



**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
November 26, 2023, 10 AM
Worship**

Prelude Andante, from Piano Concerto #2 in F, op. 102 -Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Welcome by Deacon

Call to Worship

People: We are grateful to be here, remembering all that Christ has done for us.

Leader: Friends and family – all are welcome in the house of the Lord.

People: Those who are new to our church, those who seek, those who feel lost and alone.

Leader: Christ meets us here; he breaks the bread of salvation for us.

People: He embraces us with his transforming and forgiving love.

Leader: Dear friends, let us rejoice in God's love.

People: We are called to receive that love and reach out in compassion to others.

Hymn Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates NCH #117

Anthem And the Glory of the Lord (from 'The Messiah') – G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

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

God's gifts cannot be limited to the material although they include the material. God's riches exceed our hopes and expectations when we recognize the glory of the kingdom. Let us acknowledge the reign of God as we share the abundance of this glorious inheritance and return a portion to support the ministry of Christ's church in the world and among the community of believers.

Meditation For Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth; The People That Walked in Darkness - G. F. Handel

Paul Knox, solo

For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Prayer of Dedication unison

Gracious God, thank you for the gifts we have and the blessing of sharing. Use our gifts for your glory and to meet the needs and hopes of your kindom. Amen.

Scripture Reading Matthew 25:31-46 Sandy Bodmer-Turner

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?

And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?

And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?'

Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Sermon

Rev. Ellie Richardson

Recitative/Air/Chorus O Thou, That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion (from 'The Messiah) – G. F. Handel

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Recit: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his son Emmanuel, God with us.

Air: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Chorus: O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, good tidings to Jerusalem, O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, arise, say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! Behold, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, say unto the cities of Judah, behold, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Hymn

All Hail the Power of Jesus Name NCH #304

Blessing

Closing Song God Bless You and Keep You – Jay Althouse (1951)

God bless you and keep you wherever you may go; His love be a constant companion. God lead you and guide you and be at your side. God bless you and keep you forever.

Our Deacon this morning is Nancy Peterson.

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 Coaching & Consulting and is a PCC level

trained coach; Ellie also serves churches as an Intentional Transitional Interim Minister.

In addition to church ministry Rev. Ellie serves as co-chair of the COMPASS steering committee, for national setting of the United Church of Christ. COMPASS provides training and support for Community of Practice programs throughout the denomination.

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.

Join us following worship for hospitality!

You can **contribute to the work of First Parish Church** or pay your pledge **[@PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=68888888888888888888888888888888)**.

Welcome to all who are new to our Worship time. **To join our mailing list** please fill out a "Welcome Card" to place in the collection plate or contact office.fpchurch@gmail.com, 978-526-7661 ext. 1.

Fall hands on Community Service, all items can be dropped at the Chapel or Church –

- **Operation Troop Support** Socks, any size any color. Small board and card games.
- **Thanksgiving Food Drive for The Open Door** Cereal, coffee & tea, granola bars, oatmeal, pancake & waffle mix, maple syrup, 100% fruit juice.
- **The Grace Center** Gift Cards from local grocery markets.
- **Toys for Tots** Ballet de Mar is collecting new toys for Christmas.

Our Advent theme from Rev. Rick Spalding - *Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you...* So affirms the beloved carol in whose shelter we gather ourselves together, each Advent - to wait and to wonder. The prophet Isaiah proclaims that God's name means "God with us". What are the implications of the with-ness of God - for each of us alone, for all of us together? How does the with-ness of God change our ways of being with each other? with ourselves? with the world? These are some of the questions we'll be pondering as we worship together during this momentous Advent at First Parish - on the cusp of an exciting new chapter in the life of our church, and a season of urgent need in the world. In light of everything that's going on around us, let's be sure to be **with** one another, and **with** God, as we prepare ourselves again

through the month of December to receive *tidings of great joy which shall be to all people!*

December and Advent Activities

- **Sunday, Dec. 3, Community Carol Sing**, just before the Friendship Tree concert. 2:30-3:15 PM inside First Parish Church, 10 Central St. Join us around the piano to sing some traditional carols and get in the mood for the tree lighting. Happening no matter the weather.
- **Sunday, Dec. 10, the 2nd Community "Messiah Sing" will be presented in the Church.** This event is again being made possible by a bequest from Laura Ells, who was for many years a member of the First Parish Choir. It's open to the community, singers and listeners alike with a 14-piece orchestra and professional soloists. Described - "The whole idea is that people who may or may not know each other will spontaneously get together with professionals to create something beautiful." Bring your Messiah score, we will have scores available. If you missed it last year, don't let that happen again! A reception will follow in the Chapel Hall, a donation of \$20 per person at the door is welcome.
- **Poinsettias**, the Deacons will once again offer the opportunity to purchase a poinsettia to decorate the church for Christmas. Order [online here](#) or use the enclosed order form.
- **Christmas Eve 5 PM** service needs 5 actors, three men and two women. The women will portray Mary at two different times in her journey and the two men will accompany her as the role of Joseph. One man will portray Jesus. Our renowned soloists will give us two beautiful selections in Part One of the script and the actors will be engaged in short conversation. Our two youngest church members will portray the expectant Mary and Joseph, with Jesus as Narrator for that part of the script, entitled, Looking Back is Looking Forward. Please see Jeanne or contact her at jeanne.fpchurch@gmail.com if you would like to help present a version of the Greatest Story Ever Told!
- **Christmas Eve 7:30 PM** Traditional Candlelight open to all!

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

Click to read the most recent edition of [**The Church Bell Newsletter**](#).

Thursday Bible Study with Elsa Marshall 4 PM Join in a lively discussion, Thursdays, 4 PM, on Zoom.

The Seaside Parish Knitters meets each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm. Oct. 5 & 19. We welcome all to stop by anytime during that time and join in. Over the years we have enjoyed our time knitting and crocheting items for baptismal events at the church, shawls and blankets for friends at home, scarves, neck gators, and helmet liners for our veterans in combat, and mittens and hats for Cape Ann children. 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.

Our Online Prayer Wall Request prayers and pray for others
<https://www.firstparishchurch.org/prayer-wall/>

The Stephen Ministry Learn more call Linda Crosby at 978-314-1526 or Steve Carhart at 978-407-8454.

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

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

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.

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!

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 is looking for help with streaming our worship services.

Can you volunteer? Full training is provided! Sign up here or contact Richard Smith at richard.w.smith@gmail.com.

Book Group 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, November 27, at Nancy Peterson's home, the November book is Catcher in the Rye by JD Salinger.

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.

First Parish Church Annual Fund Drive 2024

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Total Pledge for 2024 _____

Thank you for your pledge

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up as indeed you are doing."
1 Thessalonians 5:11



Please use the enclosed pre-stamped envelope to return your pledge or bring to Church on Pledge Sunday, November 19