



**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
February 4, 2024, 10 AM**

Ringing of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude Air (from 'Suite in D') – J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

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

Call to Worship

One: You, O God, know our hearts.
Many: Guide our hearts, O God.
One: You, O God, see our ways.
Many: Shape our ways, O God.
One: You, O God, call our spirits.
Many: Call us now, O God, as we call on you.

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.

*** Hymn** Renew Your Church, #311 NCH

*** Prayer of Confession**

**Holy God, we know that you created us in love,
to enjoy this world and You,
to serve your creation and your children.
And we know that we do not always do your will.
With clenched hands, we can neither give nor receive.
With eyes tight shut, we cannot see pain or beauty.
With feet of clay, we cannot dance in joy or run to help.
We ask for your help and your power to change.
Open our hands and eyes, move our feet,
Toward a world in need,
Toward grace and hope and trust in You.
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

*** Words of Assurance**

Passing of the Peace

Anthem My Shepherd Will Supply My Need – arr. Virgil Thomson (1896-1989)

My Shepherd will supply my need, Jehovah is His name. In pastures fresh He makes me feed beside the living stream. He brings my wand'ring spirit back when I forsake His ways. He leads me for His mercy's sake in paths of truth and grace. When I walk through the shades of death, thy presence is my stay. One word of thy supporting breath drives all my fears away, Thy hand, in sight of all my foes, doth still my table spread. My cup with blessings overflows, Thine all anoints my head. The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days, o may thy house be my abode and all my work be praise. There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come, no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.

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 Impromptu in G Flat, op. 90, #3 - Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

Scripture Reading Acts 6: 1-7 MaryJo Feuerbach

¹ Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. ² And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Therefore, brothers and sisters, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴ while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." ⁵ What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶ They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Sermon "Each Person's Gift is Needed" Rev. Katherine Schofield

Commissioning and Blessing of Stephens Ministers

Martha Farmer
Sue Parker
Richard Smith

Diane Houghton
Marianne Round
Jeanne Westcott

Paul Lengieza
Rebecca Shrimpton

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory I Come with Joy – Brian Wren (1936) & Peter Niedmann (1960)
I come with joy, a child of God forgiven, loved, and free, the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed, the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread, in Christ's communion bread.
As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud division ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends, and strangers now are friends.
The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near, is in such friendship better known, alive among us here, alive among us here. Together met, together bound by all that God has done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.

*** Doxology**

**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.**

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.

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

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Thank you, God, for inviting us to this banquet of life, for feeding us with the good news of Jesus, for welcoming us as family around this table. As we leave this meal may we carry with us a taste of your grace and love, offering the same to all we meet. Amen.

*** Hymn** Called as Partners in Christ's Service, #495 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 Deacons are John Feuerbach and Paul Gudonis.

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!

Today - the FPC Annual Meeting will be held following worship, see the warrant on the last page of the bulletin.

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

Coming up for Lent

The Season of Lent will begin with a traditional Ash Wednesday service, in the Sanctuary on Wednesday, February 14th from 6:30 – 7 PM.

Weekly Vespers Services: Wednesdays, 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary

Weekly Lenten Group Study Series on Five Spiritual Disciplines That Draw Us Closer to God: Mondays, 5-6 PM on Zoom

Weekly At-Home Devotional: "Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent"

Manchester Seniors - Drop in for Coffee and Conversation Every Monday 10 AM-12:00 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!

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.

February 26 at Meredith Tufts' home. The book is Beyond That, the Sea by Laura Spence-Ash. RSVP, for planning purposes only, to Meredith at (978) 500-5439 or mpt32150@gmail.com.

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

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.

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

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.

Faith Formation

The Youth Fellowship program will host an intergenerational Valentines Creation Workshop in Chapel Hall on Sunday evening, Feb 4, 6:30 - 7:30 PM, come and create one or more works of Valentine beauty to benefit the COA. Make one for your sweetheart as well. Snacks, and all materials will be available so come if your medium is crayons or come if your textile guru! All are welcome.

Sunday School is available every Sunday except for Communion Sunday. Know of a family that might like to join us? Invite them to come and try out a Sunday School session. It's fun in a faith-filled fantastic way!

The Stephen Ministry at First Parish is Live

A Soup and Conversation describing this initiative in detail will be presented at a later date. A Stephen Minister's objective is not to "solve" the challenge but rather to ensure that none feel alone in their struggles. If you are interested in participating or are aware of any individual in the congregation who might benefit from our care, please feel free to contact Stephen Leaders Linda Crosby at 978-314-1526 or Steve Carhart at 978-407-8454.

WARRANT FOR ANNUAL MEETING
First Parish Church, Congregational
United Church of Christ
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts
February 4, 2024

TO: Active Members of the First Parish Church, Congregational, United Church of Christ, Manchester-By-The-Sea, Massachusetts.

You are hereby notified to meet **in the Church or Zoom Conferencing** immediately following Worship Service on Sunday, February 4, 2024 for the following purposes:

To wit:

ARTICLE I: To accept the report of the first combined annual and financial meeting, held on February 12, 2023

ARTICLE II: To accept the report of the Special Meeting held on September 17, 2023.

ARTICLE III: To hear the recommendations of the Nominating Committee and to elect officers, board and committee members of the church.

ARTICLE IV: To see what action the Church will take in regard to the budget proposal for 2024 as submitted by the Church Council.

ARTICLE V: To hear and act upon the reports of officers, boards, committees, and organizations connected with the church.

ARTICLE VI: To hear and act upon the recommendation of the Church Council that the regular Sunday Service from July 7 to September 1 inclusive, shall start at 9:00 a.m.

ARTICLE VII: To hear and act upon any other business, financial or otherwise, that may come before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted;
George A Nickless, Clerk