



**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
June 30, 2024, 10:00 am

Ringling of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude E Phrygian – Johann Krieger (1651-1735)

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

***Call to Worship**

One: God of every country, thank you for this country:

Many: For its beauty from coast to coast.

One: Thank you for the American people, rich in cultural diversity,

Many: From First Nations and many nations.

One: You have a vision of what peace is,

Help us live in that peace and towards that peace.

Many: Help us to be a people of vision, courage, and commitment,

Offering your hope and comfort to all we meet.

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 God of the Ages, Who with Sure Command – 592, NCH**

“Help Us to Work with Renewed Vigor ” by Martin Luther King, Jr.
Betsy Nickless

Most gracious and all wise God, before whose face the generations rise and fall; Thou in whom we live, and move, and have our being. We thank thee (for) all of thy good and gracious gifts, for life and for health; for food and for raiment; for the beauties of nature and human nature. We come before thee painfully aware of our inadequacies and shortcomings. We realize that we stand surrounded with the mountains of love and we deliberately dwell in the valley of hate. We stand amid the forces of truth and deliberately lie. We are forever offered the high road and yet we

choose to travel the low road. For these sins O God forgive. Break the spell of that which blinds our minds. Purify our hearts that we may see thee. O God, in these turbulent days when fear and doubt are mounting high give us broad visions, penetrating eyes, and power of endurance. Help us to work with renewed vigor for a warless world, for a better distribution of wealth and for a brotherhood that transcends race or color. In the name and spirit of Jesus we pray. Amen

Passing of the Peace

Solo - Pie Jesu – (from ‘Requiem’) – Gabriel Faure (1845-1924)

Erin Merceruio Nelson, solo

Pious Lord Jesus, give them rest. Pious Lord Jesus, give them everlasting rest.

“The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln

Fran Bachman

Delivered at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 19, 1863

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have

died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Prayers of the People

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 Come Thou Font of Every Blessing – Robert Robinson (1735-1790), arr. Linda Hartman

Dr. Herman Weiss piano

Scripture: Psalm 3 3:13-22

Jane Pearson

From heaven God looks down and sees all humankind; from God's dwelling place God watches all who live on earth — God who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king is saved by the size of the army; no warrior escapes by great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of God are on those who fear God, on those whose hope is in God's unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for our God; God is our help and our shield. In God our hearts rejoice, for we trust in God's holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, God, even as we put our hope in you.

“On Old Cape Ann: By the Summer Sea” by Madison Julius Cawein

Christiane Alsop

Sunlight and shrill cicada and the low,
Slow, sleepy kissing of the sea and shore,
And rumor of the wind. The morning wore
A sullen face of fog that lifted slow
Letting her eyes gleam through of grayest glow;
Wearing a look like that which once she wore
When, Gloucesterward from Dogtown there, they bore

Some old witchwife with many a gibe and blow.
But now the day has put off every care,
And sits at peace beside the smiling sea,
Dreaming bright dreams with lazy-lidded eyes:
One is a castle, precipiced in air,
And one a golden galleon--can it be
'Tis but the cloudworld of the sunset skies?

The New Colossus , by Emma Lazarus

Jason Smith

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

To the Others , by Lola Ridge

Hilary Robinson

I see you, refulgent ones,
Burning so steadily
Like big white arc lights...
There are so many of you.
I like to watch you weaving—
Altogether and with precision
Each his ray—
Your tracery of light,
Making a shining way about America.
I note your infinite reactions—
In glassware

And sequin
And puddles
And bits of jet—
And here and there a diamond...
But you do not yet see me,
Who am a torch blown along the wind,
Flickering to a spark
But never out.

Call to the Offering

Solo – Alleluia (from ‘Exultate Jubilate’) – W.A. Mozart (1756-1791) Erin
Merceruio Nelson, solo

*** 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.**

William Sloane Coffin, Independence Day Prayer, 1983

Bruce Bellingham

O God, mightily we pray for wisdom, courage and strength to serve thee and this nation faithfully in the days that lie ahead. Remind us of our duty to promote the general welfare, to secure the blessings of liberty for all, to see to it that justice and compassion reign from sea to shining sea, and that the bountiful resources of a favored land are not only thankfully received but also gladly shared with the whole human family. Amen.

*** Hymn How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies - #594, NCH**

*** Blessing**

Closing Song – God Be in My Head - H. W. Davies (1869-1941)

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in mine eyes and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;

God be at mine end, and after my departing.

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

Our Deacon is Marianne Round.

We welcome Erin Merceruio Nelson this morning.

Hailed as “secure and sonorous” with a “bright, flexible voice” (Boston Musical Intelligencer), soprano Erin Merceruio Nelson is quickly becoming known for her signature blend of impeccable musicianship and strong dramatic instincts across a broad range of challenging repertoire. An avid performer of new and contemporary music, Erin’s 2023 -2024 season performances include the role of Ruth in the East Coast premiere of *Awakenings* by Tobias Picker with Odyssey Opera as well as multiple roles in a set of new chamber operas with White Snake Projects. Erin also premiered a new work for orchestra and soloists titled "In Her Element" by Francine Trester with the Kendall Square Orchestra. In past seasons, Erin created the role of The Nymph in the world premiere of *NIGHTTOWN* by Benjamin P. Wenzelberg with Lowell House Opera at Harvard University, premiered the chamber work *Tide Flowers* by composer Geoffrey Gibbs at the University of Rhode Island as the soprano soloist, and appeared as Bea in Jake Heggie’s *Three Decembers* with TBD Opera Project under the direction of Sharon Daniels. Erin’s 2023-2024 season also includes the role of First Lady in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* with MassOpera. Other recent performances include *Lady Clarence* in Odyssey Opera’s concert production of Saint -Saëns’ *Henry VIII*, and *Frasquita* in Bizet’s *Carmen* with Opera Breve in NY.

www.erinmerceruionelson.com

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. Ask a Deacon should you need help.

Fair by the Sea We start accepting items for the Fair this Wednesday, July 3rd! Drop items at the Chapel Hall 11AM-1PM. We welcome folks to come help us receive and sort items at the same time. Please see the enclosed flyer for details on what is accepted, thank you!

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 , Youth Group Will resume in the fall.

Weekly Lectionary Bible Study – Meets on Tuesdays, 3:30-4:45p via Zoom. We will continue to meet during the summer months. We study scripture together, utilizing resources from a variety of traditions, and seeking meaning for our daily lives.

You can **contribute to the work of First Parish Church** or pay your pledge **@PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester**

Readers and Greeters are always needed. To volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up online.

The Seaside Parish Knitters will begin meeting again in Sept. each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm. We welcome all to stop by anytime during that time.

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. 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).