

# **SEASON OF EPIPHANY**

# 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 January 10, 2021

**Preaching Today**Dan Smith, Senior Minister

Leading Worship
Lexi Boudreaux, Pastoral Associate
Peter Sykes, Music Director
Marianne Jensen, First Church member
Kris McQuage-Loukas, tech support

The photograph on the bulletin cover is by Gaylen Morgan.

#### FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

January 10, 2021

#### **GATHERING**

Come, All You Thirsty

**VOLUNTARY** How Brightly Shines The Morning Star

Dietrich Buxtehude

(see page 4)

\*GREETING

\*HYMN C-23

Marianne Jensen

L: Sisters and brothers, peace be with you!

C: God's peace be with us all!

L: Come now, everyone! Drink from the water of life,

C: the water of God's compassion.

L: Come now, everyone! Bathe in the river of peace,

C: the river of God's grace.

L: Come now, everyone! Hear God's voice declare:

C: "You are my delight! You belong to me!"

L: And let us praise our God!

#### WORDS OF WELCOME

#### **EPIPHANY CANDLELIGHTING**

Lexi Boudreaux

ANTHEM

Eternal Light
First Church Choir, 2017

Mark Schweizer

#### **CONFESSING**

#### **INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

#### **SILENCE**

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Now let us pray for the pardon and healing we need:

All: God in Christ, with you at our side,

we confess our failings—

what we have done, and what we have failed to do. By your baptism in the Jordan, wash us in mercy and mend the harm we have done to ourselves, our neighbor, and our world. Help us to live knee-deep in grace, our hearts alive to our truest names beloved daughters, cherished sons, siblings in the spirit! Amen.

#### **DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

#### \*GREETING OF PEACE

#### **OPENING THE WORD**

#### PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING	Psalm 4 (adapted)
L:	Answer me when I call, O God of my right!
	You gave me room when I was in distress.
	Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.
C:	How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?
	How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?
L:	But know that God has set apart the faithful for herself;
	the Holy One hears when I call to her.
C:	When you are disturbed, do not sin;
	ponder it on your beds, and be silent.
L:	Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in God.
C:	There are many who say, "O that we might see some good!
	Let the light of your face shine on us, O God!"
L:	You have put gladness in my heart
	more than when their grain and wine abound.
C:	I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone,
	O God, make me lie down in safety.

**READING** Mark 1: 4-14

**SERMON** Dan Smith

\*HYMN 228 O Holy Dove of God Descending (see page 5)

#### SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

L: God be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray....(silence, intercessions and 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.

#### INVITATION TO OFFERING

#### \*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

To God, all glorious heavenly Light, to Christ revealed in earthly night, to God the Spirit now we raise our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.

#### GOING FORTH

\*HYMN 407 Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing (see page 6)

\*BENEDICTION

**VOLUNTARY** A Gigge John Bull

#### OPENING HYMN

# Come, All You Thirsty



#### **SERMON HYMN**





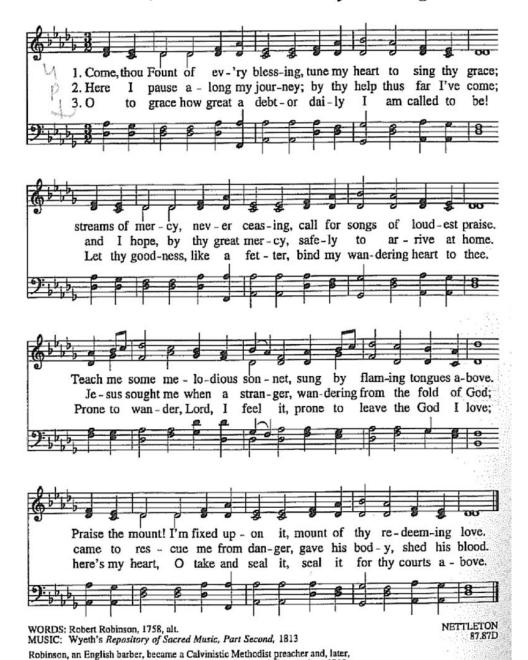
WORDS and MUSIC: Bryan Jeffery Leech, 1976

Playwright and hymnal editor Bryan Leech is a pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church.

99.96 © 1976 Fred Bock Music Co. Used by permission

LOIS

# Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



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a Baptist minister. His text has been sung to this American folk tune since 1813.

