



**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  
May 5, 2024, 10:00 am**

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

**Prelude** I Stand All Amazed - Charles H. Gabriel, 1856–1932, arr. Linda Hartman

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

**\* Call to Worship**

One: Clap your hands! Let your spirits rejoice!

**Many: God has done wondrous things for us!**

One: Praise God to the highest heavens!

**Many: Christ has blessed our lives with his presence and his teachings!**

One: On this Ascension Sunday we celebrate Christ's return to God.

**Many: We look up in wonder as he is lifted from us into heaven!**

One: But this is not a time to gaze upward. There is work to be done.

**Many: Jesus has entrusted the ministry of God's love to us.**

**Let's make our hearts ready for the task ahead with prayer and praise!**

**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.*

**THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

**Serena Arias Bothwick**

Child of James and Gianinna Arias Bothwick

Godchild of Jordan Bothwick and Carla Arias

**BLESSING OF THE WATER**

## THE LITANY OF BAPTISM

One: We are gathered to present **Serena Arias Bothwick** to the Church and to dedicate her to God. What can we affirm about her?

**Many: She is a child of God, made in God's image.**

One: As Serena grows and matures, how will she know she is a child of God and how will she learn of the Christian story?

**Many: We will tell her about Abraham and Sarah, the parents of our faith; about Moses and Miriam who led our ancestors out of bondage; about Mary and Joseph's openness to mystery; about the Savior, Jesus.**

One: In turn, what will we expect of Serena?

**Many: We look forward to sitting with her at the Lord's Table, sharing with her the costs and joys of discipleship, learning and growing with her in the Christian pilgrimage, and declaring with one voice our faith in God and God's son, Jesus.**

One: Do you, James and Gianinna, parents, assume your primary responsibility for fulfilling these expectations by growing with Serena in the Christian faith, helping her to become a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, and by offering her the nurture and support of the Christian church? And do you, Jordan and Carla, godparents, agree to guide Serena into becoming an engaged and complete human being, teaching her about personal sacrifice for a greater good, about grace and reconciliation at times of human weakness, and the power of unconditional love for all people?

Parents and Godparents: We happily and genuinely accept this serious duty.

One: And First Parish Church, do you pledge to maintain a nurturing and challenging Christian environment for Serena?

**Many: We do, for she belongs to us as well.**

One: Then, may God be with us.

**Many: God help us. Amen.**

## BAPTISM

### CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME (Unison)

**We rejoice in God's empowering love, freely given to each and all. We welcome you, newly baptized, into the circle of love in Christ's**

church. We promise to pray for you, to seek the depths of faith with you, to support you, and to love you. We covenant with you to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

**\*Hymn** Our God, Our Help in Ages Past - #25, NCH

*Sunday school students stay in worship today*

**\* Prayer of Confession (unison)**

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. Have mercy on us and forgive us, we pray; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

**\* Words of Assurance**

**Passing of the Peace**

**Anthem** A Repeating Alleluia – Calvin Hampton (1938-1984)

**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** A Flower Is a Lovesome Thing – Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967); arr. Herman Weiss

Rebecca Shrimpton. Solo

A flower is a lovesome thing, a luscious living lovesome thing; a daffodil, a rose, no matter where it grows is such a lovely lovesome thing. A flower is

the heart of spring that makes the rolling hillside sing – the gentle winds that blow, blow gently for they know; a flower is a lovesome thing. Playing in the breeze, swaying with the trees; in the silent night or in the morning light - such a miracle. Azaleas drinking pale moonbeams, gardenias floating through daydreams - wherever it may grow, no matter where you go - a flower is a lovesome thing. Playing in the breeze, swaying with the trees; in the silent night or in the morning light – such a miracle. Azaleas drinking pale moonbeams, gardenias floating through daydreams - wherever it may grow, no matter where you go – a flower is a lovesome thing. (tag) In the silent night, in the morning light.

### **Scripture Reading Bethany Woods Luke 24:44-53**

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

<sup>50</sup> Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, <sup>53</sup> and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

### **Sermon “Pass It On” Rev. Katherine Schofield**

#### **Invitation to the Offering**

**Offertory Anthem Filled With the Glory! – Don Besig (1936), Nancy Price**

Filled with the power, filled with the might, filled with the glory, the glory of the Lord. We are filled with the power, we are filled with the might. We are filled with the glory of the Lord! Filled with the glory! We

are filled with the wonder, we are filled with the light. We are filled with the glory, the glory of the Lord! When they came together to worship on that day, a mighty wind swept over them; they saw those tongues aflame. Though they spoke in languages from many different lands, the spirit moved among them, and they all could understand. They were filled with the power, they were filled with the might. They were filled with the glory of the Lord, of the Lord! They were filled with the wonder, they were filled with the light. They were filled with the glory, the glory of the Lord! Like those true believers, we gather here today to celebrate and praise the Lord and worship in His name. As we go into the world to witness and inspire, the Spirit moves within us and will set our hearts afire. We are filled with the power, we are filled with the might. We are filled with the glory of the Lord! We are filled with the wonder, we are filled with the light. We are filled with the glory, the glory of the Lord, of the Lord! We are filled with the glory of the Lord!

**\* 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.**

**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)**

Lord, you have given us peace and blessed us with a taste of your heavenly banquet. As we leave your table, empower us with the outpouring of your Spirit, that we might share your love and light with the world. Amen.

### Prayer of Dedication

\* Hymn O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing #42, NCH

\* 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.

\* 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.

### **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.

**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.

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

**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.

**First Parish Stephen Ministers** are highly trained lay volunteers who stand ready to provide confidential, one on one presence and counsel for anyone facing a life challenge such as divorce, job loss, major illness, or bereavement, under the direction of our Minister. This service also provides referrals to local agencies which can provide tangible assistance for needs such as housing, energy, or medical care. This program is part of the national interdenominational Christian movement described here: [stephenministries.org](http://stephenministries.org). If you or anyone you know might benefit from this service, please contact Rev. Katherine or Stephen Leaders Linda Crosby (978-314-1526) and Steve Carhart (978-407-8454).