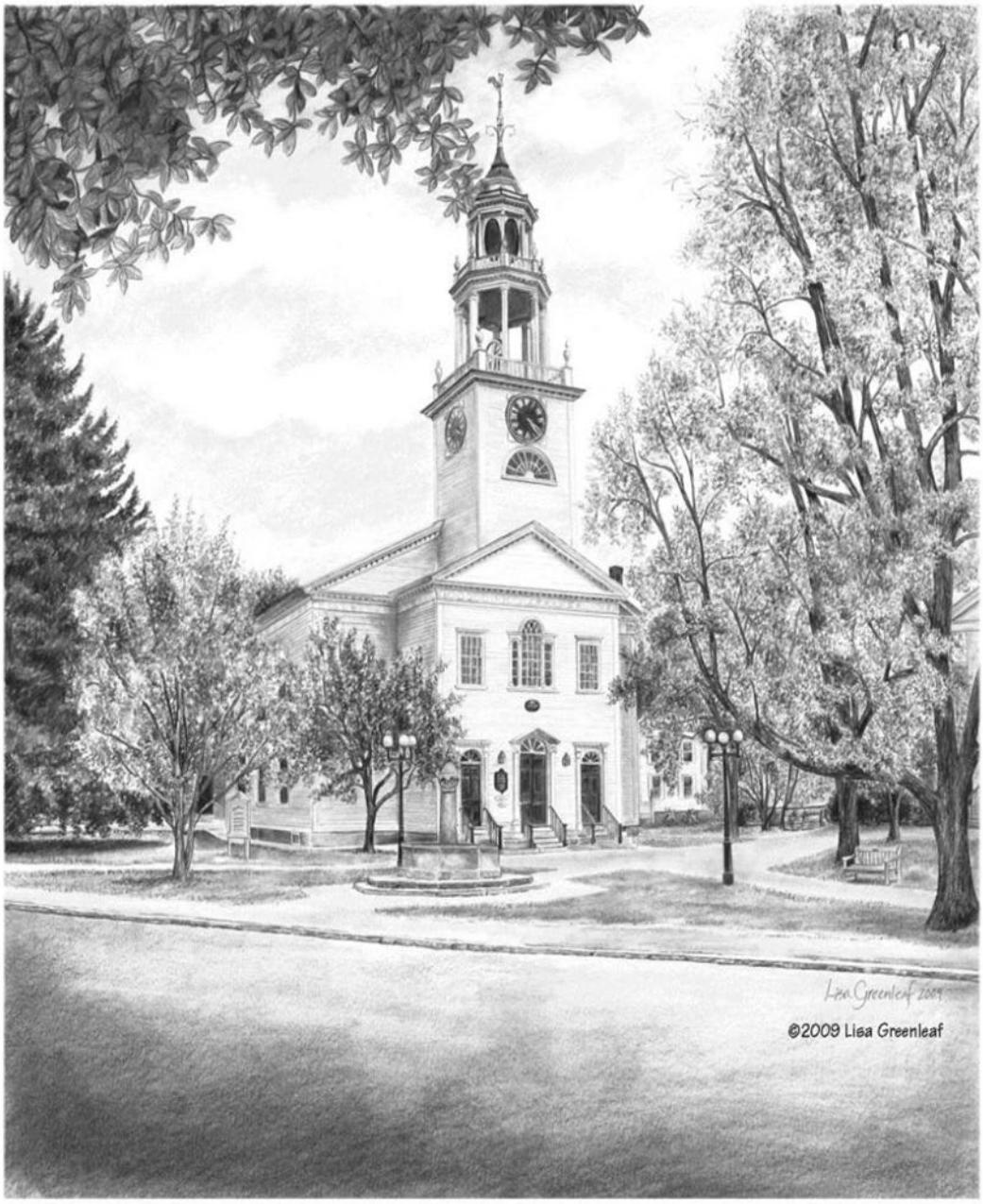

First Parish Church, Congregational
On the Village Green
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts

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
Nov 1, 2026

Ringing of the Bell and Lighting of the Candles

Prelude Abide with Me - William H. Monk, 1823-1889;
arranged by Michelle Soderberg

*** 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 elders, 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

Hymn O Love That Will Not Let Me Go - #485, NCH

***Prayer of Invocation**

Passing of the Peace

Choir Anthem Do Not Be Afraid – Philip W. J. Stopford (1977); text by Gerard Markland (1953)
Rebecca Shrimpton, solo
Chorus: Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name; You are mine.
Verse: When you walk through the waters I'll be with you, you will never sink beneath the waves. When the fire is burning all around you, you will never be consumed by the flames.
Chorus:

Verse: When the fear of loneliness is looming, then remember I am at your side. When you dwell in the exile of a stranger, remember you are precious in my eyes.
Chorus:
Verse: You are mine, O my child; I am your father, and I love you with a perfect love.
Chorus:

Prayer Intentions

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Meditation Mondnacht (Moonlit Night), from Liederkreis, op. 39 – Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
Rebecca Shrimpton, solo

Sung in German. translation: It was as though Heaven had softly kissed the Earth, so that she in a gleam of blossom had only to dream of him. The breeze passed through the fields, the corn swayed gently to and fro, the forests murmured softly, the night was so clear with stars. And my soul spread her wings out wide, flew across the silent land, as though flying home.

