

*America did not invent human rights.  
In a very real sense human rights invented America.*

*The best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is  
worthy of emulation*

– Jimmy Carter (1934-2024), the 39th President of the United States

THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH IN WESTON, U.U.  
Weston, Massachusetts  
*Gathered in 1698*  
ORDER OF SERVICE  
January 5, 2025 A.D. at 10:30 am  
Epiphany Sunday / The 2nd Sunday after Christmas

PRELUDE	Abide with Me	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
	Deck Thyself, Beloved Soul, with Gladness	J. Brahms
	Precious Lord	Thomas A. Dorsey (1899-1993)

CALL TO WORSHIP – Isaiah 2

Leader: In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised above the hills;  
all the nations shall stream to it.

People: **Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain  
of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his  
ways and that we may walk in his paths.'**

Leader: He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they  
shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-  
hooks.

People: **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war  
any more.**

\*HYMN S23 (*front of hymnal*) – "O Star of Truth"

Minister: The Peace of God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

EXCHANGE OF PEACE AND WELCOME

CHURCH COVENANT:

**In the love of truth and the spirit of Jesus Christ  
We join for the worship of God and service to humankind.**

LIGHTING OF THE CHALICE

Richard Weeks

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME FOR ALL AGES

Rev. Sarah Napoline

DISMISSAL TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Go now in Peace, Go now in Peace,  
May the love of God surround you,  
Everywhere, everywhere, you may go.**

READING: Micah 6: 6-8

OFFERTORY

Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling  
from *L'enfance du Christ*, Op. 25

Hector Berlioz  
(1803-1869)

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, the Love we all may share;  
Praise God, the beauty everywhere;  
Praise God, the Hope of Good to be;  
Praise God, the Truth that makes us free.**

REFLECTION: "On Following Principles and Stars"

Rev. Jeff Barz-Snell

MUSIC MEDITATION – "Come My Way, My Truth, My Life"

**COMMUNION RITUAL**

*Note: First Parish Weston has a practice of hospitality in all our rituals. If you would like to participate in our communion service, you are welcome to do so. You are also welcome to come forward and simply receive a blessing. For those who wish to participate, we will be moving "counter-clockwise" in a circle from your seats. Please approach "on the right" and receive the gift of bread first, and then move to the left to receive the gift of wine, before returning to your seat.*

The prophet Jesus, who was born in Nazareth of Judea, and who was crucified and died outside the walls of Jerusalem in a final witness to his faith, and in the hope of bringing closer that final harmony of all things with the Divine (which he called "the Kingdom of God"), left no written record of his preaching. His sayings were preserved among his followers and among the common people and were finally written down in narrative versions of his life and message called Gospels, or "Good News."

Minister:

From the Gospel according to Matthew we have these words:

*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

We are not gathered here today because we have dared give up our life to live in faith, or because we ever willingly take up the crosses we bear in order to follow Jesus. We are here because his words and his example are an inspiration in our lives. Thus, like the millions of women and men who have preceded us, we find in remembering him an inducement to a greater sense of connectedness with All That Is, a feeling nearer akin to wholeness than we are often privileged to enjoy, and a renewed hope in the possibilities of a larger fellowship and a more caring community.

Let us join in saying together the prayer Jesus taught us to pray,  
**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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

All peoples through all time have considered with wonder and awe the mystery of life and growth and have found symbols to express our reverence for the forces of life and ways to celebrate our dependence on the nurturing earth. Bread and wine are such symbols, and Communion is a way of celebrating both the gifts we are given and the creativity we can bring to using them.

Jesus and his followers shared bread and wine at their last meal together,

Jesus used the bread and the wine as symbols of the liberation that his own sacrifice would mean to those who understood it. He took bread, and he poured wine, and he said, "This do in remembrance of me."

Let us break bread together and share the cup of wine in remembrance of Jesus, as he asked.

Let us remember also all those men and women who toil in all the many kinds of fields and vineyards, who labor and are heavy laden, and be reminded that these elements need to be for us symbols of liberation.

Let us remember that what we do here is a ritual act of sharing, and that in coming together we join with our sisters and brothers of every race and faith, for we all seek meaning in the midst of mystery, and we all find that which is worthy of our profoundest awe. We call it many names, but the sense that we are part of an inconceivably vaster whole is a feeling we all share.

