

LENT

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Congregational 1633-1636 United Church of Christ Garden and Mason Streets Cambridge, Massachusetts



WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE... Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

These past months have brought home to all of us the vital importance of working together to slow and limit the spread of Coronavirus. We know we are called to be a community of faith, not fear. We also know we are called to care for the most vulnerable in our midst, to be good stewards of our staff and resources, and to be good citizens of the wider community.

Under normal circumstances, people of faith would care for each other by drawing close together. It's what we do. It's who we are. In times of loss or threat, we respond by coming together to pray and to sing, to hug and hold each other tight.

Pandemics are different. During an outbreak such as the one we are facing now, we are called to care for each other by moving farther apart, creating a holy buffer of social distance. We do this not only for our own safety and the safety of the people around us, but in loving stewardship to our wider world.

Even when apart, we are not alone. God is with us, in every heartbeat, every breath: strengthening, comforting, and upholding us. Christ is with us, walking beside us, sharing our trials, speaking peace to our fears. The Spirit is with us, uniting us one to another across the barrier of physical distance.

These are temporary measures only. They won't last forever. We will rejoice and celebrate all the more when we are able to come back together, to share stories of what it was like, to laugh, to cry, and to share hugs and handshakes again. Until then, day by day, let's hold one another in prayer.

WORSHIP LEADERS February 28, 2021

Preaching TodayDan Smith, Senior Minister

Leading Worship

Jaz Buchanan, Pastoral Associate
Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship & Arts
Leslie Pelton-Cairns, Deacon
Adam Weiss, Deacon
Peter Sykes, Music Director
Kevin Newell, tech support

The photograph on the bulletin cover is by Gaylen Morgan.

A TIME FOR WELCOME

Trio

My Shepherd, You Supply My Need *HYMN 88 (see page 4) *GREETING Adam Weiss Friends, grace and peace to you, and welcome! L: To everything there is a time and season: a time to speak, and a time to listen; C: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; L: C: a time for hurt, and a time for healing; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. 1: Friends, God's presence meets us here and wherever we are. C: Let us open our hearts and listen for it now. (Silence) Friends, come and worship! It's time to give our thanks and praise, L: for God's love surrounds and enfolds us even now

WORDS OF WELCOME

VOLUNTARY

CANDLELIGHTING AND BELL RINGING

Jaz Buchanan

Josef Rheinberger

This morning we commemorate the 500,000 beloved lives we have lost in the United States to COVID-19. We will light five candles and ring the church bells five times, each time representing 100,000 lives.

SILENCE

RESPONSE

L: God, in your mercy, **C:** hear our prayer.

ANTHEM Kyrie Josef Rheinberger

First Church Choir, 2018

A TIME FOR GOD'S MERCY

INVITATION TO CONFESSION Leslie Pelton-Cairns

SILENCE

SUNG RESPONSE Peter Sykes, 2021

The choir will sing it through once, after which the congregation is invited to join in.

um - der hea-ven.



DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

un – der hea – ven.

*GREETING OF PEACE

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sarah Higginbotham

ven_

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

un - der heà

INVITATION

THE DEACONS' PROMISES

*THE CONGREGATION'S PROMISES

L: Do you affirm these deacons' gifts of care and leadership?

All: We do.

L: Will you receive, respect, and respond to their ministry among you?

All: We will.

L: Will you uphold and enfold them and all the deacons of this church

with your prayer and gratitude?

All: We will.

*THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

The laying on of hands is an ancient practice by which, through human touch, the Holy Spirit consecrates ("sets apart") and confirms persons called to particular ministries in a community. It is also a sign that these leaders stand in a long and living line of servants who have been called from within their communities for this same ministry.

*ORDINATION PRAYER, DECLARATION, AND INSTALLATION PRAYER

A TIME FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING Ecclesiastes 3:9-22

READING Mark 8: 31-37

SERMON Dan Smith

*HYMN 86 The Lone, Wild Bird (verses 1, 2, and 5) (see page 5)

A TIME FOR GOD IN COMMUNITY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

L: God be with you.

C: And also with you

L: Let us pray.... (silence, intercessions, the Lord's Prayer)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Please pray this prayer and address God in words most meaningful to your heart.)

