



**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 8, 2023, 10 AM  
Worship

**Prelude** Minuet in D, K.V. 355 – W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

**Welcome by Deacon**

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Welcome to God's house, a place of faith.

**People: From our homes, we come seeking God's wisdom.**

Leader: Here you will find nourishment and hope.

**People: May we learn lessons of courage and peace.**

Leader: Here you will find rest from your struggles

**People: Gracious God, prepare our hearts to receive your wisdom that we may leave this sacred place and return to our homes, encouraged and challenged to be your people. Amen**

**Hymn** Take My Life God, Let It Be NCH #448

**Anthem** When the Stars Are Gone – Henry Mollicone (1946 – 2022) words by Robert Louis Stevenson

The stars shine over the mountains, the stars shine over the sea, the stars look up to the mighty God, the stars look down on me; the stars shall last for a million years, a million years and a day, but God and I will live and love when the stars have passed away.

**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** Heaven – Duke Ellington (1899-1974)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Heaven, my dream Heaven, divine Heaven, supreme  
Heaven combines every sweet and pretty thing life would love to bring;  
Heavenly heaven to be is just the ultimate degree to be.

**Prayer of Dedication** unison

Embraced in your peace and love, O God, we bring our gifts to you. Bless these gifts and the lives they represent, that they may be multiplied and used in your service and to your glory. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

**Scripture Reading** Matthew 21:33-46

**New Inclusive Bible Translation**

“Listen to another parable. There was a property owner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, installed a winepress and erected a tower. Then the owner leased it out to tenant farmers and went on a journey. <sup>34</sup> When vintage time arrived, the owner sent aides to the tenants to divide the shares of grapes. <sup>35</sup> The tenants responded by seizing the aides. They beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup> A second time the owner sent even more aides than before, but they treated them the same way. <sup>37</sup> Finally the owner sent the family heir to them, thinking, ‘They will respect my heir.’ <sup>38</sup> When the vine growers saw the heir, they said to one another, ‘Here’s the one who stands in our way of having everything. With a single act of murder, we could seize the inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup> With that, they grabbed and killed the heir outside the vineyard. <sup>40</sup> What do you suppose the owner of the vineyard will do to those tenants?” <sup>41</sup> They replied, “The owner will bring that wicked crowd to a horrible death and lease the vineyard out to others, who will see to it that there are grapes for the proprietor at vintage time.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Did you ever read in the scriptures:

‘The stone which the builders rejected

has become the chief cornerstone;

it was our God’s doing,

and we find it marvelous to behold’?

<sup>43</sup> “That’s why I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to people who will bear its fruit. <sup>44</sup> Those who fall on this stone will be dashed to pieces, and those on whom it falls will be smashed.”

<sup>45</sup> When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard these parables, they realized that Jesus was speaking about them. <sup>46</sup>Although they sought to arrest him, they feared the crowds, who regarded Jesus as a prophet.

### **Sermon Rev. Ellie Richardson**

#### **Anthem** For the Beauty of the Earth – John Rutter (1945)

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love which our birth over and around us lies: Lord of all to thee we raise this, our joyful hymn of praise. For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and vale and trees and flower, sun and moon and stars of light: Lord of all to thee we raise this, our joyful hymn of praise. For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild: Lord of all to thee we raise this, our joyful hymn of praise. For each perfect gift of thine, to our race so freely given, graces human and divine flowers of earth and buds of heav'n: Lord of all to thee we raise this, our joyful hymn of praise.

#### **Hymn** Called as Partners In Christ's Service NCH #495

#### **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 Janet Groth.**

**This morning we welcome** Rev. Ellie Richardson. Rev. Ellie Richardson (She/Her/Hers) is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ having graduated from Andover Newton Theological School. She has served as Minister of Spiritual Development in the historic Andover Association of the Massachusetts Conference (MACUCC); moderator and chair of the Committee on Formation for the historic Andover Association; Associate Conference Minister for Lay & Clergy Leadership Development in the historic MACUCC and the Southern New England Conferences; she is a co-founder of Potentials



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Website [www.firstparishchurch.org/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:richard.w.smith@gmail.com).

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](mailto: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!

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.

Listed further below are more Book Group reads for the new year.

Monday, October 30, 6:30 PM, at Sheila Logue's home, 25 Norwood Ave. We will discuss Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See.

November 27, at Nancy Peterson's home. The book is The Walls Between Us, Vol. 1 by Haru Tsukishima.

December 11, a potluck dinner, and book swap at Joanne Hadaegh's home.

January 29 at Mary Ellen's home, 23 Harold St. The book is Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano.

February 26 at Meredith Tufts home. The book is Beyond That, the Sea by Laura Spence-Ash.

March 25 at Carol Spence's home. The book is Genesis in the Bible.