



Advent
Hybrid Morning Worship
December 12, 2021

**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

We're glad you are worshiping with us today! First Church is a vibrant, multi-generational, engaged, urban church. We care a lot about each other and what's happening in the world around us. Wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome here.

FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL
385 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 1

Sunday, December 12, 2021

Preaching Today	Bishop Brian Greene, <i>Senior Pastor, Pentecostal Tabernacle Church</i>
Assisting in Worship	Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i> Lexi Boudreaux, <i>Transitional Minister</i> Jaz Buchanan, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Director of Creative Worship & Arts</i> Peter Sykes, <i>Director of Music</i> Alex Steinert-Evoy, <i>liturgist</i> Mary Robinson and Mary Martha Thiel, <i>Advent Candle-Lighting</i> Kevin Newell, <i>tech support</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck, <i>Youth Group member</i>

Today's Programs and Events

10:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
11:00 a.m.	Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:20 a.m.	Children's Worship with Jaz, Library
12:00 p.m.	Zoom Coffee Hour
3:00 p.m.	Fall Pilgrimage: African American Heritage Trail, Cambridgeport
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

New to First Church?

Have you just begun joining us for worship? Consider filling out this ["virtual visitor card"](#) so that we might reach out and connect with you about our community.

Give to First Church

You can give online at www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give or by texting "\$ ___" to: 1-844-996-0982.

Contact a Pastor or Staff Member

Find [contact information](#) for our ministerial, program, and building staff on our website. For general information and inquiries: info@firstchurchcambridge.org

Have a church program or event to promote?
Complete the [First Church Communications Request](#) form.

Have an edit or update for our website? Complete the [FCC Website Changes](#) form.

GATHERING

Masks will be lowered by worship leaders when speaking at their discretion.

VOLUNTARY

Magnificat

Dietrich Buxtehude

THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 1:46-55

Jaz Buchanan

L: The word of God.

C: Thanks be to God.

*HYMN 124

My Heart Sings out With Joyful Praise

For everyone's safety, please sing quietly or hum.

*GREETING

Alex Steinert-Evoy

L: Siblings in Christ, God's love is already here with us,
and yet, it's always coming our way!

**C: God's peace is already here, right in our hearts,
and yet, it's waiting to be born anew!**

L: God's joy is already here in our worship,
and it's just a taste of what's to come!

C: So we gather now, in this season of wonder and waiting,

L: finding strength in what's already here
and in sacred mysteries, known and unknown.

C: Prepare the way for God's already, not yet, glory!

ALL: Let it be revealed in Christ and in us!

WORDS OF WELCOME

Alex Steinert-Evoy and Dan Smith

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Mary Robinson and Mary Martha Thiel

L: God, we light this third candle of Advent.
We kindle it with joy.

**C: May that joy sustain us in this time,
and guide us in our work for compassion and justice.**

SONG

Sarah Higginbotham

**Give me light in the darkness, light in the darkness,
light in the darkness to sing my soul awake.**

(Sing twice through.)

**You are invited to stand. Hymns preceded by a "C" are found in the beginning section of the hymnal. This section contains hymns written and composed by current and past members of First Church in Cambridge.*

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray for justice, pardon and peace:

**C: God, when we despair that we aren't there yet,
fill the space in-between.**

**When we are weary, afraid, and longing for stability,
give us pathways of hope and flexibility.**

When we grow tired of waiting, forgive us, we pray,

and give us your vision of where we are now and where we are going.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GREETING OF PEACE

Staying in place and observing social distance, share this good news wherever you are! Send it back to us! Share it with a neighbor! Send it to the world! Young children are now invited to join Jaz for Children's Worship in the Library.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Matthew 2:1-11

SERMON

Bishop Greene

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

Cambridge Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Lexi Boudreaux

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 in words most meaningful to your heart.

**All: Our Creator, 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. 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



Give by Text



Give Online



I've Given Already



Pledge for 2022

OFFERTORY

There Is No Rose

Jessica Nelson

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

For everyone's safety, please sing quietly or hum.

**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 160

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

For everyone's safety, please sing quietly or hum.

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

Anton Heiller

OPENING HYMN

124 My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise
(Song of Mary)

1. My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es me,
2. The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the proud.
3. The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to be,

who came to me when I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.
The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.
for God has come in pow'r to save, to set all peo - ple free.

