

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 March 14, 2021

Leading Worship

Dan Smith, Senior Minister
Lexi Boudreaux, Pastoral Associate
Jaz Buchanan, Pastoral Associate
Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship & Arts
Steve Brown, First Church Shelter Staff
Laurie Williams, First Church member
Issa Bibbins, guest musician
Kevin Newell, tech support

The photograph on the bulletin cover is by Gaylen Morgan.

A TIME FOR WELCOME

VOLUNTARY

*HYMN 442 What a Friend We Have in Jesus (see page 4)

*GREETING Laurie Williams

L: Friends, grace and peace to you, and welcome!

To everything there is a time and season:

C: a time to speak, and a time to listen;

L: a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

C: a time for hurt, and a time for healing;

L: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.

C: Friends, God's presence meets us here and wherever we are.

Let us open our hearts and listen for it now.

(Silence)

L: Friends, come and worship! It's time to give our thanks and praise,

for God's love surrounds and enfolds us even now.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Laurie Williams and Dan Smith

CANDLELIGHTING Jaz Buchanan

ANTHEM Kyrie arr. Carolyn Wilkins

Laurie Williams, voice; Issa Bibbins, piano

A TIME FOR GOD'S MERCY

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

SUNG RESPONSE

Peter Sykes, 2021

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







DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sarah Higginbotham

Duke Ellington

Don Moen

Will L. Thompson

A TIME FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING James 5: 13-18

A TIME FOR HEALING

REFLECTION Dan Smith and Steve Brown

SONGS OF HEALING Come Sunday

Softly and Tenderly

To God Who Sits on the Throne Laurie Williams and Sarah Higginbotham, voice

Issa Bibbins, piano

A HEALING BLESSING AND PRAYER

Lexi Boudreaux and Jaz Buchanan

AN EMBODIED 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.

*HYMN 470 Precious Lord, Take My Hand (see page 5)

A TIME FOR GOD IN COMMUNITY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INVITATION TO OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

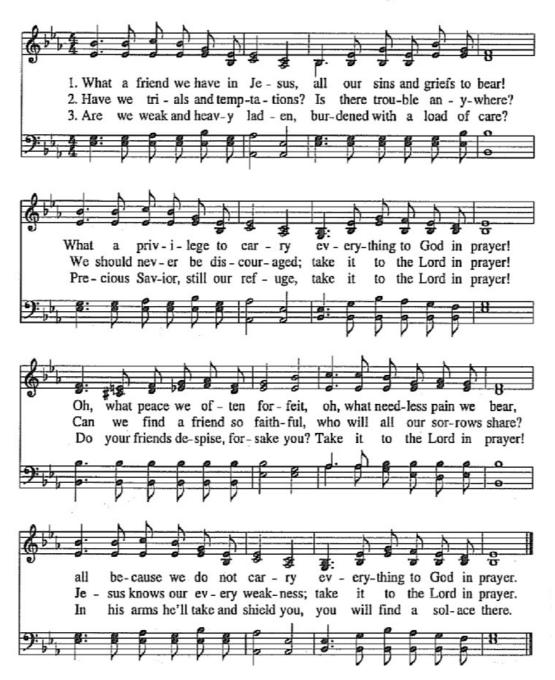
A TIME FOR BLESSING AND SENDING

*HYMN 401 Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound (see page 6)

