



First Parish Church
Congregational, Manchester-by-the-Sea • MA

September 2024

The Church Bell Newsletter

Dear First Parish Church,

I pray you are all feeling refreshed, renewed and well-summered! It's been such a joy to spend the summer with you all. There are so many highlights! Volunteering with a wonderful First Parish Church crew at the Red, White and Blue pancake breakfast. Welcoming the community to our church during the 4th of July Parade. The Music at Masconomo event (where 65 people participated in the Love Thy Neighbor contest, and 45 kids made sticker scenes). And, of course, the Festival by the Sea, which saw over a hundred people come through our doors at both the Fair and the church! I was able to meet lots and lots of community members through all of these events and First Parish really put our best foot forward to help to "share the love and light of God" with the wider community. Thank you so much to each of you for your contributions and participation. These events also gave me the nudge to create some updated church brochures and fliers which you'll see around the church (feel free to share :).

Early Fall has always been one of my favorite seasons. Maybe it's the book-worm in me, but I always loved going back to school. Fresh school supplies, a new lunch box and endless possibilities ahead - what could be more exciting? That's how I'm feeling this year. Fresh school supplies (have you donated to Faith Formation's School Supply Drive? Read on), a new water bottle ("Lord, help me remember to hydrate"), and endless possibilities ahead for our beautiful, vibrant, Spirit-filled faith community.

I am so excited for worship this Fall. We'll be bringing back Family Sundays (all ages worship on the First Sunday of the month), and will take our first steps together along a scriptural trajectory that will begin with a Creation Celebration on Welcome Back Sunday (9/8) and lead into a sermon series about Abraham for the first half of the Fall. We have much to learn from this founder of the faith, and in a season of division (globally, nationally) I am excited for us to explore more about this figure who is recognized as the Father of three of the world's major religions. Also coming up this Fall we'll

continued

Pastor continued

celebrate Jazz Sunday (9/29) and World Communion Sunday (10/6).

There's been a lot of great work going on behind the scenes at First Parish this summer. The Faith Formation Committee has been meeting regularly and is excited to lead the congregation in a Soup and Conversation in October to talk more about our evolving vision for Faith Formation at FPC, and get your ideas about upcoming programming. The Deacons are revising the Deacon Handbook, which is generating a lot of great discussion and discernment. Council is starting to look at our church governance structure with an eye to sustainability, effectiveness and beating burn-out. First Parish Church - we are on the move!

NB: I've now been at First Parish Church for nearly eight months! If you've got feedback for me, or have just been looking for an excuse to sit down and chat, please consider this your invitation to email, call or stop by.

May your burdens be light in this shoulder season!

Blessings,

Rev. Katherine

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.



WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

September 8th



10am Family Worship
“Creation Celebration!”

FPC Choir Returns!

Blessing of the Backpacks!

5-7pm Stewardship Thank You
Picnic @ Tuck's Point



FPC Stephen Ministers Begin Community Outreach

The Stephen Ministry at First Parish is pleased to report that it is beginning systematic outreach to our community this fall. The group, commissioned last February, has been working closely with Rev. Katherine to assess and meet the immediate needs of our Congregation and close friends. We are now confident that those needs are being met and emerging needs in our immediate community can be handled as well. As was the initial plan, the group will now broadly engage with allied organizations in Manchester and nearby towns.

As we hope the congregation is aware, the Stephen Ministry—named for Stephen, who in Acts 6 was appointed to assist members of the community suffering acute hardships—is a 50-year-old interdenominational Christian tradition. The service trains lay members of the congregation in psychology and theology to be a Christian presence with any in the community suffering acute life challenges such as bereavement, divorce, or terminal illness. under the overall direction of the Minister. To date, the movement includes about 13,000 congregations and has trained 75,000 Stephen Leaders who have in turn trained 600,000 Stephen Ministers. Fuller details on the movement are here: [Stephen Ministries](#)

Our initial outreach to community groups will include organizations such as the Manchester Council on Aging, Action, Beverly Bootstraps, Care Dimensions, and the Chaplaincy at Beverly Hospital. For such organizations—many of whom have longstanding relationships with First Parish such as pastoral visits and cash donations—we will offer the presence of a Stephen Minister to persons served by these organizations. A Stephen Minister's objective will not be to “solve” the challenge but rather to ensure that none feel alone in their struggles. At the same time, this outreach will strengthen our relationships with these organizations to whom the Ministry may refer care receivers who need tangible services such as housing, energy assistance, or job training.

Members of the Congregation are invited and encouraged to participate in this ministry by bringing forward anyone in the community who might benefit from our care. This can include friends, neighbors, and family members whether they are affiliated with the church or not. In addition, there are many ways to participate in the Stephen Ministry depending upon your gifts and availability, including becoming a Stephen Minister after one of our future trainings. Please contact Rev. Katherine or Stephen Leaders Linda Crosby at 978-314-1526 or Steve Carhart at 978-407-8454 to discuss any of these matters.