Scripture Reading Ruth 1:1-18 1 Liz Loomis

1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. 3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, 5 both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had considered his people and given them food. 7 So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. 8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back each of you to your mother’s house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.” Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. 10 They said to her, “No, we will return with you to your people.” 11 But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, 13 would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.” 14 Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.
15 So she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” 16 But Ruth said,

> “Do not press me to leave you,
> to turn back from following you!
> Where you go, I will go;

where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people
and your God my God.
17 Where you die, I will die,
and there will I be buried.
May the Lord do thus to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!”

18 When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Message “Where You Go, I Will Go” Rev. Katherine Schofield

Stewardship Reflection: Chip Price

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem We Are Not Alone – words and music by Pepper Choplin (1957)
Rebecca Shrimpton, solo
We are not alone, God is with us. We are never alone, for God is with us. Now. through all our days, always, forever and ever we are never alone. And God will make us strong, for God is with us. We will press on, for God is with us. Now, through all our days, always, for ever and ever we are not alone. We are not alone, our God is with us.

*** 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: God be with you.
Many: And also with you.
One: Lift up your hearts.
Many: We lift them up to God.
One: Let us give thanks to God.
Many: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

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

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)
Thank you most Holy God, for meeting us in this simple meal.
May your presence within us ripple beyond us, ever expanding,
until the day when you gather all your saints together
to share in your eternal banquet.
In all our words and actions may your name be praised
now and forever more. Amen.

Hymn Softly and Tenderly - #449, NCH

*** Blessing**

Closing Song 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

The altar flowers are given by Jan Marshall in memory of her husband, Wayne and her parents.

Our Deacons are Janet Groth and John Feuerbach.

Our Greeter is Cynthia Westland.

Join us, following worship, for coffee and conversation.
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 by Venmo to @FirstParish-Church (Church cell phone 978-907-3781). You can also use @PayPal.Me/FPChurchManchester.

Readers and Greeters are always needed. To volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up online.
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-diaconate

Outreach and Service Partner for October - Beverly Bootstraps

For more than a decade, First Parish Church has supported Beverly Bootstraps. Their work reaches far beyond groceries. Along with their food pantry and mobile market, the organization offers free tax preparation, financial coaching, English classes, help earning a high school diploma, and more. Our gifts will strengthen neighbors not just in Beverly, but Manchester, Hamilton, Wenham and Essex.

Stephen 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).

Prayer Wall - Give it a try! Request prayers and pray for others through the Prayer Wall on our website. https://www.firstparishchurch.org/prayer-wall/ Feel more connected to the Joys and Concerns of our congregation and hear what's on each other's hearts. You will be touched to receive notifications every time someone prays for you. We also have traveling prayers walls throughout the year. Look for us at the 4th of July Parade, Festival by the Sea, Burgers & Bingo and other community events!

Readers and Greeters are always needed. To volunteer speak to the Deacons, or you can also sign up online.
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4caba822a1f49-diaconate

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.

The Seaside Parish Knitters meet September through June, on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 1PM-3PM, in the FPCC Chapel Conference Room. We will meet again on Nov. 5 & 19. 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 gaiters, helmet liners and hats 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 has begun! We would love to have you join us! November 30th we will discuss “Man's Search for Meaning” by Viktor Frankl at Mary Ellen Cook’s home, 23 Harold St MBTS. Please RSVP to Mary Ellen at 978-500-0018 or cook.maryellen7@gmail.com for planning purposes.

Book Group meets on the last Monday of the month, 6:30 PM, and hosting is shared among members. It is a time for church members as well as non-church friends to come together and share in a discussion of books that are of interest to people of various backgrounds.

Soup & Conversation:

“Casting a Vision for the Future”

November 8, 2026 - After Worship

We will begin brainstorming as we look to shape a vision for the future of our church. Please join us for what promises to be both an important and exciting time of dreaming together. Please sign up to bring a soup, salad or dessert. Sign up at http://tiny.cc/Nov or scan the QR code to the right