*BENEDICTION

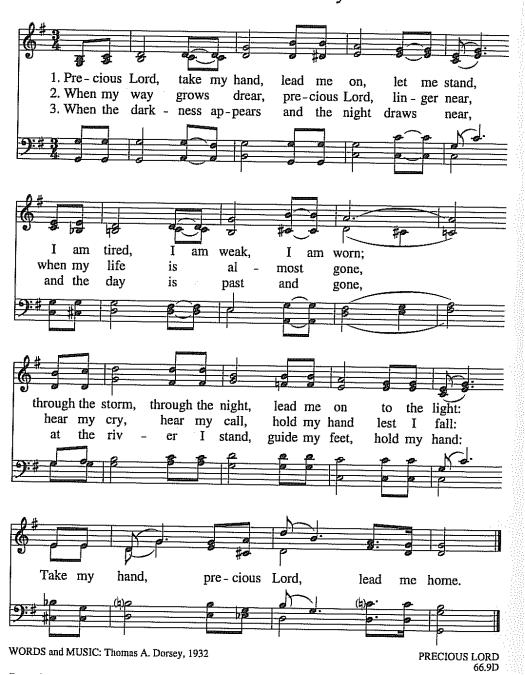
VOLUNTARY

What a Friend We Have in Jesus



SERMON HYMN

Precious Lord, Take My Hand



Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound



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

NEW BRITAIN CM

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for our First Church community on this one-year anniversary of our worshiping and gathering remotely. We pray for all those who are living alone, feeling isolated, and grieving loss of connection and disruption.
- We pray for Linda Ziebell, who was recently diagnosed with sarcoma in her leg and is pursuing treatment.
- We pray for the First Church Shelter community and loved ones of a First Church Shelter guest who was hospitalized recently and died on March 4 of alcoholic cardiomyopathy at the age of 49.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer: Joanne Paul; Sarah Robinson, daughter of Mary Robinson and Mary Martha Thiel; Ron Paquette, Caroline Newton's father; Penny Kilburn, Nancy Kilburn's mother; Katie Bentin-Aimaasu, Moana Bentin's sister; Amy Golodet, Jonathan New's sister-in-law; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet, and her sons-in-law, Denis Collet and Stewart Bailey; Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters; and Hans Gert, Ingeborg Haug's brother.
- We pray for all who are receiving hospice care, including Rich Goode's mother Donna Goode, Chris Reynolds' cousin Pamela Perkins Wilcox, and Connie Gagnebin's mother Nancy Clark.
- 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 our nation and our world as we continue to experience the effects of extreme
 weather. May God grant us the strength to confront and combat the many realities of the
 climate crisis. We pray especially for the poor, who are disproportionately affected by our
 inaction.
- 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

ADULT FORMATION: LENTEN SERIES SESSION 4: ASHES AND REPENTANCE Today, 9:30 a.m., via Zoom "There is a time to heal; to throw and gather stones." Join Jean Dany Joachim and Dave McCann for a poetry workshop on the topic of repentance. You can find the <u>Zoom invitation</u> on our website calendar.

CHILDREN'S FORMATION: READ-ALOUDS FROM THE CHILDREN'S BOOK CORNER Today, 9:30 a.m., via YouTube Premiere Watch a pre-recorded video of three First Church members reading picture books from our collection in the Book Corner. You can find the video on our <u>YouTube</u> channel or in the calendar event on our website.

HEALING SERVICE WITH GUEST MUSICIAN ISSA BIBBINS Today, 11:00 a.m., via Livestream On the one-year anniversary of our shift to remote worship and given the depth of grief and loss we've been holding for so long, we offer a special service of healing music and a time of healing prayer. Issa Bibbins, Laurie Williams, and Sarah Higginbotham provide Spirit-filled songs to ground us in God's solace, comfort, and presence.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR Today, 12:15 p.m., via Zoom The Deacons will host our Zoom Coffee Hour for a time of sharing and receiving healing prayer. Though we are still online, surely "there is a balm in Gilead," still. 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

CALL FOR PHOTOGRAPHS FOR PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP We are looking to collect photos from our First Church in Cambridge community reflecting on our journey together over the course of this past year. The pictures will be featured during our livestream service on Palm Sunday. If you have any photos that you would like to share from Zoom or outdoor gatherings, prayer walks, or at home worship, please email them to Jaz Buchanan at jaz@firstchurchcambridge.org **by Monday, March 22.**

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

FIRST CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

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.

EARTH STEWARDSHIP GROUP MEETING Wednesday, March 17, 5:00 p.m., via Zoom Our agenda will include planning for Earth Day observances, discussing First Church's role in celebrating the Creation, as well as recognizing the challenges for those who seek to be responsible stewards of our planet. See the calendar on our website for the <u>Zoom information</u>. All are welcome. Also, for a <u>penetrating and inspiring talk</u> about climate and environmental issues in light of faith, we recommend listening to our old friend and Special Advisor on Climate Justice to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ Jim Antal.

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.

COFFEE HOUR CONVERSATION ABOUT NEW COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES Sunday, March 21, 12:15 p.m., via Zoom As we continue to live into the increased capacity of our website, First Church is developing new strategies for communications, both within the congregation and with the wider world. Join Sarah, Lexi, and Dan at Zoom Coffee Hour on March 21 to hear about an upcoming refresh of our bulletin, a new email listserv for members and friends for connection and information, and new ways to request promotion of your group's events and activities. Bring your questions, as well as an open mind for exploring new opportunities for sharing our stories, our ministries, and our lives with each other and the wider community.

PUBLIC REMEMBRANCE PROJECT FOCUS GROUPS REPORT: READ, LISTEN, AND JOIN THE NEXT CONVERSATION Sunday, April 18, 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. On March 7, Karlene shared a report on her findings at an after-worship Zoom session. A recording of that session and the full written report are available to you. Please read the report, and plan to join us for our next Zoom conversation with Karlene after church on April 18. More information is available in the Latest News on our website.

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.