#### **COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

- We pray for Leo Neurath and for his parents Sarah Higginbotham and Chris Neurath. Leo is recovering at home from two recent emergency surgeries related to appendicitis.
- We pray for Dean Eaton's niece Kate Smith and her husband James, who sustained serious injuries and needed extensive surgery following a near-fatal motorcycle accident, the result of a hit-and-run in Florida.
- We pray for Marian Smith, whose 9-year-old grandson Ian has been hospitalized recently and diagnosed with CRMO (chronic osteomyelitis) and Crohn's disease. We pray for Ian and his parents, former members Barb and Adam Kroft, and his sisters Ada and Lily.
- 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 all those caring for elderly parents and for all who have dementia.
- We pray for a peaceful transition of power in this month of Presidential Inauguration.
- We continue to pray for all who are grieving the loss of loved ones to COVID-19, as well as the growing number of people suffering from symptoms of COVID-19. We pray for health care professionals and essential workers, that they may feel supported and cared for.
- We pray for the 14 men who are finding sustenance and protection in our First Church Shelter, and for the guests of the Friday Cafe, who are finding food and listening ears. We pray for all who are experiencing deprivation and hardship in these uncertain times.
- 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 solace and security for immigrants and all those who live in fear and anxiety over their status in this country. We also pray for all who work for a just and compassionate future for immigrants and asylum seekers.
- We pray that God may grant us the strength to confront and combat the many realities of the climate crisis, and that we and our leaders may be empowered to take bold steps to care for God's creation. We pray especially for the poor, who are disproportionately affected by our inaction.

#### **TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH**

**ADULT FORMATION:** AN INVITATION TO CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE Today, 9:30 a.m., via **Zoom** First Church friend Duncan Hollomon, a seasoned psychotherapist with an extensive background in both Buddhist and Christian contemplative practice, will host a weekly gathering of folks who wish to explore a contemplative approach to our spiritual life. Together we will learn about and practice various approaches to accessing our inner world, with an eye to "doing the inner work of outer work" — seeing the relationship between reflective contemplation and action in the world. Today, Duncan hosts a Zoom call for those who feel drawn to a contemplative spiritual path. This will be a chance to get to know one another a bit and to get a sample of how the proposed weekly small group sessions might run. To learn more about Duncan and this generous offering, please visit our blog.

<u>Click here to join Adult Formation directly</u>, or go to <u>zoom.us</u> and "join a meeting" using the following information:

Meeting ID: 869 6902 6288 Passcode: 372484 Call-in Number: +1 929 205 6099

**CHILDREN'S FORMATION: READ-ALOUDS FROM THE CHILDREN'S BOOK CORNER Today, 9:30 a.m., via YouTube premiere** Go to <u>First Church's YouTube channel</u> at 9:30 to watch three FCC members read picture books chosen from our Book Corner in the Sanctuary.

**ZOOM COFFEE HOUR Today, 12:15 p.m., via Zoom** Join us following worship to share joys and concerns. We will have a breakout room for our second Sunday Newcomers' gathering; all those who are new to First Church are welcome to join.

<u>Click here to join Zoom Coffee Hour</u> directly, or go to <u>zoom.us</u> and "join a meeting" with the following instructions:

Meeting ID: 876 6474 8993 Password: coffee

**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, and join us today for our monthly Newcomers' gathering at Zoom Coffee Hour.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL OF EMAIL SCAMS We are observing an uptick in phishing scams impersonating church staff via email. If you receive an email claiming to be from Dan Smith (or another staff) that asks for an email reply because he is in a meeting, please double-check the sending address. Please note that if the sender is using an email address other than an @ firstchurchcambridge.org address, it is most likely a scam. Please do not respond. Church staff would never ask for any kind of donations to be sent directly to him (or directly to others). The scammers have been able to pull enough information from church websites to make the email sound legitimate. Scams have become more and more sophisticated! If you are still wondering, please be sure to speak directly with Dan or to the staff person involved before responding.

#### FIRST CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

**HAVE YOU PLEDGED?** We have received pledges totaling just under \$525,000, which is 87% of the way to our 2021 pledge goal. Many thanks to all who have responded so far. Is your piece of our puzzle not yet in place? The Stewardship Committee would love to send you your thank you gift this week! Make your pledge online and then check out how we've pieced together our progress.

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.

**ONLINE WORSHIP LITURGISTS** Assist in worship, either in-person or via video. <u>Sign up here</u>, and you will receive an email with instructions on how to contribute! Questions? Contact Lexi Boudreaux: lexi@firstchurchcambridge.org

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING OPPORTUNITY FOR FIRST CHURCH Monday, January 11, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., via Zoom Have you ever witnessed a friend, acquaintance, or family member enduring what seems to be a mental health crisis and wondered what to do? Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an intervention that can help. MHFA training provides the skills you need to assist someone facing such a crisis. Trainees learn about risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help. Sign up for the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA)'s next free MHFA training on January 11. Join other First Church members in this two-part, eight-hour class, involving:

- 1. Two hours of self-paced online prep work on MHFA topics, with a brief training in the online Zoom platform used to host the live part of the class.
- 2. A six-hour CHA-instructor-led live training on Zoom. You will need to complete the prep work BEFORE taking on the live portion of the class.