In a moment of silent prayer or meditation, let each of us remember a personal and private sacred moment: **Amen.**

### **Distribution of the Elements:**

Dear friends, the same night in which he was betrayed, we are told that Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said: "This is my body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me."

After the same manner, he also took a cup when he supped, saying, this is the new testament in my blood. This do ye, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

We invite you to come forward for the elements as the choir sings the anthem.

ANTHEM

“The Work of Christmas”

Dan Forrest (b. 1978)  
text: Howard Thurman (1899-1981)

HYMN 311 – “Let Us Break Bread Together”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**We give thanks, Gracious God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us your presence. Strengthen our resolve to do your will in this beautiful but challenging life, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the subtle power of your presence and spirit. Amen.**

\*HYMN 401– “Amazing Grace” (*v. 1-4*)

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Lord God, Now Be Glorified, BWV 601

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Our Greeter this morning is Trish Mordas.

First Parish Church has long welcomed people with different perspectives, backgrounds, and orientations. As a Welcoming Congregation, we happily invite all people to be a part of our 21st century community and church. If you are visiting, we hope you will fill out a welcome card and put it in the collection plate, introduce yourself to the ministers, and then join us for a time of fellowship and light refreshment in the Parish Hall.

AN INVITATION AND AN OPPORTUNITY  
Today In the Parlor after Worship

Join us for a brief meet & greet and orientation for folks considering joining the church in preparation for us welcoming new members at our 327th Annual Meeting on Sunday, Feb. 2.

There is no obligation to join the church after attending; just the opportunity to learn more about First Parish, its long history, and its programs and current ministries. Come meet some of our officers and learn about the “Wise New England Congregational Way” of local governance, service and “growing a soul.”

# O Star of Truth

1. O star of truth, down shin - ing Thro' clouds of doubt and fear,  
2. I know thy bless - ed ra - diance Can nev - er lead a - stray  
3. The bleed - ing feet of mar - tyrs Thy toil - some road have trod;  
4. Tho' lov - ing friends for - sake me, Or plead with me in tears;

I ask but 'neath thy guid - ance My path - way may ap - pear:  
How - ev - er an - cient cust - om May tread some oth - er way;  
But fires of hu - man pas - sion May light the way to God:  
Tho' an - gry foes may threat - en, To shake my soul with fears,

How - ev - er long the jour - ny, How hard so - e'er it be,  
E'en if thro' un - trod des - erts, Or o - ver track - less sea,  
Then, though my feet should fal - ter, While I thy beams can see,  
Still, to my high al - le - giance I must not faith - less be;

Tho' I be lone and wea - ry, Lead on, I'll fol - low thee!  
Tho' I be lone and wea - ry, Lead on, I'll fol - low thee!  
Tho' I be lone and wea - ry, Lead on, I'll fol - low thee!  
Thro' life or death for - ev - er, Lead on, I'll fol - low thee! A - MEN

WORDS: Minot Judson Savage  
MUSIC: Finnish Hymn Melody

NYLAND  
7.6.7.6.7.6.7.6.

# Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound

1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound that  
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
 3. Through man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I  
 4. My God has prom - ised good to me, whose  
 5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved and set me free! I once was lost, but  
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and  
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.  
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

WORDS: St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779, alt.; St. 5, *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790  
 MUSIC: Shaw and Spilman's *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1829; harm. FCC, 1997

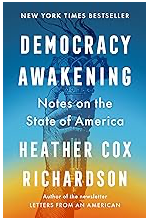
NEW BRITAIN  
 CM

John Newton, an English Anglican pastor, had been a captain of a slave ship until he experienced an 'awakening' in a storm at sea. At age forty he was ordained into the ministry of the Church of England.

Harm. © 1998 FCC Houston TX

STAFF

Minister:	Rev. Jeffrey Barz-Snell
Asst. Minister of Families & Community Outreach:	Rev. Sarah Napoline
Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator:	Robert Jones
Music Director:	TJ Rufo Curran
Organist:	Geoffrey Wieting
Choir Soloists:	Nathaniel Bear, Benjamin Doyle Rose Hegele, Nathan Savant
Parish Administrator:	Betsy Gibson
Sexton:	Alan Flynn
Fellowship Coordinator:	Paula Leger
Video Production Staff:	Peter Constable



NEW GROUP FORMING FOR 2025:

**Defending Democracy Book & Discussion Group**  
Meeting on the last Friday of the month,  
starting on Jan. 31 at 4 pm.