FOLLOW NIGHTSONG ON FACEBOOK TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANT WORKS

While NightSong is on hiatus during the pandemic, Artistic Director Daryl Bichel posts recommendations for chant works on <u>the ensemble's Facebook page</u>. You can also find NightSong recordings on <u>their website</u>.

LOOKING AHEAD TO HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 28

Palm Procession at First Church and Cambridge Common, 8:30 a.m.

Livestream Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.

We will gather in the early morning to march around Cambridge Common waving our palms, remembering Jesus's final entry into Jerusalem. There will be Facebook Live footage for those who cannot join in person, and we'll make sure there is time to return home to watch Morning Worship via our livestream.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 1

Evening Worship via Zoom, 7:30 p.m.

Join us on Zoom as we remember Jesus's last meal with friends and the events that led to his sentencing. We invite you to participate from your home with us in a feet/hand washing ritual and in Holy Communion.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Evening Worship via Zoom, 7:30 p.m.

We gather to lament the world's pain and injustice and to remember Jesus' death on the cross. Join us on Zoom for this solemn service of ritual, reverence, and remembrance.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4

Livestream Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.

Christ is Risen! We celebrate and rejoice in God's gift of new life through the resurrection of Jesus, as we proclaim that not even death can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

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 Today and Sunday, March 21, 9:30 a.m., via Zoom Read the full descriptions of each session on our website.

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.

MIDWEEK LENTEN PRAYER SERVICES Wednesday 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.

JESUS OF THE PEOPLE BANNER 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. 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.

WIDER COMMUNITY ACTIONS AND EVENTS

MALE SURVIVORS UNITED You are invited to join together with an anonymous community of like-minded adult men affected by unwanted or abusive sexual experiences. Leave isolation behind and join our monthly phone calls for free peer support, by male survivors for male survivors. Our group is nonprofessional. We are peers, not therapists. Together we help each other reclaim our voices and our lives. The calls are at 5:00 p.m Eastern Time on the 2nd Sunday of each month; **this month's call is this afternoon**. For more information see: malesurvivorsunited.org or contact First Church Deacon Bruce Hoppe confidentially at: bruce@malesurvivorsunited.org

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAM ON WOMEN'S STORIES AS TOLD TO FIRST CHURCH MINISTER THOMAS SHEPARD Thursday, March 18, 5:30 p.m., online The most exciting find in the records of puritan minister Thomas Shepard (Cambridge, 1638-1649) are the voices of the women who came to tell him their stories of spiritual seeking. Serving women, elderly widows, young wives and mothers, daughters of powerful men—all told stories of heroic seeking that feature their independent labor in reading, praying, listening, asking questions, and making meaning in a world narrowed down to just the seeker and her God. *Heroic Souls*, by Lori Rogers-Stokes, brings you these women's stories—their lives and passions, and the super-charged energy for change, discovery, and meaning that they embrace. Register here for this free program.

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>

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS are welcome at any time, especially those with high nutritive value like cereal, proteins including beans and canned chicken, canned fruit and veggies, hearty soups. Please do not donate anything already open or expired, and regular sizes are best. Feminine products also welcome. Drop off continues on Hilary's front porch at 30 Winslow St., Cambridge, 1/4 mile from FCC up Garden St., just past where Sherman and Garden diverge at the firehouse. It's the first right off Sherman and then the first house on the right. Leave items in the cooler and ring the Hopkins bell on the silver mailboxes to let us know there's a delivery; no need to wait. Thank you so much for your continued generosity.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, March 14 - FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Adult Formation: "Ashes and Repentance" with Poet-in-Residence 9:30 a.m.

Jean Dany Joachim and Dave McCann, via Zoom

Children's Formation: Read-Alouds from the Children's Book Corner, 9:30 a.m.

via YouTube premiere

Livestream Worship: Service of Healing Music and Prayer 11:00 a.m.

Issa Bibbins, guest musician

Zoom Coffee Hour with Newcomers' Gathering 12:15 p.m.

and Deacon-led Healing breakout rooms

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

Monday, March 15

Meal Distribution, Tower Room 4:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, via Zoom

Tuesday, March 16

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

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

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

Wednesday, March 17

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

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

Earth Stewardship Group, via Zoom 5:00 p.m. Nominating Committee, via Zoom 6:00 p.m.

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

7:30 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

8:00 p.m. Finance Committee, via Zoom

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

Thursday, March 18

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

6:00 p.m. Weekly Bible Study, via Zoom 7:45 p.m. First Church Choir Call, via Zoom

Friday, March 19

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

Saturday, March 20

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

Sunday, March 21 - FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

9:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: "Ashes and the Cross" with Ariel Ackermann, via Zoom

Children's Formation: Remote Church School Classes, via Zoom

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

Zoom Coffee Hour with New Communications Conversation 12:15 p.m.

> 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.

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