All: Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

A TIME FOR GIVING

INVITATION TO OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine demands my soul, my life, my all! Amen.

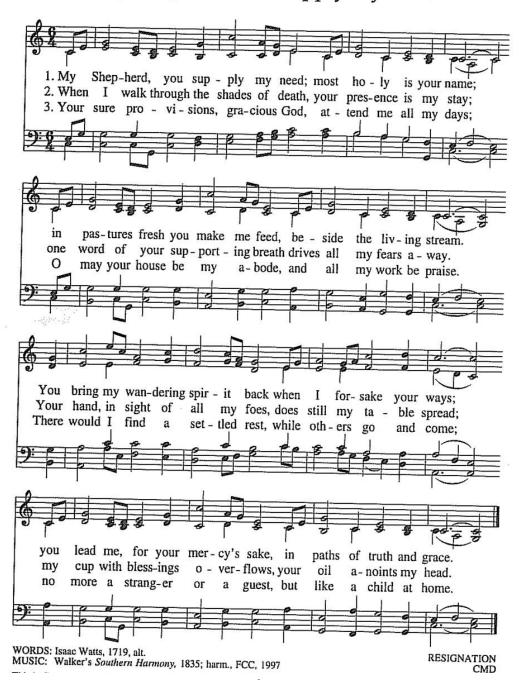
A TIME FOR BLESSING AND SENDING

*HYMN 455 God of Earth and Sea and Heaven (see page 6)

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY Trio Josef Rheinberger -3-

My Shepherd, You Supply My Need



-4-

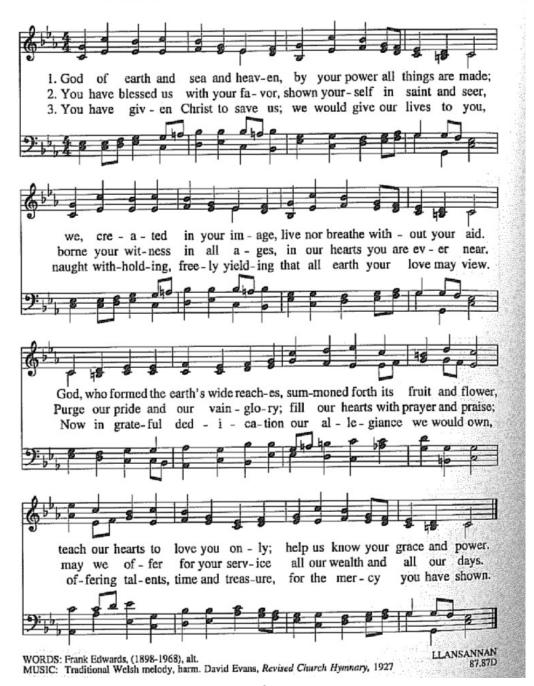
The Lone, Wild Bird

verses 1, 2, and 5



WORDS: Sts. 1, 2, Henry Richard McFadyen, 1925, alt.; sts. 3 - 5, Marty Haugen, 1991 MUSIC: Walker's Southern Harmony, 1835; harm. David N. Johnson, 1968