The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace
The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way.
Re - mem - b'ring those who wait to see sal - va - tion's dawn - ing day,

to those who seek their Mak - er's will in ev - 'ry time and place.
The poor of earth who suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
our Sav - ior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

WORDS: Ruth Duck, 1981, 1985, 1992
MUSIC: Traditional English melody; coll. Lucy Broadwood;
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The English Hymnal*, 1906

KINGSFOLD
CMD

As editor of *The English Hymnal*, 1906, Ralph Vaughan Williams introduced a host of traditional English folk tunes he and his contemporaries had rescued from obscurity.

Words © 1992 GIA Publications, Inc.

CLOSING HYMN

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

160

Refrain

Go, tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

go, tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born!

Fine

1. While shep - herds kept their watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night, be -
 2. The shep - herds feared and trem - bled when lo! a - bove the earth rang
 3. Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born, and

hold through - out the heav - ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

to Refrain

WORDS: Stanzas, John W. Work II, 1907; refrain, African - American spiritual
 MUSIC: African-American spiritual, arr. John W. Work III, 1940

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
 76.76 w. refrain

John Wesley Work II added the present stanzas to an existing refrain. Work was a leader in the effort to study, preserve and perform African-American slave songs and spirituals.

© 1940 John W. Work III

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for sexton George Williams, whose nephew Jacobey Williams died on Monday at the age of 33 due to respiratory issues.
- We pray for Taj Smith whose cousin Jamal was killed on Monday in a tragic bike accident.
- We pray for Susan Redlich and her family. Susan's father William Redlich died peacefully at the age of 100 in Evanston, Illinois.
- We pray for courage and strength for Kindle Williams as she enters the final stretch of her Ph.D. thesis at M.I.T. this week.
- We pray for Dave and Ann McCann, whose beloved friend and mentor Edwin Cranston died this week. We pray also for his wife Fumiko and for all the friends, neighbors, and colleagues who will miss his presence in their lives.
- We pray for Dave Dyer's brother Daniel Dyer, who had a stroke recently in Hudson, Ohio, and who is also struggling with cancer.
- We pray for Kirsten Manville's father Keith, who is recovering at home after being hospitalized with a bacterial infection. We also pray for Kirsten and her husband Tim Foley as they mourn the loss of Tim's mother Agnes Foley and his aunt Doris Herson, who both died recently.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer: Pauline Fennel; Abby Shuman's uncle Barry; Penny Kilburn, Nancy Kilburn's mother; 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; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray for all impacted by the crisis at "Mass and Cass" in Boston, especially for those whose makeshift tents and homes have been uprooted by the City of Boston. We pray for creative and compassionate solutions that honor the dignity of all.
- As the Supreme Court hears a case pertaining to reproductive rights currently protected by the Constitution, we pray for all those experiencing anxiety in anticipation of potential changes to abortion access in this country.
- We pray for those grieving the loss of life and those dealing with the trauma of a school shooting in Oxford, Michigan, last week. We continue to pray for the political will to enact common sense gun legislation.
- We pray for all who are affected by COVID-19 diagnoses and for all who are awaiting vaccines, globally and locally. We continue to pray for all who are grieving the loss of loved ones to COVID-19 and for those experiencing symptoms of long Covid.
- When we feel helpless and overwhelmed by the climate crisis, we pray for the divine wisdom, strength and courage needed to ensure that local, national, and global remediation and reparation efforts distribute power equitably and protect the most vulnerable.
- 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.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Bishop Greene, Guest Preacher

We welcome longtime Cambridge pastor Bishop Brian Greene from the [Pentecostal Tabernacle Church](#) as our guest preacher today. For more than a year, members of First Church and Pentecostal Tabernacle (PT) have been gathering on Tuesday afternoons for weekly Biblical Justice Prayer Zoom calls hosted by PT. In addition, Dan Smith and Bishop Greene have been meeting regularly about a deepening connection between our congregations.

[Read more](#)



Already Here, Not Yet There

ADVENT 2021 AT FIRST CHURCH

Advent 2021: *Already Here, Not Yet There*

This classic Advent theme seems to fit this year more than most! Indeed, we are stepping into a new season — not only Advent, but also in our mid-pandemic world. We are gathering for hybrid worship. We are already doing more with family and friends than we were a year ago. And yet, nothing feels quite the same as before...