Abraham

FALL SERMON SERIES

The man at the heart of the world's three
monotheistic religions has much to teach us about
bravery, sacrifice, legacy and love.

SUNDAYS | 10:00 AM | BEGINNING 9/15



First Parish Church
Congregational, United Church of Christ
Manchester-by-the-Sea • MA

Book Group

September 30, 6:30 PM “The Frozen River” by Ariel Lawhorn, meeting at Liz Loomis’s 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’s home 5 LedgeWOOD Rd. Manchester.
RSVP to Joan at joanwogan@gmail.com.

Book Group meets on the last Monday of the month and hosting is shared among members. Come join us!

Deacons

We enthusiastically announce the addition of Jeffrey Bodmer-Turner and Jason Smith to the diaconate!

With much appreciation, we give thanks to Barbara Smith who retired from the diaconate after her wonderful summer deacon services. Hopefully, you got the pleasure of enjoying not only Barbara's Sunday spiritual care but also her divine fellowship treats!

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Parker

Seaside Parish Knitters

The Seaside Parish Knitters are meeting again after a short summer break! We meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, **September 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.

Vitality

Vitality had a busy summer of herbs on the steps, July 4 parade opening the church and welcoming (Katherine got her first taste of the oddly-spaced parade), Music in Masconomo sponsorship and 80+ submissions (and 4 winners) of the Love Thy Neighbor contest, and opening the church for Festival by the Sea. The Prayer Wall in the narthex brims with prayers -- wonderful!

This fall, we look forward to helping stewardship with the Thank You Party at Tuck's Point on Sept 8, helping with Cape Ann Plein Air on Oct 12 (if needed), blessing dogs on the beach on Oct 20, and Wobblin Gobbler on Oct 26. Lots of outreach and connections in the community to come!

Photographers Needed! FPC needs photographers to record events during church services (baptisms, musicians, choir) and events outside of church. Cell phone photos only. Contact Allison for 10-minute training and have fun getting involved in church life -- from a different perspective!



Music Committee

Summer Activities of the Music Committee

The First Parish Church Choir may be on vacation, but the Summer Music during July and August has been beautiful, interesting and diverse. There has been special music, vocal (Rebecca Shrimpton, Paul Knox and guest soloists) and instrumental (Herman and guest musicians).

Guest vocalists have included the following: operatic soprano, Erin Merceruio Nelson, who sang pieces by Faure, Mozart, Bach/Gounod and Adams; Jim Brennan, tenor from the choir, who sang a beautiful Ortega/Powell anthem, and Rev. Katherine and Simone Argento, tenor from the choir, who sang a delightful duet. Guest instrumentalists have included the following: Dr. Bonnie Anderson who appeared as flute soloist and then with Herman as duo-pianists. Bonnie and Herman played two Hungarian Dances (numbers 4 and 5) by Johannes Brahms that express the great variety that exists in the realm of Hungarian Gypsy music. The quick tempo and memorable melodies made for thrilling listening.

The First Parish Church Choir will start up again with a rehearsal after Labor Day on Wednesday evening September 4th at 7:30 PM in the Chapel Hall. Then the Choir will be singing in church on September 8th. Jazz Sunday is scheduled to be back on September 29th. Once again we'll raise the roof in the sanctuary worshipping through jazz and gospel music featuring the First Parish Choir and soloist Rebecca Shrimpton, with favorite guest musicians Brian Price (tenor sax), Tom Palance (trumpet), Dave Landoni (bass), Russell Lane (drums), and more.

Come raise a joyful voice with us.

Marty Farmer
Maggie Michael

See photos of some of our guest musicians on the next page...



Summer Worship



September Birthdays

09/02	BILLINGHAM, BRUCE	216 HART ST BEVERLY FARMS MA 01915	bbillingham@ms-group.com
09/02	COLELLA, TINAMARIE	13 HIGHWOOD ROAD MANCHESTER	tctopcatrules@yahoo.com
09/04	JAMES, ADILIA	10 BRIMBAL HILLS DRIVE BEVERLY MA 01915	
09/06	WARNOCK, SAMUEL	5 RUNNING RIDGE ROAD MANCHESTER	
09/08	HESLOP, MARK	34 NORWOOD AVE MANCHESTER	mark@heslopfamily.com
09/08	MARTINEAU, SUSAN	121 LAFAYETTE RD APT 420 SYRACUSE NY 13205	smart14@twcny.rr.com
09/10	SCHOFIELD, ROSALIE	10 BRIMBAL HILLS DRIVE BEVERLY MA 01915	adilia.james@gmail.com
09/12	PARKER, JEFFREY	41 CENTRAL ST MANCHESTER	jpbradfordme@aol.com
09/13	ELDER, MARTHA	94 OLD ESSEX ROAD MANCHESTER	lilacvally238@gmail.com
09/13	FEUERBACH, JOHN	5 HAROLD ST MANCHESTER	jwfeuerbach@gmail.com
09/14	KLEBART, ELIZABETH	15 GROVE ST ESSEX MA 01929	
09/17	SMITH, GEORGE	8 MASCONOMO ST MANCHESTER	bugsysmith01@gmail.com
09/24	ALSOP, IAN	675C HALE ST BEVERLY MA 01915	
09/27	WEAVER, DANIEL	12 ALLEN AVE MANCHESTER MA 01944	rufio23@aol.com
09/29	LOOMIS, ELIZABETH	34 BENNETT ST MANCHESTER	loomisliz@hotmail.com