God of Earth and Sea and Heaven



COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray in celebration for the new life of Franklin Brigham Cyr Kolash, born last weekend to Abbie Cyr and Josh Kolash. We also pray for grandmother Nancy Cyr, who is recovering in the hospital from surgery related to diverticulitis.
- We pray for Shelter Staff member Steve Brown and the Yorston/Brown families as they mourn the loss of Steve's uncle Richard Yorston, who died recently due to complications from COVID-19.
- We pray for Joanne Paul and Wendy Vander Hart as as they meet with doctors to determine next steps in treating Joanne's cancer.
- We pray for John Stauffer and his family as they grieve the loss of John's mother Jean Stauffer, who died on February 1 on her 91st birthday.
- We pray for Hyun Kim and her family, who are grieving the recent loss of Hyun's father Byung Nam Kim in South Korea.
- We pray for Connie Gagnebin, whose mother Nancy Clark recently entered hospice care at the age of 100.
- We pray for Hilary Hopkins and her sister-in-law Heather who are grieving the loss of Hilary's nephew and Heather's son, Jamie, who died last week at the age of 58.
- We pray for Chris Reynolds's cousin Pamela Perkins Wilcox of Brattleboro, Vermont, who is receiving hospice care for pancreatic cancer which was just recently diagnosed.
- We pray for Ingeborg Haug's brother, who was recently diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer.
- We pray for Rich Goode's mother Donna Goode, who has recently entered into hospice care in Ayer, Massachusetts.
- We pray for Devin Hansen, who is recovering at home from thyroid surgery while in the midst of a job transition at Starbucks.
- We pray for the 14 men who are finding sustenance and protection in our First Church Shelter, and we pray for the guests of the Friday Café, who are finding food and listening ears. We pray for all who are experiencing deprivation and hardship in these uncertain times.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer: Sarah Robinson, daughter of Mary Robinson and Mary Martha Thiel; Ron Paquette, Caroline Newton's father; Penny Kilburn, Nancy Kilburn's mother; Katie, Moana Bentin's sister; Amy Golodet, Jonathan New's sister-in-law; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet, and for her sons-in-law, Denis Collet and Stewart Bailey; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray for the Faith and Life groups that are meeting during this season of Lent. May they be places of connection and growth.
- We pray for the residents of Texas, who are continuing to recover from severe weather conditions. We pray for those that have died and for their loved ones. We pray that God may grant us the strength to confront and combat the many realities of the climate crisis, and we pray especially for the poor, who are disproportionately affected by our inaction.

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COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We continue to pray for all who are grieving the loss of loved ones to COVID-19. We pray for the "long-haulers"—those who continue to live with symptoms from the disease. We continue to lift up health care professionals and essential workers, that they may feel supported and cared for.
- We pray for all who are caregivers—caring for elderly parents, for those with dementia, for young children, for older children, for those struggling with addiction, depression, anxiety—and for all those they care for.
- We pray for all who continue to name, confront, and work toward the eradication of white supremacy and white privilege.
- We pray for those who seek sanctuary in houses of worship around the country, including our partner University Lutheran Church in Harvard Square. We pray for all who work for a just and compassionate future for immigrants and asylum seekers.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

MULTIGENERATIONAL FORMATION: LENTEN SERIES SESSION 2: ASHES AND CREATION Today, 9:30 p.m., via Zoom "There is a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted." We will wonder about the Godly Play story of "The Sower," and then those who wish can plant an apparently-lifeless seed in ashes and "dust," to observe the miracle of creation during the 40 days of Lent. First Church folks of all ages are invited to wonder and plant together. You can find the Zoom invitation on our website calendar.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR Today, 12:15 p.m., via Zoom Join us for a time of conversation and connection, where we share our joys and concerns with each other. This Sunday, we'll be joined by Facilities Manager Kris McQuage-Loukas, who, sadly, is leaving First Church to become the full-time parish administrator at University Lutheran Church. We will celebrate Kris's three years of service to First Church and wish him well. You can find the **Zoom invitation** on our website calendar.

NEW TO FIRST CHURCH? Have you just begun joining us for online worship? Consider filling out this <u>"virtual visitor card"</u> so that we might reach out and connect with you about our community.

FIRST CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

MEN'S BREAKFAST Saturday, March 6, 8:00 a.m., via Zoom For all who identify as men, please join us for our monthly first Saturday gathering. This is a time for soulful connection, prayerful support, and topical conversation led each month by a different member of the group. We usually share a hearty breakfast at church but during Covid, please bring your coffee and morning meal to our Zoom meeting. You can find the <u>Zoom information</u> for this event on our website calendar. Learn more about this and other small group opportunities on our website.

PUBLIC REMEMBRANCE PROJECT FOCUS GROUP REPORT Sunday, March 7, 12:15 p.m. via Zoom In 2019, as part of our ongoing efforts to reckon with our slaveholding past, the Beloved Community group contracted with First Church member Karlene Griffiths Sekou to conduct focus groups with small segments of some impacted communities to gain insight about the living legacies of white supremacy and racism. Karlene conducted seven community focus groups to gather feedback on our initial ideas for a public remembrance project, and she facilitated wider community conversations about repair. Karlene has now completed this process and is ready to report on her findings. Please join us for a Zoom conversation with Karlene about what we have learned. Our hope is to invite impacted communities to help share how we move forward towards accountability, repair, and reparations.