For this eight-hour certification training, registration is required and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. This training is rich and rewarding, inspiring confidence. Come join us! For more information, contact Carter West at cartergw24@gmail.com or 781-321-3416.

PRAYING THE PSALMS GROUP Tuesday mornings, 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m., via Zoom Our Praying the Psalms group has resumed weekly meetings via Zoom. The 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

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY BOOK GROUP Tuesday, January 12, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., via Zoom All those who identify as women are welcome to join the Women's Community Book Group for their next read. They will be discussing Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments by Laidiya Hartman. Please send an email to Alex Steinert-Evoy (alex@steinert-evoy.org) to be added to the group's email list to receive the Zoom invitation.

ADULT FORMATION: LEARNING COMPASSION Sunday, January 17, 9:30 a.m., via Zoom In their book *Compassionomics*, scientists Stephen Trzeciak and Anthony Mazzarelli ask the question of whether compassion can be taught and learned. At the Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics at Emory University, Lobsang Tenzin Negi developed cognitive-based Compassion Training, which he calls "a model for a secular compassion meditation practice drawn from the vast, varied Tibetan Buddhist tradition." If compassion can be nurtured, let's join together and consider some of the ways in which Professor Negi suggests. Community Minister Rev. Alex Steinert-Evoy will lead us in a discussion of the research as we consider our own definitions of compassion. Together, we will look at ways we might cultivate compassion towards ourselves and others in 2021.

MLK SUNDAY WORSHIP Sunday, January 17, 11:00 a.m., via YouTube Premiere Join us next Sunday for a special pre-recorded service in honor of the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Members of our Beloved Community team and participants in our recent racial justice programs will be leading the service and offering reflections about what they've been learning in recent months on their individual and collective journeys. Recordings of guest musicians Issa Bibbins and Nola Hood will be featured, as well as a powerful short video of rare archival footage of the March on Washington.

**CONVERSATIONS ABOUT BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST CHURCH Sunday, January 17, 12:15 p.m. and Sunday, January 24, 9:30 a.m., via Zoom** With help from our Community Minister for Racial Justice Carlyle Stewart, church leaders have been drafting a new language for our vision of becoming an anti-racist church. Please join us next Sunday after our MLK worship for a Zoom Coffee Hour discussion of this vision and/or at the 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation on January 24. A final version of the vision will be brought to our Annual Meeting on January 31 for congregational approval.

WINTER WALK Sunday, January 17, 2:45 p.m., Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge We will seek out buds and other winter wonders! Meet Hilary Hopkins at Story Chapel near the entrance. We'll walk for about an hour. Come prepared for the weather and, of course, wear your masks. Heavy snow will postpone us to January 24.

#### FIRST CHURCH NEWS AND EVENTS

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. Our next session held via Zoom is Tuesday, January 19.

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY GRANT EXTENDS TIME WITH CARLYLE STEWART, COMMUNITY MINISTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE** Good news, church! Thanks to renewed funding from our BU School of Theology Creative Callings Project grant, Carlyle Stewart, our Community Minister for Racial Justice, will continue to be with us through most 2021. Carlyle will be preaching on February 21 and helping lead an FCC leadership retreat soon after. In addition, he will be continuing to lead weekly theological reflection sessions on biblical and spiritual themes related to our work of becoming an anti-racist church.

**PRAYER SHAWLS FOR OUR NEW CONFERENCE** Do you like to knit, crochet, or sew? Rev. Darrell Goodwin, the new General Minister of <u>SNEUCC</u> (the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ—that's us) is asking for prayer shawls for conference staff, ministers, and partners—tangible signs that we are wrapping them in prayer. Watch Rev. Goodwin's recent <u>video</u> to learn more, and follow him on social media @RevDGoodwin to keep up with what's happening in the life of our conference!

#### WIDER COMMUNITY ACTIONS AND EVENTS

CALL THE GOVERNOR - LAST CHANCE FOR MEANINGFUL CLIMATE LEGISLATION Years of prayer and advocacy are on the line. The bill includes many critical components to advance Environmental Justice in communities of color and/or low wealth, and it sets meaningful targets for reducing carbon emissions, specific actions to achieve them, and more. Read a summary of the bill at <a href="bit.ly/3oraAQR">bit.ly/3oraAQR</a> and then call Gov. Baker at (617) 725-4005 ASAP, and tell him to <a href="sign">sign</a> the climate bill!

