparing them for success!