GREATER BOSTON INTERFAITH ORGANIZATION REFOUNDING Tuesday, March 16, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., via Zoom The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization has been in a "refounding" process that's coming to a close. This means that we are inviting in new members and will officially 'refound' as an organization, better representing Greater Boston. Then, as our new collective we will listen and decide on our issue platform campaigns for 2021 and beyond. The refounding assembly takes place in a few short weeks on Zoom, and we look forward to welcoming more than a dozen new member organizations. As First Church is one of the longest active member organizations, we want to make a great showing for the celebration. Register for the GBIO Refounding! Stay tuned for details on how you can play a role in determining our 2021 platform; and reach out to Will Erickson (wericks2002@gmail.com) or Phil Jones (p.robbennolt.jones@gmail.com) with questions.

PRAYING THE PSALMS GROUP Tuesday mornings, 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m., via Zoom Our Praying the Psalms group is set up to accompany individual reading of one Psalm per day, starting with Psalm 1 on January 1. Each Tuesday at 7:45 a.m., we gather online for a time of soulful check-in and shared reflection about the Psalms of the week. Feel free to drop in virtually when you can, or plan to make it a regular part of your week. See the calendar on our website for the Zoom information.

FIRST CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

BI-WEEKLY FCC PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVERS' CALL First and Third Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m., via Zoom Hospital workers, homecare workers, therapists, chaplains, doctors, nurses, caregivers and essential workers of all kinds — would it help to talk and share your experience with others at First Church? If you've been flat out and barely able to come up for air, please drop-in when you can for a time to listen, share, pray, and process. You can find the **Zoom information** for this event on our website calendar.

BIPOC SPACE, TIME, AND COMMUNITY If you are a Black, Indigenous or Person of Color (BIPOC) member of First Church, please consider joining our periodic Zoom meetings designed as active listening sessions to reflect, heal, support one another, and build community. Please contact Moana Bentin (moana.bentin@gmail.com) with questions or to receive a Zoom invitation to participate. This group is by BIPOC for BIPOC.

WIDER COMMUNITY ACTIONS AND EVENTS

WATCH DAN SMITH'S RECENT SERMON AT PENTECOSTAL TABERNACLE CHURCH Dan Smith was recently invited to preach at the Pentecostal Tabernacle Church (PTC) in Central Square to share about our journey towards becoming an anti-racist church. A video of PTC's worship service with Dan's sermon on February 21 is now available, with over 600 views and counting. The preaching starts at about 45 minutes, but don't miss the music and Bishop Brian Green's comments before and after the sermon that speak to our deepening relationship with PTC. Also, be sure to read the congregation's "real time" response to the sermon that is recorded in the chat next to the video. In recent months, Dan, Bishop Greene, and members of the two congregations have been meeting and praying together. Please continue to pray for this Spirit-led and growing relationship!

UCC NATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES The United Church of Christ provides twice-weekly webinars called *Tuesdays for Nurture* and *Thursdays for the Soul*. These offerings unite, uplift, and equip the Church for such a time as this. Recent webinar topics include: *Church-Based Reparations, The State of Creation,* and *The State of the Poor,* with Rev. William Barber and Rev. Traci Blackmon, in partnership with Poor People's Campaign. These videos are streamed live and are available to rewatch and share on the UCC's YouTube channel on a playlist entitled <u>"Worship and Care for the Entire Church."</u>

ATTENTION FOOD PANTRY DONORS! Although all donations are appreciated, our contact at the Food Pantry told us that more families can be served if **ordinary-sized containers** of foods are donated instead of restaurant-sized ones. Also, please be sure that your donations are reasonably nutritious - **breakfast cereals, canned chicken, canned fruit, beans are much more helpful than crackers and cookies**. Thank you for your continued generosity.

LENT WITH FIRST CHURCH

ASHES TO ASHES: A TIME FOR TURNING (AND RETURNING)

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return!
Genesis 3: 19

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven... Ecclesiastes 3:1



"ASHES TO ASHES" LENTEN STUDY Sundays, February 21, 28 and March 7, 14 & 21, 9:30 a.m., via Zoom Read the full descriptions of each session on our website.

