



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
Sunday Worship, 10:00 am
February 23, 2025**

Ringing of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude Fanfare for the Common Man – Aaron Copland (1900-1990); arr.
Roger Brison

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

*** Call to Worship**

One: God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

**Many: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,**

One: Though its waters roar and foam, and the mountains quake with their
surging.

Many: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

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** Faith of Our Fathers - #365, Pilgrim Hymnal

***Prayer of Invocation**

Passing of the Peace

Anthem One Faith, One Hope, One Lord – Craig Courtney
(1948)

One faith, one hope, one Lord, one church for which He died,
one voice, one song we lift in praise to Him who was and is and shall be
evermore. There is one body, one spirit, as you were called to one hope.
One Lord, baptism and faith, one God and Father of all, who is in you all.
Though we be many people, diverse with various gifts, we are given to

each other for the unity of faith, that we grow in the knowledge of the Son of God, in the fullness of Christ.

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 The Things Our Fathers Loved – Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

I think there must be a place in the soul all made of tunes, of tunes of long ago;

I hear the organ on the Main Street corner, Aunt Sarah humming Gospels; Summer evenings, the village cornet band, playing in the square. The town's Red, White and Blue, all Red, White and Blue; Now! Hear the words, but they sing in my soul of the things our Fathers loved.

Scripture Readings Brian Parker

Nehemiah 8

¹ all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁴ Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose, and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand and Pedaiiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hash-baddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people, and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷ Also the

Levites Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD, and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." ¹¹ So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." ¹² And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

¹³ On the second day the heads of ancestral houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the law. ¹⁴ And they found it written in the law that the LORD had commanded by Moses that the Israelites should live in booths during the festival of the seventh month ¹⁵ and that they should publish and proclaim in all their towns and in Jerusalem as follows, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written." ¹⁶ So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on the roofs of their houses, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷ And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them, for from the days of Jeshua son of Nun to that day the Israelites had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. ¹⁸ And day by day, from the first day to the last day, Ezra read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem The Gift of Love – arr. Hal H. Hopson (1933)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Though I may speak with bravest fire, and have the gift to all inspire, and
have not love my words are vain, as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.
Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love profess, but not be

giv'n by love within, the profit soon turns strangely thin. Come spirit come, our hearts control. Our spirits long to be made whole, O come, spirit, come let inward love guide every deed. By this we worship, and are freed. Amen

*** 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

Matthew 5:1-12

- ¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:
- ³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- ⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
- ⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
- ⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- ¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Lincoln Portrait – Aaron Copland (1900-1990); piano arrangement
by Herman Weiss
Rev. Katherine Schofield, narrator**

*** Hymn Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory - #443, Pilgrim Hymnal**

*** Blessing**

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 Deacon is Sue Parker.

Musical note: Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn, New York, on November 14, 1900. He was the youngest of five children in a Conservative Jewish immigrant family of Lithuanian origin. Copland was unaware until late in his life that the family name had been Kaplan, his parents having never told him. In his twenties his music largely was jazz influenced. Among the best known works from that period are his 'Piano Concerto' and 'Music for the Theater'. In the 1930's Copland's 'Piano Variations' exhibited a more modernist direction (which he would revisit in his later compositions). During wartime, Copland turned his attention to American themes. The ballet scores 'Appalachian Spring', 'Billy the Kid' and 'Rodeo', plus the 'Fanfare for the Common Man' became the scores for which he is remembered best. The 'Lincoln Portrait' came from this period.

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.

A **Church Directory**, Fall is 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.

Family Worship (first Sunday of the month) children of all ages stay in

worship for these special intergenerational services.

Church School (all other Sundays) children depart from worship around 10:15a for their own time of learning, crafting, sharing and playing.

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. 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 Annual Church Meeting will be held Sunday, March 9 following worship. A light lunch will be provided by the Deacons.

The Seaside Parish Knitters meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, Feb 6 and 20. 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.

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! Feb. 24, 6:30 PM we meet to discuss "The Art Thief" at Mary Ellen Cook's home, 21 Harold St, Manchester. RSVP to Mary Ellen (for planning purposes only) at 978-500-0018 or cook.maryellen7@gmail.com. Book Group meets on the last Monday of the month, at 6:30 PM, and hosting is shared among members.

Hands on Opportunities at First Parish

First Parish resumed serving at The Open Door in January. We will serve the 2nd Wednesday of each month (Feb. 12, Mar 12, Apr 9...) 2 volunteers are needed from 3:30-6:30 on each of those dates. You can sign up on our Sign Up Genius online (link below) or by speaking to Jim Brennan after worship or at 978-580-9623.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4CABA822A1F49-54306850-open>

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



Please join us as we celebrate the

Pastoral Installation

of

Rev. Katherine A. Schofield

Sunday, March 2 at 3:00 pm

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

Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Nancy S. Taylor

Reception to Follow