[Read more](#)

Our Advent Candle-Lighting Song is based on “Give Me Birds at the Dawning,” written by Betsy Binstock and arranged by Peter & Mary Alice Amidon, from *Twenty-five Anthems for Interfaith and Community Choirs* ©2016, Amidon Music Publishing. The words have been adapted to fit the Advent season.

And once again, we are featuring three **Advent Banners** with images designed by Vermont artist Janet McKenzie, thanks to a generous donation from Laurie Williams and Andrea Seek. The Deacons were pleased to support this project last year as part of our ongoing efforts to lift up historically and Biblically underrepresented images and voices of women and persons of color. This week, along with ***The Annunciation*** and ***The Visitation***, we re-introduce McKenzie’s ***Holy Mother of the East***.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Fall Pilgrimage: African American Heritage Trail, Cambridgeport Today at 3:00 p.m.

rain date: December 26 at 3:00 p.m.

Join us for our final Fall Pilgrimage, as we embark in prayer, quieting our minds and expanding our hearts to hear the Word of God across time and space. [Learn more and sign up here.](#)



Winter Is Coming!

A Covid-19 Update for First Church Gatherings

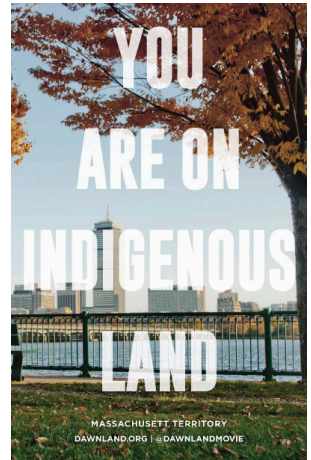
Winter is coming, and public health officials are cautioning us to maintain Covid safety protocols now, more than ever. As one expert put it, “just when you think you can let up, that’s the most important time to stay vigilant.” Unfortunately, door and window ventilation and heating don’t mix and will create strain for our planet and budget. With this in mind, we will be modifying our Sunday schedule a bit for December and early January, at least... [Read more about what is changing, what is staying the same, and “What about Christmas?”](#)

First Church Land Acknowledgment

At our recent Fall Congregational Meeting, church leaders introduced a [First Church Land Acknowledgment](#) and offered suggestions for its use.

We hope the congregation will affirm a version of this statement at our Annual Meeting in January, and we are eager to hear any thoughts you may have.

Please contact [Dan Smith](#) or [Hilary Hopkins](#) with any comments or questions.



SCAN ME

Do you want to follow the hyperlinks, but you’re holding a paper bulletin in your hand? Use your phone’s camera to hover over the QR code marked “scan me;” this will take you to the **Members & Friends** page of our website, where you’ll find the bulletin online, as well as links to news, events, and more.

ADVENT AT FIRST CHURCH



Advent Unbound: A Companion to Pádraig Ó Tuama's *Poetry Unbound*

Looking for a resource for spiritual reflection to keep you grounded this Advent? Join us and our friends at the [SALT Project](#) for this go-at-your-own pace devotional that includes Advent scriptures tied to the popular NPR OnBeing poetry podcast featuring Pádraig Ó Tuama. Download the pdf [here](#), which offers instructions on finding the companion podcasts and scripture.

Advent in our Home Sanctuary: A Video Project

Many of us are choosing to join in-person worship, but not all of us can yet, especially many of our little ones and those caring for them. This year, Jaz Buchanan is sharing multigenerational spiritual practices throughout the four weeks of Advent on [our YouTube Channel](#). These are practices that you can incorporate right from your home sanctuary! Tune in each week, as we pause, wonder, and prepare together for the mystery of Christmas.

MULTI GENERATIONAL FORMATION

Advent In Our Home Sanctuary



Advent Season Giving and Alternative Christmas Fair

The Missions & Social Justice Committee has had another eventful year of supporting the work of non-profit organizations, both near and far. In this Advent season, we share with you a list of organizations with which First Church partners closely and who are seeking donations...

[Read more](#)

Warm Hands, Warm Hearts

Give a meaningful gift this holiday season by donating a pair of warm winter gloves through the Friday Café to someone in need. Donate for yourself, or in honor of a special person on your list. They will receive a mailed holiday card with your gift message. Each pair of gloves is \$20. You can make your gift [here](#).



