



**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 Communion Family Sunday
January 5, 2025
10:00 am

Ringling of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude Away in a Manger – traditional, arr. Dave Brubeck (1920-2012)

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

*** Call to Worship**

One: We gather in the Light
that was before, is now, and ever will be .

Many: We seek the Light's ancient wisdom .

One: We gather in the Light that is God's continuing gift .

Many: We live into the Light's new wisdom .

One: We gather in the Light that is our own, emerging anew each day .

**Many: We seek to share this wisdom ,
nurtured in the Light from Bethlehem's cradle .**

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.

Prayer of Invocation

All: God of Light and Love,

In this very moment the star still beckons.

Gather us and let the star call us to new ways

Of healing and hope,

Restoration and renewal,

As we discover again Christ's call to discipleship.

Amen .

***Hymn** As With Gladness Men of Old - #119, Pilgrim Hymnal

Children's Message

Passing of the Peace

Solo Flower of Heaven – Eric Thiman (1900-1975); words by Irene Gass
Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Dew pearled, He lies upon her breast, a living, breathing flow'r, whose coming makes of Winter, Spring, with gentle quickening power. With steady glow the stars look down; the oxen in a ring breathe sweetly on the Babe who sleeps soft cradled on Love's wing. Watchful, the mother sees Him wake, a moment filled with bliss; for joy comes from His clinging touch, and rapture with His Kiss.

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 Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart – Frederick C. Atkinson (1841-1896), arr. Lloyd Larson
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

Scripture Reading s Chip Price

First Lesson Isaiah 60:1-6

¹ Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² For darkness shall cover the earth
and thick darkness the peoples,
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

³ Nations shall come to your light
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together; they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.

⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Second Lesson Matthew 2:1 -12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense,

and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon “ Home By Another Way ” Rev. Katherine Schofield

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem – The Shepherd’s Farewell (Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling) – Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling, the humble crib, the stable bare,
Babe, all mortal babes excelling, content our earthly lot to share,
Loving father, loving mother, shelter thee with tender care! Loving father,
loving mother, shelter thee with tender care! Blessed Jesus, we implore
thee with humble love and holy fear, in the land that lies before thee,,
forget not us wgo linger here! May the shepherd’’s lowly calling, ever to
thy heart be dear! May the shepherd’’s lowly calling, ever to thy heart be
dear! Blest are thee beyond all measure, thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heavenly treasure, the Prince of Peace, the Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you safely through the wild, guide you
safely through the wild!

*** 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.**

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)

Holy Lord, God of endless love,

heaven and earth are surely full of your glory.

The angels sang of it —we have been lavished with it.

Thank you for this meal, in which your love is made real.

Blessed is he who was born that we might have life.

Glory to God and on earth peace to all people.

*** Hymn We Three Kings of Orient Are - #143, Pilgrim Hymnal**

*** 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.

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](#).

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. 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, December 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.

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

Hands on Opportunities at First Parish

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 978-712-0047 or 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: