



**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, 10 AM. Sunday, December 7, 2025
Advent 2 - Peace**

Ringling of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude Pastoral Symphony (from 'The Messiah') – G. F. Handel (1685 – 1759)

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

*** Call to Worship and Advent Wreath Lighting** Peter and Jan Eschauzier & Gar and Jody Morse

One: Can you hear it? God's Word is coming.

Many: We're listening. We're eager to hear.

One: A voice cries out and declares the Promise of Peace.

Many: We stand in awe.

One: Things are going to even out in the world.

Many: All people will embrace each other.

One: Today we light the candle of Peace.

(Light the second candle.)

All: Our peace comes from God.

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.

*** Opening Hymn** My Soul Gives Glory to My God - #119, NCH

Prayer of Invocation (Unison)

All: Holy God,

We long for your peace, and trust in your promise;

we hear your call to turn toward you,

to change our lives and welcome you in.

Meet us here and fill our minds with your wisdom

and our hearts with your peace,

**that our worship together may open us to the challenge
of your dream of wholeness for all.**

In the Name of the One who is coming, we pray. Amen!

Presentation of New Members

Bruce Billingham
Jan and Peter Eschauzier
David and Suzie Turnbull
Steve and Gail Gang
Jeanne Westcott
Cynthia Westland
Ken Wilson

Litany of Intent

One: Friends in Christ, these people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. They have been led by the Spirit to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the Christian church.

Many: They are here, as we are here, to endeavor to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves. God help us.

One: Friends who are joining, we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith which has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith. Do you promise, by the grace of God, to continue in your pilgrimage of faith, to be Christ's disciple, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Those joining: We do.

One: Do you promise to walk with us in faithfulness and in Christian love? And do you promise, that so far as able, you will participate in the life of this church, by worshiping God with us, and offering your time, talent and means for the ministry of this church and for the larger church of which this is a part?

Those joining: We do.

One: Friends, we then welcome you as partners in the common life of this church and join our voices to share our covenant of mission with you.

***All: We pledge to give ourselves to the one whom Jesus called "Abba, Father," as the God in whose love we are grounded, and to Jesus Christ, God incarnate, our salvation and strength. We give**

ourselves to God the Holy Spirit, our comforter and guide, and trust in the Good News of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of our faith and practice. We promise to walk in covenant with one another, with the wider church, and with the First Parish Church, Congregational. We promise to walk secure in God's grace, prepared in gratitude to live by our promises and to serve by the word of the Gospel.

Congregational Greeting

*** Passing of the Peace**

Anthem – People Look East – Besancon carol, words by Eleanor Farjeon, arr. Malcolm Archer.

People, look East. The time is near for the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth, and set the table. People, look East, and sing today: Love the Guest is on the way. Furrows, be glad.

Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there: give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish. People, look East, and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim, shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together. People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way. Angels, announce to man and beast him who cometh from the East. Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming. People, look East, and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

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 What Child is This? – arr. Linda Hamilton
Dr. Herman Weiss, piano

Scripture Reading Brian Parker

Isaiah 11:1-10

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
³ His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.' "

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and

do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Sermon "Waiting Like Fools" Rev. Katherine Schofield

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem – Once in Royal David's City – arr. Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus her little child.
He came down to earth from heaven Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Savior holy.

*** 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: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them up to God!

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

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

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

Holy One, we have met you at this table. Nourished by your holy food, send us out as one people, full of vision and courage, to prepare the way for your kingdom. Filled with your grace, show us how to live so that all may know your hope, your peace, your joy, and your love. We pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, child-king, divine Messiah, and Prince of Peace, Amen.

Hymn Watcher, Tell Us of the Night - #103, NCH

*** Blessing**

Closing Song The Peace of the Earth – 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 John Feuerbach and Marianne Round.

Join us following worship for coffee and conversation.

Musical Note: "What Child Is This?"; is a Christmas carol with lyrics written by William Chatterton Dix in 1865 and set to the tune of "Greensleeves", a traditional English folk song (possibly by Richard Jones), in 1871. Although written in Great Britain, the carol today is more popular in the United States than its country of origin.

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

You can contribute to the good work of First Parish Church or pay your pledge @PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester or Venmo to @FirstParish-Church

Introducing our new members –

Peter and Jan Eschazier are excited to be joining First Parish Church this morning. Peter was born on the island of Java, Indonesia, when it was still part of the Dutch East Indies, and from the age of 16 months to age 5 he was interned, along with his mother and two older sisters, in a Japanese concentration camp. His family was repatriated to the Netherlands in

January 1946 and in 1948 they moved to Long Island, NY. Peter attended school in Massachusetts, Long Island, and Switzerland and eventually graduated from Bard College and enlisted in the Navy, earning his wings in April 1965. Peter worked as a pilot for 39 years (mostly with American Airlines) until his retirement in 2010. Jan grew up on Lake Winnepesaukee and Squam Lake in New Hampshire, counting loons in the summer and skiing in the winter. She was a single mom for many years before she met Peter, who has two daughters. Jan and Peter were married in 1986 and became a blended family. When the girls left home for school, Jan and Peter moved to Naples, FL, where Jan became a founding board member of The Naples Botanical Garden. In 2010 Peter and Jan moved to Salem, MA to be near their daughters and grandchildren. They are thrilled to have found a church home "down the street" and look forward to participating in the life of First Parish Church.

Suzie Turnbull spent her childhood years attending a Congregation church in Connecticut and three years at a high school affiliated with the Episcopal church. **David Turnbull** was raised in New Jersey and Connecticut in the Episcopal tradition. He and Suzie went to college together and got married in 1980 at her church, North Congregational, in Woodbury, CT. His career in energy, mining and trading enabled them to live in many places in both the US and Canada, during which time they raised three children. Suzie has spent the last twenty years as a freelance journalist and editor, providing encouragement and tools for people to document their values and their life stories. Her favorite job, though, is being "Mimi" to her grandchildren, who all live close by. Before they moved to Manchester, Suzie and David experienced church communities. For Suzie, joining First Parish brings her back to where she started, and David looks forward to being part of a welcoming place where he can further his spiritual journey amidst a warm community of engaged individuals.

Cynthia Westland is a Crime Fiction Mystery Writer, and has authored two series, Murder in Boston and Murder in Manhattan. In addition to her love of writing, her interests include gourmet cooking, music and film noir. Cynthia recently moved to Manchester-by-the-Sea from Rockport and she is excited to get to know the community better. Cynthia began worshipping with First Parish online and has been glad to worship in person since the summer. She looks forward to getting more involved at FPC.

Gail Gang is a life-long artist whose steadfast commitment to find her painting voice keeps her at the easel. Her side gig is designing women's athletic wear using iconic paintings. She loves walks in the woods with her dog, and exhausting herself in the garden. **Steve Gang** is devoted to Gail, their kids, Rosie the dog, and the natural environment. He juggles semi-

retirement and many avocations including conservation, music, and vegan cooking. Once his new hip is installed, he'll be back to hiking and biking (and dog walking). Gail and Steve have twin sons and shared in parenting two daughters from Steve's first marriage. They are often on the road chasing their 7 grandchildren.

Jeanne Westcott is the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries at FPC. She is married to Bruce Westcott and has two daughters, a step son and a step daughter. She is also step grandparent in training to four step grandchildren and fur momma to Pearl and Onyx, two cherished felines. Jeanne has been a member of the UCC for 35 years.

Ken Wilson is originally from Boston and raised his two daughters and son in Medford, before moving to Manchester-by-the-Sea. He is semi-retired and works part-time at the Home Depot in Salem. Ken loves to play golf, cook and spend time with his grandkids - all boys. He is glad to be joining First Parish Church today.

Stephen's Ministry 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).

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 (second 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.

The Seaside Parish Knitters meet each 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, Dec. 4 & 18, **1-3 PM**. We welcome all to stop by. 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 Community Service, all items can be dropped at the Chapel or Church –

- **First Parish Church serves dinner at The Open Door**, Gloucester, Emerson Ave. Gloucester, monthly. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4CABA822A1F49-54306850-open> or speak with Coordinator Jim Brennan 978-580-9623.
- **Operation Troop Support** Socks, any size any color. Small board and card games.
- **The Open Door** Pantry items welcome. Pancake & waffle mix, maple syrup, 100% fruit juice. They are also grateful for bake mixes including muffin mixes.
- **The Grace Center** welcomes gift cards from local grocery markets to help the center provide cream, butter and other perishables.
- **Toys for Tots** - Ballet de Mar is collecting, new unwrapped toys, there is a box outside the Church Office.

Book Group

We will meet on **December 15**, at 6:30 PM for a potluck and a Yankee Swap with a wrapped used book. We will discuss "When the World Fell Silent" by Donna Jones Alward. At Nancy Peterson's home, 111 Chebacco Rd, South Hamilton. RSVP to Nancy at (508) 284-0883 or nancypete1@gmail.com for planning purposes.

January 26, Mary Ellen Cook's home, The Grimkes: The Legacy of Slavery in an American Family by Kerri K. Greenidge.

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. Book Group usually meets on the last Monday of the month, at 6:30 PM, and hosting is shared among members.



You are invited to purchase a traditional Poinsettia, \$30, to decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas services. The Diaconate also offers the option of donating to The Diaconate Fund to assist people in our community who are in need. Following the Christmas Eve

services the plant may be taken home or left to be given to our members and friends who are ill or unable to leave their home. A complete list of all honored will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins.

I (we) wish to donate a plant(s) please circle one:

In Memory of

In Celebration of

In Honor of

Name of Honored

Name of Donor(s)

Please check:

I will take plant(s) home

Please give my plant(s)

A donation to the Diaconate Fund

of Poinsettia(s) desired: _____ Enclosed: \$ _____

Please return order form and payment to the church office or drop in the offering plate. Payment by credit card can be made in the church office, Mon-Fri 9-noon. Order online [here](#)

Orders accepted by Wednesday, December 17

Thank you for making our Sanctuary beautiful!



FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Community
Messiah Sing

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH - 7:30PM

First Parish Church, 10 Central Street, Manchester-by-the-Sea

Come Sing With Us!

Music by G.F. Handel, Part One & "Hallelujah" Chorus with
Marsha Johnson, Soprano Rebecca Shrimpton, Mezzo-Soprano
Nathan Snyder, Tenor Dylan Evans, Baritone
And members of the Cape Ann Symphony
Conducted by Dr. Herman Weiss

Admission \$20 at the door to help pay for the musicians.
Reception to follow at First Parish Community Hall (2 Chapel Lane)

For more information: (978) 526-7661 or www.firstparishchurch.org

Made possible by a grant from the Manchester Cultural Council.