Use the links below to learn more about First Parish Church online:

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/FirstParishChurchManchesterMa/) www.facebook.com/FirstParishChurchManchesterMa/

[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/fpcmanchesterbythesea/) www.instagram.com/fpcmanchesterbythesea/

[Website](http://www.firstparishchurch.org/) www.firstparishchurch.org/

First Parish uses candid photos of Church activities in its publicity from time to time.

Any photos of children used will not contain personally identifiable information. Members of the community not wanting their or their children's photos depicted should inform the Church Office.

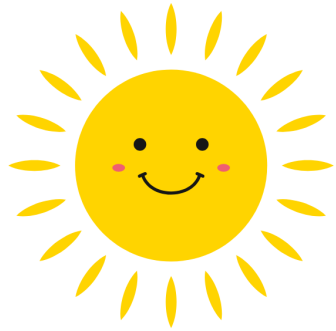
Stewardship

Our committee is busy, with Reverend Katherine, planning the *Stewardship Annual Fund Drive 2025*. We will begin the drive in mid-October culminating, with Stewardship Sunday on November 24th. Letters and more information will be coming in October.

The annual thank you party is being held on Sunday, September 8th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Tuck's Point (on the lawn). If it rains we will move to the Chapel hall. This is a chance for the stewardship committee to thank you for your participation and support in 2024. Vitality is our partner in providing pizza and beverages including the singing beach fizzies! All are welcome see you there!

Family Worship

at First Parish Church



September 8th - Rally Day!
October 6th - World Communion
November 3rd - All Saints Day
December 1st - Advent

Family Worship is a monthly hands-on worship service for all ages. Using art, storytelling, poetry, prayer and music we will celebrate life and faith together.

All are welcome!



First Parish Church at Manchester's 2024 Festival-by-the-Sea!!

What a day of community outreach for First Parish Church!!! The Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce held its annual Festival-by-the-Sea throughout Manchester on Saturday, August 3, 2024, and First Parish Church was a joyful and vital participant!!

As has been the custom, our church doors were open to the public during the Festival and countless people came by for a tour, to leave a prayer on our Prayer Wall, or simply for a peaceful moment and warm greeting. Our volunteers report engaging in many lovely and meaningful conversations with curious passers-by. And let's not forget the sidewalk chalk for the budding little artists in the crowd!

The second annual Fair-by-the-Sea was an all-around joy! Volunteers gathered weekly during July to receive donations from our ever-generous members and to organize, price and display them in our Chapel Hall. Thanks to a great use of social media, a crowd was lined up at the doors waiting to get in and scoop up their treasures! Our team of volunteers was so welcoming and helpful – the entire vibe was one of joyful community! Even 2 of our tenants, Ballet de Mar and Harbor Dharma, donated auction baskets!

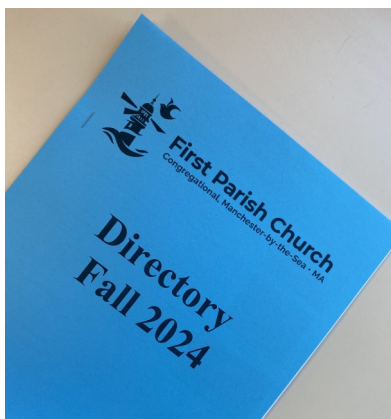
Continuing the theme of community, Fair proceeds will be shared with the Manchester Council on Aging toward the new Senior Center and with the Amaral-Bailey Legion toward their building campaign; unsold items were donated to The Second Glance in Gloucester, the thrift store arm of The Open Door (thank you to those who loaded their cars up and dropped things off at the Donation Center!!!), a donation of winter blankets will be made to ACTION's emergency shelter and a collection of winter coats will be donated to the annual coat drive at Sacred Heart/Visitation Church.





**Fair by the Sea
2024**

First Parish Church Directory



Thank you to all who sent us updated information so we could update our church directory this Fall!

Paper copies are available at the Church and in the Church Office.

Updated photos are always welcome send them along to office.fpchurch@gmail.com.

We hope to produce a new edition in Spring 2025.

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 also 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



First Parish Church
P.O. Box 187
Manchester, MA 01944



**Please come to a gathering to thank you for supporting our Church in 2024.
Join us on the lawn at Tuck's Point Sunday, Sept. 8, 5 - 7 PM for Pizza &
First Parish Fizzes. *We hope to see you there!*
(If raining we will move to the Chapel hall)**