**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

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#### WIDER COMMUNITY ACTIONS AND EVENTS

FREE COVID TESTING NOW AVAILABLE FOR ALL WHO LIVE, WORK, AND PRAY IN CAMBRIDGE

The City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) are offering <a href="free">free</a> COVID-19 testing</a> for Cambridge residents and, we are told, for all who work and pray in Cambridge. The PCR tests are anterior nasal swab tests and not the nasopharyngeal swab test that go all the way back in the nasal passages. No identification or Social Security number is required. All sites are wheelchair accessible. Available testing appointments can book up quickly, but please keep checking back as new appointments will be added when they become available. When you sign up for an appointment, you will be asked for your address and to "Select all that apply: \*I am a Cambridge resident \*I am an employee in Cambridge \*I am a City of Cambridge employee \*None of the above." If you don't live or work in Cambridge, be sure to select \*None of the Above and then list in the address line that follows: "Member of First Church in Cambridge, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA." To schedule an appointment, <a href="sign up">sign up</a> online or call 617-349-9788.

**FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS WELCOME** Patrons need cereal, canned veggies and fruit, proteins (canned chicken & peanut butter especially); feminine products and diapers very welcome. Please do not donate fresh food or anything already opened. Deliver to Hilary's front porch, 30 Winslow St., Cambridge, ¾ mile up Garden St. from FCC, first street on right after Garden and Sherman diverge. There is a wreath on the front door and a storage box on the porch: pull up its lid, close firmly, ring bell for #30 on silver mailbox. Thank you!

**FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO PROVIDE FOOD SECURITY** The following organizations welcome financial donations. They work providing food to people who are living with food insecurity.

<u>Food For Free</u> supports low-income Cambridge residents. It offers fresh produce as well as other kinds of food. In some cases it will also deliver food to people who are unable to come to their food pantry.

<u>Greater Boston Food Bank</u> provides food to over 500 partner agencies in Eastern Massachusetts. It will also help people locate and apply for other food resources.

Have an announcement for the bulletin?

Please send information about church or wider community events to Sarah Higginbotham

(shigginb@firstchurchcambridge.org) by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesdays

to be considered for the following Sunday's bulletin.

#### **LOOKING AHEAD**

#### Sunday, January 10

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Invitation to Contemplative Practice, via Zoom

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

via YouTube Premiere

11:00 a.m. Live-Stream Morning Worship, Dan Smith preaching

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

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

5:30 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

#### Monday, January 11

9:00 a.m. Mental Health First Aid Training, via Zoom

2:30 p.m. Beloved Community, via Zoom

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

7:00 p.m. Executive Council, via Zoom

#### **Tuesday, January 12**

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

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

6:00 p.m. Women's Community Book Group, via Zoom

#### Wednesday, January 13

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

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

7:00 p.m. Christian Formation Committee, via Zoom

#### Thursday, January 14

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

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

# Friday, January 15

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

# Saturday, January 16

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

# Sunday, January 17

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Learning Compassion, via Zoom

9:30 a.m. Children's Formation: MLK Project, via Zoom

11:00 a.m. Morning Worship via YouTube Premiere, lay leaders offering testimony

12:15 p.m. Zoom Coffee Hour with Conversation about Becoming an Anti-Racist Church

Zoom invitations to our week's programs can be found on each event listed in the calendar on our website. They may also be found in the all-church email that was sent this morning. To join our all-church email list, please sign up here.

# THE STAFF AT FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

#### **Senior Minister**

Rev. Dan Smith 617-547-2724 ext.23

dsmith@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### Minister of Stewardship & Finance

Rev. Karen McArthur

karenmc@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### **Minister of Street Outreach**

Rev. Kate Layzer 617-851-5074 kate@thefriday.cafe

#### **Pastoral Associate**

Lexi Boudreaux

lexi@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### **Pastoral Associate**

Jaz Buchanan

jaz@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### **Director of Music**

Peter Sykes

617-645-0833

psykes@aol.com

#### **Director, Creative Worship & Arts**

Sarah Higginbotham 617-547-2724, ext. 42

shigginb@firstchurchcambridge.org

## **Staff Composer**

Patricia Van Ness

www.patriciavanness.com

#### Poet-in-Residence

Jean Dany Joachim jeandany@gmail.com

#### **Shelter Director**

Jim Stewart

617-661-1873

jstewart@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### **Director of Operations**

Kirsten Manville

617-547-2724, ext. 21

parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org

## **Facilities Manager**

Kris McQuage-Loukas

617-547-2724, ext. 44

facilities@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### Office Assistant

Bruce Dillenbeck

617-547-2724

bruce@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### Sextons

Douglas Casey, Rebecca LaFrance, George Williams, Kimel Williams 617-642-3980

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



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

