



**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  
April 28, 2024, 10:00 am**

**Ringling of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles**

**Prelude** Bedeck Yourself, O Dear Soul – Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

*Please maintain a prayerful quiet during the prelude as we prepare our hearts for worship.*

**\* Call to Worship**

One: We are branches, rooted in the vine of Christ.

**Many: We gather because we seek to abide in Christ.**

One: The branches that remain in the vine bear much fruit.

**Many: We worship because we long to be spiritually vibrant, alive, productive.**

One: If we abide in Christ, then Christ's words will abide in us.

**Many: We come because we strive to be faithful disciples.**

One: Let us gather for worship now to the glory of God:

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer.

**Many: May we grow wildly through God's loving care. Amen.**

**Welcome**

*First Parish Church is rooted in the Congregational tradition of democratic governance and the full inclusion and participation of all who call this their spiritual home. We take seriously the responsibility to make the Christian faith our own in this time and place, and seek to live lives of generous service.*

**Presentation of New Members**

Andrea Kunst

Eric Grant

Rebecca Shrimpton

Diane Houghton

Katherine Schofield

Adilia James

Heather Johnson-Reid

## **Litany of Intent led by Rev. Dr. Llewellyn P. Smith**

One: Friends in Christ, these people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. They have been led by the Spirit to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the Christian church.

**Many: They are here, as we are here, to endeavor to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves. God help us.**

One: Friends who are joining, we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith which has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith. Do you promise, by the grace of God, to continue in your pilgrimage of faith, to be Christ's disciple, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

*Those joining: We do.*

One: Do you promise to walk with us in faithfulness and in Christian love? And do you promise, that so far as able, you will participate in the life of this church, by worshiping God with us, and offering your time, talent and means for the ministry of this church and for the larger church of which this is a part?

*Those joining: We do.*

One: Friends, we then welcome you as partners in the common life of this church and join our voices to share our covenant of mission with you.

**\*All: We pledge to give ourselves to the one whom Jesus called "Abba, Father," as the God in whose love we are grounded, and to Jesus Christ, God incarnate, our salvation and strength. We give ourselves to God the Holy Spirit, our comforter and guide, and trust in**

**the Good News of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of our faith and practice. We promise to walk in covenant with one another, with the wider church, and with the First Parish Church, Congregational. We promise to walk secure in God's grace, prepared in gratitude to live by our promises and to serve by the word of the Gospel.**

### **Congregational Greeting**

**\* Hymn** Listen to Your Savior Call - #250, NCH

*Sunday school students leave for the classrooms after the hymn.*

**\* Prayer of Invocation**

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Solo** In Christ Alone – Stuart Townend (1963), arr. Benjamin Harlan  
Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song;  
this cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and  
storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled,  
when strivings cease. My Comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ  
I stand. There in the ground His body lay, light of the world by darkness  
slain: then bursting forth in glorious day, up from the grave He rose again!  
And as He stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me; for I am  
His and He is mine, bought with the precious blood of Christ. In Christ  
alone I place my trust and find my glory in the power of the cross. In ev'ry  
victory let it be said of me, my source of strength, my source of hope is  
Christ alone. No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in  
me; from life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No  
power of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand: 'till He  
returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand. In Christ  
alone I place my trust and find my glory in the power of the cross. In ev'ry  
victory my source of strength, my source of hope is Christ alone.

**Prayer Intentions**

**Pastoral 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.

**Meditation** Song of India - Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

## **Scripture Reading John 15: 1-8**

<sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

**Sermon "Lessons from the Garden" Rev. Katherine Schofield**

## **Invitation to the Offering**

**Offertory Anthem** My Lord, What a Mornin' – Spiritual, arr. H. T. Burleigh (1866 – 1949)

My Lord what a mornin' when the stars begin to fall. Done quit all my worldly ways; joined that heavenly band. Oh! My Lord what a mornin' when the stars begin to fall.

