

Welcome Guests! We're glad you're here. You can learn more about us via the brochure in the back of the seat in front of you, or at www.firstparishyork.net.

Restrooms: Restrooms are located on the lower level of this building, which is accessed by stairs in the foyer. Wheelchair accessible restrooms can be found across the drive in Fellowship Hall. For access during the worship service, please see a Deacon.

Nursery Care: *Our downstairs nursery is not currently staffed*, but you are welcome to accompany your child to the nursery at any point during the worship and spend time there as a family if you feel that you need to.

Video and Streaming: We stream our worship services live and archive them on www.youtube.com/@firstparishyork. If for privacy reasons you do not wish to have you or your children's faces appear on video, you can sit in pews that are marked on the ends with blue tape. Feel free to ask a deacon to show you what those markings look like.

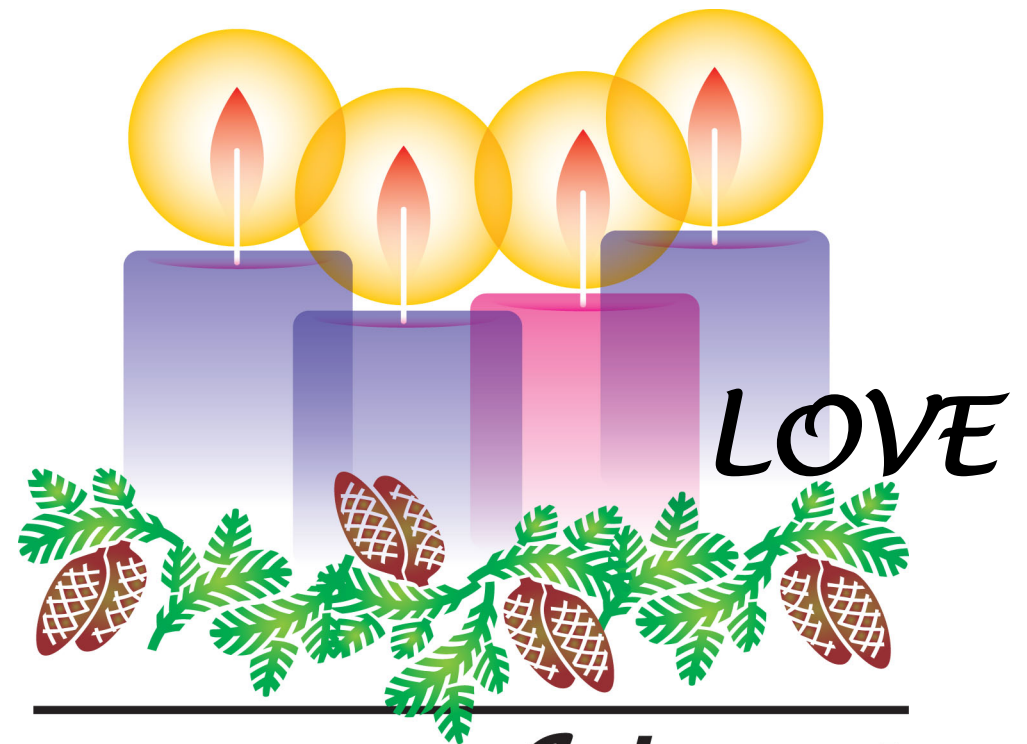
Photos: We regularly take photos for use in media. If you would prefer you or your child's image not be used, please inform a pastor after worship.

Sunday School: During the school year, anyone age 4 through 8th grade is welcome to attend Sunday School. We ask that parents/guardians fill out a registration form on the first visit; our Deacons will be happy to connect you with someone from Sunday School before the children make their way outside. Partway through Sunday services, children are invited to meet with their teachers in the church foyer. Together, students and teachers will make their way to the Fellowship Hall to take part in fun and faith-based activities centered around a theme from the Bible. (Family members are always welcome to attend Sunday School if you wish!) After worship is over, families can go across the drive to sign out their children with the teachers. Sunday School is free of charge.

**No Matter Who You Are or Where You Are On Life's Journey,
You Are Welcome Here!**

We covenant with God and with one another as members of First Parish Church to be an Open and Affirming Church. We affirm the dignity and worth of every person created in the image of God. We are one body with many members: people of every age, marital status, family structure, faith background, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, racial and cultural identity, and socio-economic status. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we invite all into the full life, ministry, and sacraments of the church. We honor the guiding principle that discrimination is incompatible with Christ's message of unconditional love.

180 York Street, York, Maine 03909 ♦ 207-363-3758
office@firstparishyork.net ♦ www.firstparishyork.net



FOURTH SUNDAY OF *Advent*

First Parish Church
Congregational
United Church of Christ

"The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it."
John 1:5

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023~ 10AM WORSHIP
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**Indicates a time when you are invited to stand if you choose.*

PRELUDE TWO FRENCH CAROLS
“JOSEPH EST BIEN MARIE” (“Joseph is well-married”)
Claude-Benigne Balbastre (1727-1799)
“A VIRGIN PURE”
Nicolas LeBègue (1631-1702)

WELCOME AND THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE The Anthony Family
Leader: We gather today to light the candle of Love.
People: Love brings life, and it makes life worth living!
Leader: Jesus Christ came into this world to heal and change us all for the better.
People: We give thanks that we have been made whole in Christ’s love!
Leader: Christ calls us together to be a community of love and justice.
People: Let us be shepherds of God’s love and light to a world that needs it!