Feb 21: Introduction: Ashes to Ashes: A Time for Turning (and Returning)

Adult Formation

"Ashes to ashes and dust to dust," and yet life returns. A general introduction.

Feb 28: Ashes and Creation

Multigenerational Formation

"There is a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted." Wonder about "The Sower" and respond with a planting project.

Mar 7: Ashes and Mortality

Adult Formation

"There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh." Reflect on the realities of our own mortality through stories of grief and gratitude.

Multigenerational Creative Arts Workshop

"For everything there is a season..." Explore Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 with charcoal.

Mar 14: Ashes and Repentance

Adult Formation

"There is a time to heal; to throw and gather stones." A poetry workshop on repentance.

Mar 21: Ashes and the Cross

Adult Formation

"There is a time to die and to be born anew." Reflect on connections between ashes and the cross with finger labyrinths.

LENT WITH FIRST CHURCH



evenings through March 31, 8:15 - 8:45 p.m, via Zoom During Lent, join us on Zoom for 30 minutes of contemplative and embodied prayer on Wednesday evenings. This is a time for holy silence, candlelight, prayers, music and gentle movement. We invite you to bring a candle and communion elements (bread or crackers & water, juice or wine). Music provided by cellist, Jackie Buchanan. You can find the Zoom invitation on our webiste calendar.

This Lent we are once again honored to feature a banner by Vermont artist Janet McKenzie.

Entitled Jesus of the People, this banner was the winning entry in a 1999 competition by the National Catholic Reporter to create a new image of Jesus. In response to the image, poet Kaeley J. McEvoy wrote in 2013:

"This time, I will paint your face the color of water, Your skin the hue of a night sky, Your body reflective of each person who has ever seen beauty in the moon."

The Deacons and Staff are pleased to support this banner project as part of our ongoing efforts to lift up historically and biblically underrepresented images and voices of women and persons of color.



LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, February 28 - SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

9:30 a.m. Multigenerational Formation: "Ashes and Creation" Lenten Study, via Zoom

11:00 a.m. LiveStream Worship, Dan Smith, preaching

12:15 p.m. Zoom Coffee Hour, farewell to Facilities Manager Kris McQuage-Loukas

Monday, March 1

4:00 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

4:00 p.m. "Contemplative Practices" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

7:00 p.m. Cambridge Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition (CISC) Meeting, via Zoom (all active volunteers are welcome; Zoom invitation sent via email)

Tuesday, March 2

7:45 a.m. Praying the Psalms Group, via Zoom

4:00 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

4:00 p.m. FCC Caregivers' Call, via Zoom

7:00 p.m. "Intro to Feminist Readings of the Bible" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

Wednesday, March 3

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, via Zoom

4:00 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

7:00 p.m. "Back to Basics Bible Study" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

7:30 p.m. "Racial Justice Caucus for White Men" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

8:15 p.m. Midweek Lenten Prayer Service, via Zoom

Thursday, March 4

10:00 a.m. "Supporting our Lenten Changes" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

6:00 p.m. Weekly Bible Study, via Zoom

7:30 p.m. "Raising an Anti-Racist Child" Faith & Life Group, via Zoom

7:45 p.m. First Church Choir Call, via Zoom

Friday, March 5

1:00 p.m. Friday Café lunch bag pickup, Tower Room

Saturday, March 6

8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast, via Zoom

4:00 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

Sunday, March 7 - THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: "Ashes and Mortality," via Zoom

9:30 a.m. Multigenerational Formation: Lenten Creative Arts Workshop

with Audrey Bellinger, via Zoom

11:00 a.m. Livestream Worship, Carlyle Stewart, preaching

12:15 p.m. Zoom Coffee Hour with Report on Public Remembrance Project Focus Groups

with Karlene Griffiths-Sekou

2:00 p.m. Youth Group, meet at church playground, weather permitting

Zoom invitations to our week's programs can be found on each event listed in the calendar on our website.

Faith & Life Group leaders have sent Zoom invitations to registered participants.

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THE STAFF AT FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

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Would you like to give to First Church in Cambridge? Here are easy ways to do it:



Text \$ __ to 1-844-996-0982

