



**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
January 7, 2024, 10 AM
Worship with Communion**

Prelude Away in a Manger – traditional, arr. Dave Brubeck (1920-2012)

Welcome by Deacon

Call to Worship

One: Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Many: We gather in the Light that was before, is now, and ever will be.

One: We seek the Light's ancient wisdom.

Many: We gather in the Light that is God's continuing gift.

One: We live into the Light's new wisdom.

Many: We gather in the Light that is our own, emerging anew each day.

One: Together we will share this wisdom,

Many: Nurtured in the Light from Bethlehem's cradle.

Hymn As with Gladness Those of Old #159 NCH

Anthem The Shepherd's Farewell (Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling)
– Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling, the humble crib, the stable bare,
Babe, all mortal babes excelling, content our earthly lot to share,
Loving father, loving mother, shelter thee with tender care! Loving father,
loving mother, shelter thee with tender care! Blessed Jesus, we implore
thee with humble love and holy fear, in the land that lies before thee, forget
not us who linger here! May the shepherd's lowly calling, ever to thy heart
be dear! May the shepherd's lowly calling, ever to thy heart be dear! Blest
are thee beyond all measure, thou happy father, mother mild! Guard ye
well your heavenly treasure, the Prince of Peace, the Holy Child! God go
with you, God protect you safely through the wild, guide you safely through
the wild!

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 How Far Is It to Bethlehem? – traditional English tune; words by Frances Chesterton, arr. by Stephen Paulus

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

How far is it to Bethlehem? Not very far. Shall we find the stable room lit by a star? Can we see the little child, is he within? If we lift the wooden latch may we go in? May we stroke the creatures there, ox, ass, or sheep? May we peep like them and see Jesus asleep? If we touch his tiny hand will he awake? Will he know we've come so far just for his sake? Great kings have precious gifts, and we have naught, little smiles and little tears are all we have brought, for all weary children Mary must weep. Here on his bed of straw – sleep, children, sleep. God in his mother's arms, babes in the byre, sleep, as they sleep who find their hearts' desire. Sleep, as they sleep who find their hearts' desire.

Prayer of Dedication

Scripture Reading Matthew 2:1-12 David Lumsden

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense,

and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon “Reflection” Rev. Katherine Schofield

Anthem Carol of the Star – T. Tertius Noble (1867-1953), arr. June Nixon
Verse: There came three kings who rode apace to Bethl’em town by God’s good grace. Hail Earendel God love be with us. In sooth it was a duteous thing, wise men to worship childe King: God love be with us, Hail, Earendel. They gave Him gifts of farbrought thing, of Recells, Myrhh and Gold of Kings; Hail Earendel, brightest of angels, and setten there in strawy tent their mystic signs of Orient: God love be with us, Hail, Earendel. The Gold and Frankinsense and Myrhh for King for Priest for digne martyr, Hail Earendel, brightest of angels. On the great Good Friday morn is’t crown of gold or crown of thorn? God love be with us, Hail, Earendel. O hymn then those Orient Kings, who brought for Him their offerings. Hail Earendel, brightest of angels, and grant in holy mystery ourselves His sacrificed may be, God love be with us, Hail, Earendel.

Note: Earendel is an old English name, which translates to ‘morning star’. Also, it is the name given to the character of Tolkien’s ‘Lord of the Rings’ who carries with him the ‘Silmaril’, or morning star.

Communion Liturgy

The Sacrament of Communion

Invitation to the Table

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them up to God!

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: We give you thanks, O God, The angels caroled glory to you in the highest heavens and peace to all people on earth, and we join with them and with all people to praise your holy name:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory!**

The angels sang of it—we have been lavished with it.

Blessed is he who was born that we might have life.

Glory to God and on earth peace to all people.

The Breaking, Pouring, and Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Gracious God – In deep gratitude for this place, this meal, these people, we offer ourselves again to You. Stir in us a passion to ease the hunger and thirst we see around us. Send us forth in the strength of this food and this time to love You and to love Your people - to serve You and to serve Your people. Amen.

Hymn We Three Kings #143 PH

Blessing

Closing Song The Peace of the Earth – words and music Guatemalan traditional

The peace of the earth be with you, the peace of the heavens too; the peace of the rivers be with you, the peace of the oceans too. Deep peace falling over you; God's peace growing in you.

**Our Deacons this morning are Susan Parker and Janet Groth.
Our Greeter this morning is Bethany Woods.**

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!

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.
- **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.

You can **contribute to the work of First Parish Church** or pay your pledge **[@PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.paypal.com%2Fme%2Ffpchurchmanchester)**.

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.

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**.

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.

The Seaside Parish Knitters meets each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm. Jan. 4 & 18. 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.

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

Rev. Katherine Schofield, Pastor, revkatherine.fpchurch@gmail.com

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.

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.

Your Stewardship Committee would like to remind you to fulfill your pledge commitment for 2023 to help us close out the year. We also invite you to pledge for 2024 so the Trustees can continue planning for First Parish's activities in 2024.

Questions? Contact Mary Ellen Cook or David Lumsden.

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