CHIMES FOR PRAYER AND MEDITATION
(Candles will be lit as a sign of Christ's light in the world.)

GATHERING PRAYER *(together)* Rev. Eric Dupee
Eternal God, Prince of Peace, we pray for compassion, justice, and peace in our world.
We pray for compassion, justice, and peace in our country. We pray for compassion,
justice, and peace in our community. We pray for compassion, justice, and peace in
our homes. We pray for compassion, justice, and peace between all people, and in all
relationships, now and always...

LORD’S PRAYER *(together)*
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
debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN “LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS ” No. 210

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES Rev. Eric Dupee

ANTHEM “THE CHRISTMAS STORY” Mark Denza
*In Bethlehem one winter’s day a little babe was born
to be the world’s great Savior, that blessed Christmas morn.
A man of feeble mortal flesh, yet Son of God above,
He came into this wicked world to give us peace and love.*

*This tiny child, the Son of God, was born to Mary mild;
a virgin mother true to God, she bore his only child.
This sign of God’s true love for us, his gift of peace to all,
was not in any palace born, but in a cattle stall.*

*Although it was so long ago since Jesus Christ was born,
we celebrate his wondrous birth at every Christmas morn.
Although he lived so short a time, a life so quickly gone,
at Christmastime in all our hearts His message still lives on.*

First Parish Vocal Ensemble

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:26-38 N.T. 49 Rev. Pat Smith

SERMON Rev. Dan Hollis

OFFERING OUR GIFTS Chorale Prelude on "LO, HOW A ROSE E’ER BLOOMING"
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF COMMITMENT No. 34
You are free to sing inclusive lyrics (below) or traditional lyrics (from the hymnal).
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN “O HOLY NIGHT” *(verses 1 and 3 only)* No. 187

CLOSING BLESSING AND THREEFOLD AMEN Rev. Dan Hollis

POSTLUDE Recessional on “HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING”
Arr., Gordon Young (1919-1998)

*We invite the congregation to remain seated in order to enjoy the postlude.
However, you are welcome to exit the sanctuary at any time.*



First Parish Church
Congregational
United Church of Christ
FAITH FEATURES

THIS WEEK

Today, Sunday, December 24th

8:30am Advent Devotional
10am Worship/Advent IV
5:30pm Family Service and Mitten Tree
8pm Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25th

Tuesday, December 26th

Wednesday, December 27th

No Shake It Up Class
No 8:30am Yoga Class
8am Cardio/Strength
9:30am Women's Bible Study

Thursday, December 28th

Friday, December 29th

Sunday, December 31st

8am Zumba
8am Aerobics
10am Worship



Ministers

All the Members of the Congregation

Leading Worship Today:

Rev. Dan Hollis

Rev. Eric Dupee

Staff

Wendell S. Purrington, Director of Music Ministries

Terrie Ilaria, Music Associate

First Parish Church Lay Leaders

John Covino, Moderator

Kristin Schrimper, Vice Moderator

Ray Hamlin, Treasurer

Susan Mancinelli, Clerk

Poinsettias: Please help deliver a Poinsettia to a homebound church member after the December 24th service. Just come forward after the service to get the plant, name and address to brighten someone's Christmas! Thank you from the Flower Committee.

Sunday School: There will be no Sunday School on December 24 and 31. We will take a two-week Christmas break and return January 7.

2024 Pledge Envelopes: Envelopes are available for pick up in the narthex. If you did not request envelopes, but wish to have them, please contact Per Jonas at finsec@firstparishyork.net. Please discard any remaining 2023 envelopes at the start of the New Year.

Dine with Nine: We have 18 different opportunities to be with one another in January thru mid-March. 124 guests have been invited into folks' homes for food, drink, games, laughter, community, etc. You may sign up this Sunday, December 24 to attend one of the events. There may be opportunity for you to attend more than one, but let's let everyone have a chance to sign up this week. Keep checking the sign-up tables as the weeks go by. Remember the object of these events are to meet new people within our church family. Please refrain from telling folks to "come to your house" so to speak! Chance getting to be with someone new! Questions? Linda Drew p.l.drew79@me.com or 207-363-3758

Green Tip/News: It has taken over forty years to reach 1-TW (terawatt) of the global installed wind capacity milestone, although with the continual gain in momentum, the next TW will take less than 7 years to install, data from the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) shows. While this is an immense achievement, it still represents only a small portion of what we must build soon in order to decarbonize our planet. To avert climate catastrophe, we must rapidly transform our economies, scaling up wind capacity to reach 8TW by mid-century! Renewable Energy Magazine <https://gwec.net>



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