CHRISTMAS AT FIRST CHURCH



The UnPageant

Sunday, December 19 at 11:00 a.m
Sanctuary and via livestream

How else to enjoy the UnPageant this year but in a hybrid experience? Join us online or in person on the fourth Sunday of Advent for First Church's beloved tradition of the UnPageant, a unique way to include everyone in the story of Christmas. This year, characters will Zoom in, pre-record themselves, and/or show up in person—it's an UnPageant for our hybrid times.

All-Church Cookie Swap

Sunday, December 19, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., MJH

While we can't gather together for our traditional Christmas Party after worship, we can celebrate with cookies! Bake or buy 6-10 dozen of your favorite holiday cookie, and then package them by the ½ dozen (6 cookies per bag) to be offered at our first All-Church Cookie Swap. Label each bag with ingredients/allergy info before dropping them off in Margaret Jewett Hall before or just after Hybrid Worship. In your baking/buying plans, consider if you can provide gluten-free, dairy-free, or low-sugar options, and definitely label any baked goods that contain nuts. We'll organize them on tables and invite everyone to walk through from the parish building entrance to the Mason Street door, picking up treats along the way. Help spread some Christmas joy on UnPageant Sunday; the more cookies, the merrier!



Young Adults: Winter Walk

Sunday, December 19 at 1:15 p.m., Boston Public Market

Join other 20- and 30-somethings for a walk through the North End. We'll depart on the T together from in front of First Church at 12:30, and rendezvous at the Boston Public Market at 1:15. We'll stroll in the snow, catch up one last time before the new year, and grab some hot chocolate from Caffe Vittoria. Be in touch to let Phil know you're coming: youngadults@firstchurch-cambridge.org



CHRISTMAS AT FIRST CHURCH



Blue Christmas Worship on the Longest Night

Tuesday, December 21, 6:30 - 7:15 p.m., via Zoom

Join us for an evening worship service on the longest night of the year to hold our grief, our sorrow, and complicated experiences amidst the Christmas season. This is a time for reflection and solace, as we continue to experience the prolonged stress and grief of the pandemic and of difficult seasons of our lives. If you have any questions about this worship service, please contact [Lexi Boudreaux.](#)

Christmas Eve Carol Sing on the Lawn

Friday, December 24, 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.

People of all ages are invited to this 30-minute family-friendly time of singing your favorite carols and hearing the Christmas story! We'll have a lighted Christmas tree set up on the lawn to brighten our gathering, but bring a flashlight or headlamp with you to follow along. We'll finish up with hot cocoa and tea for all.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Lessons and Carols

Friday, December 24, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Sanctuary, via livestream, and on YouTube

Our traditional Christmas Eve service will be held in person and on our livestream. Masks and social distancing will be required. Seating in the sanctuary will be limited for safety, and we will offer overflow seating before the big screen in a cozy, decorated, Christmas-lit Margaret Jewett Hall. The service will also be available to watch on YouTube from home anytime after the livestream ends. Watch with family and friends, near or far, after dinner, at 8, 9, or midnight!

Epiphany Walk

Thursday, January 6, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.,

Church Lawn and Cambridge Common

Please join us on the front lawn of First Church for a short Epiphany service, remembering our baptisms. We will then embark on a candlelit prayer walk around Cambridge Common, carrying the light of Christ for the Harvard Square community to see. Stay tuned for more details! If you have any questions or would like to contribute, please contact Lexi Boudreaux.



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, December 13

4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Group, via Zoom

See our [Events Calendar](#) for Zoom links and details.

Tuesday, December 14

4:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom

Sign up [here](#) to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

Wednesday, December 15

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room

4:30 p.m. Meal Distribution, Tower Room

Thursday, December 16

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

6:00 p.m. Friday Café food dropoff, Tower Room

Friday, December 17

9:00 a.m. Friday Café food dropoff, Tower Room

12:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall and the church lawn

Sunday, December 19 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, MJH

10:45 a.m. Sanctuary doors open

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship in the Sanctuary and via livestream, The UnPageant

12:15 p.m. All-Church Cookie Swap, MJH

1:00 p.m. Youth Group Christmas Gift Exchange, Harter Room

7:30 p.m. Night Song in the Sanctuary and via livestream

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC

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