**\* Doxology #780 NCH**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below,**

**Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen.**

### **Prayer of Dedication**

\* **Hymn** Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve - #491, NCH

\* **Blessing**

**Closing Song** Siyahamba (We Are Marching in the Light of God) – Zulu Song, arr. Doreen Rao

\* Indicates the congregation is invited to rise in body or in spirit.

**Our Deacon is Nancy Peterson.**

**Welcome to all who are new to our Worship time.**

**Listening devices** are available for those in need; they are at the back of the Sanctuary. Feel free to ask a Deacon should you need help.

**Manchester Seniors - Drop in for Coffee** and Conversation Every Monday 10 AM-12:00 PM (except holidays) at the First Parish Community Hall. Hospitality provided by The Friends of The Manchester Council on Aging. Come sit down and talk!

### **Faith Formation Opportunities for All Ages**

Through study and prayer and service, we aspire to love God “with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.” From the youngest toddlers, to the wisest Elders, we each are called to grow in our faith and understanding.

**Sunday School** - During Worship (except for Communion Sundays)

Our kids engage in hands-on, age-appropriate learning opportunities that integrate storytelling, the arts and spiritual development in a safe and family-friendly environment.

**Youth Group** - Gathers monthly for service projects, arts and crafts, and social events.

**Next Youth Gathering: Sundaes on Sunday!**

Tonight, Sunday, April 28th - 5-8pm in the Chapel Hall

All teens and young adults (ages 12-24) are invited to join in for a make your own sundae bar and three games of skill. We'll also be making wildflower seed bombs to give as welcome gifts for visitors to the church.

**Weekly Lectionary Bible Study** – Will now meet on Tuesdays, 3:30-4:45p via Zoom. We study scripture together, utilizing resources from a variety of traditions, and seeking meaning for our daily lives.

**To join our mailing list** please fill out a “Welcome Card” to place in the collection plate or contact [office.fpchurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.fpchurch@gmail.com), 978-526-7661 x 1.

**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>

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).

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

**Hands on Community Service**

- **MBTS 21st Annual Community Cleanup**

Saturday May 4th, 9:00am to 12:00.

Bring your community spirit and join TEAM FIRST PARISH CHURCH to help beautify our town! Even if you can only spare an hour we can use your help. Gloves, bags, water, and snacks provided, plus lunch for anyone who participates. Let's have a great turnout and live our faith outside the church walls!

- **Operation Troop Support** Socks, any size any color. Small board and card games, items can be dropped at the Chapel or Church –
- **The Open Door** the need is great so please donate what you can. Pantry items welcome. Coffee & tea, granola bars, oatmeal, pancake & waffle mix, maple syrup, 100% fruit juice. They are also grateful for

bake mixes including muffin mixes. can be dropped at the Chapel or Church

- **The Grace Center** welcomes gift cards from local grocery markets to help the center provide cream, butter, and other perishables can be dropped at the Chapel or Church

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**The Seaside Parish Knitters** meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, (May 2 & 16). We welcome all to stop by anytime during that time. 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.



Book group is open to everyone! It 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, 6:30 PM, and hosting is shared among members.

**Tomorrow, April 29, 6:30 PM**, we will discuss the book of Genesis at Liz Loomis' home, 34 Bennett St. Manchester. RSVP [loomisliz@hotmail.com](mailto:loomisliz@hotmail.com).

**May 27, 6:30 PM**, we will discuss “The Women” by Kristen Hannah at Nancy Peterson's home, 111 Chebacco Rd South Hamilton. RSVP to 508-284-0883.

**June 24, 6:30 PM**, we will discuss “Mercury Pictures Presents” by Anthony Marra at Mary Ellen's home, 23 Harold St. Manchester. RSVP to 978-500-0018.

***July is a free month. Have fun reading whatever you like.***

**Our Online Prayer Wall** Give it a try! Request prayers and pray for others through the Prayer Wall on our [website](#).