



**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  
Worship Sunday Advent 4 - Love  
December 22, 2024  
10:00 am

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

**Prelude** In Dulci Jubilo – J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

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

**\* Call to Worship and Advent Wreath Lighting The Smith Family**

One: The lights of Hope, Peace and Joy burn bright. Today we light the candle of Love. [The candle is lit.]

**Many: May we kindle God's light together as we journey on.**

One: Let us give thanks for God's gift of love, made known to us through Christ Jesus.

**Many: Help us to prepare to receive Him.**

One: In Christ, the light of God's love shines in our hearts,

And we are given the strength to share love in the world.

**All: Be not afraid, the light of God's love is at hand...**

**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.*

**\*Prayer of Invocation Unison**

**All: O God of Love, who came as an infant, small and vulnerable;**

**O Prince of Peace, who said "Let the children come to me;"**

**O Spirit of Life, continue to bring Joy to this world.**

**Desperate is our need. Great is your Joy.**

**Make of this hour a festival of joyous song, heartfelt praise,**

**earnest words of hope amid our fears,**

**hands and voices raised in adoration.**

**Lead us, O Lord. Amen!**

**\*Hymn Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light - #140, NCH**

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Choir Anthem** Once in Royal David's City – arr. Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,

Where a mother laid her baby in manger for his bed.

Mary was that mother mild, Jesus her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all,

And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall;

With the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Savior holy.

### **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** Christmas Time Is Here – Lee Mendleson (1933-2019)

and Vince Guaraldi (1928-1976), arr. David Pugh (from 'A Charlie Brown Christmas')

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

### **Scripture Reading Luke 1:39-55 Allison Moir -Smith**

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
<sup>50</sup> indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

## Sermon “ The Magnificat: A Song of Love ” Rev. Katherine Schofield

### Invitation to the Offering

**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 grfant 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.

**\* 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.**

**\* Hymn Hark! The Herald Angels Sing - #120, Pilgrim Hymnal**

**\* 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.

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

**Our Deacons are Nancy Peterson & Sue Parker  
Our Greeter is Allison Moir -Smith**

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 x 1.

**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.

**Readers and Greeters** are always needed. To volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up [online](#).

**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.

**Weekly Bible Study** – Meets 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.

**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).

**The Seaside Parish Knitters** meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, December 5 and 19. 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.

**A Church Directory, Fall** is available at the Church and in the Church Office.

### **Hands on Opportunities at First Parish**

**First Parish has continuing collections for –**

- **The Open Door** Most needed items – canned chicken & tuna, peanut butter, healthy snacks, 100% juice boxes, cereal, hearty soups, canned fruits & veggies.
- **Operation Troop Support** Socks, and small board and card games.
- **The Grace Center** Gift Cards from local grocery markets for perishables like cream, butter, milk.

***Drop items at the Chapel (inside and outside bins) and at the Church***  
Our Annual Fund Drive 2025 is underway. The pledge letters have been mailed. Thank you

## Annual Fund Drive 2025

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-7



Name:

Email:

Address:

Pledge:

# BURGERS & BINGO

Celebrate New Year's Eve with food, fun, excitement, and fantastic prizes!

**FPC Community Hall**

**DECEMBER 31ST**  
→ 📅 **4 - 6 PM**

**All are welcome.  
A free and fun family event!**

[WWW.FIRSTPARISHCHURCH.ORG](http://WWW.FIRSTPARISHCHURCH.ORG)



# CHRISTMAS EVE

FIRST PARISH CHURCH  
10 CENTRAL ST, MBTS

## 5PM IMPROMPTU CHRISTMAS PAGEANT & CANDLIGHT SERVICE

Children are invited to participate in a no-rehearsal-needed Christmas pageant, with simple costumes provided. We sing carols to tell the Christmas story together.

## 7:30PM CANDLIGHT SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Featuring the FPC Choir

