



**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  
Communion Sunday Worship , November 3, 2024  
10:00 am**

**Ringing of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles**

**Prelude** Fugue in C# Minor (from 'WTC', book 1) – J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

**\* Call to Worship**

One: We remember, O God...

Many: The tender touch of loved ones,  
the healing words of comforters,  
the remarkable acts of fearless ones .

One: We remember, O God...

Many: The gentle strength of grandparents,  
the loyalty of friends,  
the kindness of strangers,  
the joy of children,  
the sacrifice of parents .

One: We remember, O God...

Many: The supreme love of Jesus,  
the blessing of his Spirit,  
the reminder of his words,  
the glory of his resurrection:  
shown forth in the lives of his disciples ,

One: We remember in every time and place the saints of God.  
Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses ...

Many: Let us worship God with joy!

**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** My Life Flows on in Endless Song - #476, NCH

## **Children's Message**

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Anthem** The Road Home – Stephen Paulus (1949-2014), lyrics by Michael Dennis Browne

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

[Intro]Ooo-ooo-ooo-ooo

Tell me, where is the road I can call my own that I left, that I lost so long ago?

All these years I have wandered - oh, when will I know?

There's a way, there's a road that will lead me home

Ooo-ooo-ooo-ooo

After wind, after rain when the dark is done, as I wake from a dream in the gold of day - through the air there's a calling from far away. There's a voice I can

hear that will lead me home

Ooo-ooo-ooo-ooo

Rise up, follow me come away, is the call, with the love in your heart as the only song. There is no such beauty as where you belong - rise up, follow me -

I will lead you home.

Ooo-ooo-ooo-ooo

## **Scripture Reading**

### **Genesis 23:1 -20**

<sup>1</sup> Sarah lived one hundred twenty-seven years; this was the length of Sarah's life. <sup>2</sup> And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. <sup>3</sup> Abraham rose up from beside his dead and said to the Hittites, <sup>4</sup> "I am a stranger and an alien residing among you; give me property among you for a burying place, so that I may bury my dead out of my sight." <sup>5</sup> The Hittites answered Abraham, <sup>6</sup> "Hear us, my lord; you are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places; none of us will withhold from you any burial ground for burying your dead." <sup>7</sup> Abraham

rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land. <sup>8</sup> He said to them, “If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me Ephron son of Zohar, <sup>9</sup> so that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of his field. For the full price let him give it to me in your presence as a possession for a burying place.” <sup>10</sup> Now Ephron was sitting among the Hittites, and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the gate of his city, <sup>11</sup> “No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it; in the presence of my people I give it to you; bury your dead.” <sup>12</sup> Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. <sup>13</sup> He said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, “If you only will listen to me! I will give the price of the field; accept it from me, so that I may bury my dead there.” <sup>14</sup> Ephron answered Abraham, <sup>15</sup> “My lord, listen to me; a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver—what is that between you and me? Bury your dead.” <sup>16</sup> Abraham agreed with Ephron, and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants.

<sup>17</sup> So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, passed <sup>18</sup> to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, in the presence of all who went in at the gate of his city. <sup>19</sup> After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan. <sup>20</sup> The field and the cave that is in it passed from the Hittites into Abraham’s possession as a burying place.

### **Genesis 25:7-11**

<sup>7</sup> This is the length of Abraham’s life, one hundred seventy-five years. <sup>8</sup> Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, old and full of years, and was gathered to his people. <sup>9</sup> His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, <sup>10</sup> the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah. <sup>11</sup> After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

## Sermon “The Great Cloud of Witnesses ” Rev. Katherine Schofield

**Meditation** Nocturne in F#, op. 28 – Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)  
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

**Stewardship Reflection: Heather Johnson Reid**

**Call to Offering**

**Offertory Anthem** May It Be (from The Lord of the Rings) – Enya (1961), lyrics by Roma Ryan; arr. Mark A. Brymer

May it be an evening star shines down upon you. May it be when darkness falls, your heart will be true. You walk a lonely road; oh, how far you are from home. \*Mor-ni-e u-tu li-e. Believe and you will find your way. \*\*Mor-ni-e a-lan-ti-e. A promise lives within you now. May it be the shadow's call will fly away. May it be you journey on to light the day. When the night is overcome, you may rise to find the sun. \*Mor-ni-e u-tu li-e. Believe and you will find your way. \*\*Mor-ni-e a-lan-ti-e. A promise lives within you now.

\*darkness has come, in Quenya

\*\* darkness has fallen, in Quenya

**Time of Remembrance**

**Introduction**

**Act of Remembering**

**Litany of Remembrance**

One: When we are weary and in need of strength

When we are lost and sick at heart,

**Many: We remember them.**

Leader: When we have a joy we crave to share

When we have decisions that are difficult to make

When we have achievements that are based on theirs

**Many: We remember them.**

Leader: At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

**Many: We remember them.**

Leader: At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn

**Many: We remember them.**

Leader: At the rising of the sun and at its setting

**Many: We remember them.**

**As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now part of us**

**As we remember them.**

### **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.

### **The Sacrament of Communion**

#### **Invitation to the Table**

#### **The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**One: Welcome to Christ's table.**

**All: We are glad to be here!**

**One: Lift up your hunger.**

**All: We do not hide our needs before God.**

**One: Prepare yourself to be hosted and fed.**

**All: The Bread of Life is our joy and satisfaction.**

### **The Breaking, Pouring, and Sharing of the Bread and Cup**

#### **Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)**

**Many: Who is like you, Gracious One?**

**There is no one like you,**

**our feast and our song,**

**our safety and our story,**

**our hope and our peace.**

**There is no one like you.**

**Thank you, now and always, Amen.**

**\* Hymn Softly and Tenderly - #449, NCH**

**\* Benediction**

**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 Deacons are Janet Groth & John Feuerbach.**

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.

**New Members Info Session - Sunday, Nov. 17th following worship**

Want to learn more about the life of this community of faith, ask any questions you may have, and get to know other newcomers and church members? Whether you're planning to join First Parish Church as a member or not, this Info Session will help you learn more about our commitments as a faith community, the various programs and ministries we offer, and how you can get involved. Contact Pastor Katherine for more info.

**Upcoming Pastor -Parish Relations Committee Meeting**

The PPRC exists to promote a healthy, faithful, shared ministry between the pastor and congregants. To that end, the committee meets regularly with Rev. Katherine, and is available as a confidential resource to the congregation offering a discrete sounding board for concerns. The PPRC also provides input to the Executive Committee as part of their annual Pastor evaluation. The PPRC will meet mid-November so if you have anything you'd like to share please seek out Sandy Bodmer-Turner, Adrian Argento or Paul Knox in the next two weeks.

**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, November 7 and 21. 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.

### **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).

It is time for the **Council on Aging Bags** ! Lists are in the Narthex for items and the items can be put in bins in the narthex or outside the church office by November 11th. There are 20 COA bags. This mission is sponsored by Women’s Fellowship, Outreach & Service and is open to the entire church. Any questions please ask Nancy Klebart or Mary Ellen Cook.