



**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 Sunday Christmastide  
January 12, 2025  
10:00 am

**Ring of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles**

**Prelude** Precious Lord, Take My Hand - George N. Allen (1812-1877),  
words by Thomas A. Dorsey; arr. Don Phillips

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

**\* Call to Worship**

One: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

**Many: God said, "Let there be light!"**

One: There was evening and there was morning,

**Many: And God called it good.**

One: Jesus came up from the waters of the Jordan.

**Many: God said, "You are my Son, the Beloved."**

One: There is a new beginning for each of us.

**Many: God calls it good.**

One: We gather here to praise the God of blessing.

**Many: And renew our journey as disciples of Jesus.**

**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** Come, O Fount of Every Blessing - #459, NCH

**\*Prayer of Invocation** *Unison*

**All: Creating, Calling, and Faithful God,**  
we rejoice in your grace, given and received.  
We thank you that you claim us,  
that you wash us, strengthen us, and guide us,  
that you empower us to live a life worthy of our calling.  
In the way of Jesus, make us as water in a dry, thirsty world.  
Root us and nurture us in love,  
that with all your people,  
our lives may overflow in service and love. Amen..

### **Passing of the Peace**

**Anthem** When in Our Music God is Glorified – Charles Stanford (1852 – 1924), adapted from Fred Green

When in our music God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried: Alleluia!  
How often, making music, we have found a new dimension in the world of sound, as worship moved us to a more profound Alleluia!  
So has the Church, in liturgy and song, in faith and love, through centuries of wrong, born witness to the truth in ev'ry tongue: Alleluia!  
And did not Jesus sing a psalm that night when utmost evil strove against the light? Then let us sing, for whom he won the fight: Alleluia!  
Let ev'ry instrument be tuned for praise! Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise! And may God give us faith to sing always: Alleluia!

### **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** Blues for Duke (from 'Portraits in Jazz') - Valerie Capers (1935)  
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

## **Scripture Reading Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 Linda Crosby**

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

## **Sermon " Taking the Plunge " Rev. Katherine Schofield**

### **Remembrance of Baptism**

### **Invitation to the Offering**

**Offertory Anthem** There Is a Balm in Gilead – spiritual, arr. William L. Dawson (1899-1990)

Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Chorus: There is a balm in Gilead, to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul.

Verse: Some times I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain, but then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again.

Chorus:

Verse: If you cannot sing like angels, if you cannot preach like Paul, you can tell the love of Jesus, and say "He died for all".

Chorus:

### **Prayer of Dedication**

**\* 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.**

**\* Hymn We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder - #500, 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 Paul Gudonis and Marianne Round.**

**Music note: Valerie Capers** (born May 24, 1935) is an American pianist and composer who is most well known for her contributions in jazz. Although she was blind from the age of 6 she also had a notable career as a teacher for the Brooklyn School of Music and at the Manhattan School of Music, here she created a jazz curriculum.

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.

**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).

**The Seaside Parish Knitters** meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Chapel, from 1-3 pm, Jan 2 and 16. 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.

## **Hands on Opportunities at First Parish**

**First Parish will resume serving at The Open Door on January 14<sup>th</sup>.** After January we will serve the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month (Feb. 12, Mar 12, Apr 9...) 2 volunteers are needed from 3:30-4:30 on each of those dates. You can sign up on our Sign Up sheet 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***

**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, at 6:30 PM, and hosting is shared among members.

**January 27** , 6:30 PM at Mary Lumsden's home , 18 Woodcrest Rd. Manchester. We will discuss the book *The Winter Soldier* by Daniel Mason. RSVP to Mary at 978-500-4571 or [rasc84@hotmail.com](mailto:rasc84@hotmail.com).

**Annual Fund Drive 2025**

*¶¶ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.¶¶*

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Address:**

**Pledge:**

# CHURCH SCHOOL

Families start Sunday in worship until 10:15a when children depart to Church School (Except 1st Sundays - when children stay in church for All-Ages Family Worship) 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.



At First Parish Church, we value kids of all ages and encourage families of all configurations to join in our Christian worship, activities and spiritual experiences. The staff and volunteers at First Parish Church are committed to respect, safety and the strengthening of relationships encompassed in God's Love and illuminating Christ's life and work. For more info contact [jeanne.fpchurch@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne.fpchurch@gmail.com).



# YOUTH GROUP

Gathers monthly for service projects, arts and crafts, and social events.