Join us for a new community-wide discussion group informed by the latest book by historian and author, Heather Cox Richardson, *Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America*.

As our country begins a new chapter, the need to learn about our history, make connections, share ideas, and defend the institutions of our democracy becomes crucially important.

To sign up, email Jeff Barz-Snell ([jeffbarzsnell@firstparishweston.org](mailto:jeffbarzsnell@firstparishweston.org)) or Sarah Napoline ([sarahnapoline@firstparishweston.org](mailto:sarahnapoline@firstparishweston.org)) or call the Church Office.

METROWEST CLIMATE SOLUTIONS PRESENTS  
*Grow Native Plants in Mini-Greenhouses in the SNOW!*  
January 15

Four sessions at 10 am, Noon, 2 pm, and 4:00 pm

Learn a new technique for growing our local native flowering perennials from seed. Your potted seeds will stay outdoors until spring and then baby native plants will appear! For info or to register, go to:

[www.metrowestclimatesolutions.org](http://www.metrowestclimatesolutions.org)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

KNITTERS & STITCHERS – Meet in person on most Mondays at noon in person in the Parlor.

RETIRED MEN'S LUNCH, TUESDAY, JAN. 7, AT NOON IN THE LIBRARY.

FPCW BEREAVEMENT GROUP, TUESDAY, JAN. 7, AT 4:00 PM IN THE PARLOR.

WEEKLY THURSDAY MORNING MEDITATION meets on at 8:30 am on Zoom for approximately 45 minutes  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87938995674>**

CHOIR REHEARSAL, THURSDAYS, 7:30 PM in the Loft.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE REV. DR. HARRY HOEHLER, 12th minister of this church, Saturday, Jan. 11, at 11:00 am in the Sanctuary with a lunch reception to follow in the Parish Hall.

LADIES WHO LUNCH will meet next on Wednesday, Jan. 15, at noon in the Library.

STAFF AND COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS - *News & Views* will be published in advance of the 2025 Budget Hearing on Sunday, Jan. 26, and the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Feb. 2. Deadline for submission of Annual Reports is *Friday, Jan. 17* (in advance of MLK, Jr. Day).

COMMUNITY YOGA FLOW CLASS, FRIDAY, JAN. 17, at 10:00 am in the Parish Hall. This free class is open to anyone; bring a mat, blocks (if you have), water bottle and an open mind! Questions? Contact Sarah Napoline ([sarahnapoline@FirstParishWeston.org](mailto:sarahnapoline@FirstParishWeston.org)).

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR SALLY GILMAN, SATURDAY, JAN. 18, AT 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary, followed by a reception in the Parish Hall.

STANDING COMMITTEE will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30 pm in the Parlor and on Zoom:  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8286031801>**

BRISTOL LODGE JANUARY SUPPER PREP & DELIVERY, WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22 – Save the date and WATCH FOR MENU DETAILS TO COME!

FPCW BOOK GROUP, Thursday, Jan. 23, 9:30 am in the Parlor and via Zoom. We'll discuss *All the Beauty in the World*, a memoir by Peter Bringley.

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83268162066>**

STEWARDSHIP THANK YOU DINNER/TRIVIA NIGHT, FRIDAY, JAN. 24, 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall. All those who made a commitment to support the church financially in 2025 by Dec. 31 are automatically invited. If you have questions, please call the Church Office.

ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING, SUNDAY, JAN. 26, following worship.

327TH ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY, FEB. 2, after worship. Come experience the “wise congregational way” in action. Here we have no bishops, popes, presbyteries, or regional councils. As the oldest continuing democratic institution in town, we will celebrate our community, elect officers, welcome new members, and approve a budget for 2025.

### CHOCOLATE SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP HOUR ON FEBRUARY 9TH!

In advance of Valentine's Day, our Fellowship Hour will feature CHOCOLATE, along with some other items. Our extraordinary chocolate fountain will be humming away, complete with a fountain attendant to do the dipping and keep everything clean/sanitary and orderly and we invite you to bring some of your favorite confections to share.

In addition to donations and the chocolate fountain, we are holding a raffle for some extra special treats provided by some of our favorite chocolatiers & bakers. The raffle will benefit MetroWest Family Promise. It is sure to be lots of fun for all ages! Whether you consider it a special occasion or an annoying Hallmark holiday, we can let Valentine's Day be a reminder of the importance of love in all forms (AND an excellent excuse to eat chocolate!).