



**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 September 22, 2024
10:00 am**

Ringing of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude We Sing to Him – Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

We sing to Him, whose wisdom was formed the ear, our songs, let Him who gave us voices, hear. We joy in God, who is the spring of mirth, who loves the harmony of Heaven and Earth. Our humble sonnets shall that praise rehearse, Who is the music of the Universe. And whilst we sing, we consecrate our art, and offer up with ev'ry tongue a heart.

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

*** Call to Worship**

One: Praise be to God

Many: Who hears our voice.

One: God is our strength;

Many: God is our shield;

One: Our hearts trust

Many: And help comes.

One: Our hearts leap for joy,

Many: And with our songs we praise our God.

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** Take My Life, God, Let It Be - #448 NCH

*** Prayer of Invocation**

Passing of the Peace

Anthem Harvest Song – Austin C. Lovelace (1919-2010)

Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts and voices Your alleluia raise!
By Him the rolling seasons in fruitful order move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.

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 3 Part Invention in G Minor – J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

Scripture Reading Genesis 15: 1-21

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵ He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷ Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." ⁸ But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹ He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰ He brought him all these and cut

them in two, laying each half over against the other, but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹ And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. ¹³ Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years, ¹⁴ but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶ And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates, ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

Sermon “ Partnership and Promise ” Rev. Katherine Schofield

Invitation to the Offering

Anthem Ev’ry Time I Feel the Spirit – Spiritual, arr. Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949) & William L. Dawson (1899-1990)

Ev’ry time I feel the spirit, moving in my heart, I will pray.

Upon the mountain my Lord spoke, out of His mouth came fire and smoke; Looked all around me, it looked so fine, till I asked my Lord if all was mine.

Jordan river is chilly and cold, it chills the body, but not the soul;
There ain’t but one train upon this track, it runs to heaven and right back.

*** 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 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing - #77, 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 Liz Loomis and Jeffrey Bodmer -Turner.

**Tonight, Sunday, Sept. 22 . Youth Fellowship begins!
Sunday, Sept. 29 Jazz Sunday during the 10 AM Worship**

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](#).

The Seaside Parish Knitters meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, October 3 and 17. 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.

Church Directory , Fall available at the Church and in the Church Office.

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 and Youth Group has begun.

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.

Soup and Conversation: Faith Formation Sunday, October 6th,
Following Worship in Chapel Hall.

In seeking to live a life of faith, we are called to grow our hearts and minds - no matter our age. While Christian education (or Sunday School) is a critical part of faith formation, the term “faith formation” goes beyond the classroom, incorporating service, leadership, and spiritual development, all in an intergenerational context. What does this mean? And where do you fit in? Join us for delicious soup and some thought -provoking conversation. Want to help? We need volunteers to bring soup and cookies, or to help with setup/clean up. Speak with Rev. Katherine or sign up on our signup sheet at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4CABA822A1F49_-48314195-soup

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).

Hands on Opportunities at First Parish

Faith Formation will be collecting school supplies , to benefit the Beeman School of Gloucester, the sales are currently on, if you are out and about, please pick up some of the following items – spiral bound notebooks (not college ruled), pencils, pens, washable markers in thin and thin variety, composition notebooks, crayons in 24 pack size, small staplers and staples, paper clips, dry erase markers, sharpies (for teachers), construction paper, sketch pads, index cards, pink pearl erasers. Any assorted art supplies: like paint brushes, washable paint, craft foam sheets, stickers, glitter glue. Let's support our educators and students by limiting their needs and preparing them for success!

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

Book Group is open to everyone! Book Group 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.

September 30, 6:30 PM ¶The Frozen River¶ by Ariel Lawhorn, meeting at Liz Loomis¶ home, 34 Bennett St. Manchester.

RSVP to loomisliz@hotmail.com.

October 28, 6:30 PM ¶The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store¶ by James McBride at Joan Wogan¶ home 5 Ledgewood Rd. Manchester.

RSVP to Joan at joanwogan@gmail.com.