

Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn. I will give thanks to you, O Lord, I will sing praises to you among the nations, for your steadfast love is as high as the heavens; your faithfulness extends to the clouds.

- Psalm 57:8-10

# Confirmation Sunday May 21, 2023

## 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 **387 YEARS** ON THE WAY 1636-2023

## May 21, 2023

Preaching Today	Lexi Boudreaux, Transitional Minister
	Sarah Higginbotham, Creative Worship & Arts Director
Liturgist	Rich Goode
Assisting in Worship	Audrey Bellinger, <i>Deacon</i>
	Phil Jones and Casey Marsh, offering a Ministry Moment
	Lee Prouty, tech support
	Dan Smith, Senior Minister
	Peter Sykes, Music Director
<b>Bulletin Cover Image</b>	Psalm 57 collage by Audrey Bellinger
•	This and other Psalm collages can be viewed in <u>a digital gallery.</u>

#### **Today's Programs and Events**

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9:30 a.m.	Choir Conversation, Harter Room
10:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
11:00 a.m.	Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:20 a.m.	Church School: Godly Play class
12:15 p.m.	Coffee Hour with Reception for Confirmands, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and <u>via livestream</u>
11:20 a.m. 12:15 p.m.	Church School: Godly Play class Coffee Hour with Reception for Confirmands, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)

#### New to First Church?

Have you just begun joining us for worship? Consider filling out a visitor card found on the small clipboards or this "virtual visitor card" so that we might connect with you about our community.

#### **Give to First Church**

You can give online: <u>www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give</u> or by texting "\$\_" to: 1-844-996-0982.

#### **Contact a Pastor or Staff Member**

Find <u>contact information</u> for our ministerial, program, and building staff on our website. For general information and inquiries: info@firstchurchcambridge.org

#### **Minister On Call**

If you have an urgent pastoral need, please call 857-331-7136 ext. 222. Your call will be routed to a First Church minister based on a rotating schedule that covers staff time off.

Have a church program or event to promote? Complete the <u>First Church Communications Request</u> form. Have an edit or update for our website? Complete the <u>FCC Website Changes</u> form

#### GATHERING

VOLUNTARY	Concerto in A minor	Vivaldi-Bach

#### \*HYMN C-29 Perfect Yet Unfinished

Rich Goode

- L: Siblings in the Spirit, grace and peace to you from God!
- C: From God the Merciful, peace to you!
- L: Together, let us praise God in the presence of Love —
- C: Love divine, stronger than injustice and death!
- L: Together, let us praise God in the companionship of the Risen Christ —
- C: the Risen Christ, source of truth, who abides with us now!
- L: Together, let us praise God in this time of worship!

## WORDS OF WELCOME

\*GREETING

#### CONFESSING

#### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

- L: Let us pray for healing, pardon, and peace:
- All: God of Justice, when we settle for the way things are instead of the way you would have them to be, forgive us. When we hold onto fear or are limited in vision, increase our trust in you.
  When we offer charity, but fail to work for justice, show us what your love requires.
  When we tire of the struggle and tomorrow feels overwhelming, rise up in us and give us your strength, restore our hope, and renew our courage. In the name of Jesus, our brother, we pray. Amen.

#### **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

#### \*GREETING OF PEACE

Please turn to your immediate neighbors and offer a handshake, or a hug! Or if you prefer to maintain social distance, fold your hands or arms in a sign of peace. We want everyone to be comfortable; today let there be no spiritual distance between us.

\*You are invited to stand. Hymns proceeded 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.

#### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AND RITE OF CONFIRMATION

#### INTRODUCTION AND INVITATION

Graham Hendren Funck Winifred Hendren Funck Owen Alexander Jones Ada Grace LaMaster\* Campbell Kathleen Pelton-Cairns Erik Isaiah Stauffer

#### **BAPTISMAL PROMISES**

#### **CONGREGATIONAL PROMISES**

L: Jesus Christ welcomes everyone who desires new life into the faith and family of Christ.Do you who will witness this sacrament promise Freddie, Graham, and Malcolm your love, support and care?

- C: We do!
- L: Will you help them to grow in faith and witness with them to the love and mercy of Christ?

#### C: We will, with the help of God!

- L: Do you renew your own promises to live in the freedom of Christ, and resist the power of evil?
- C: We do, with the help of God!

#### POURING AND BLESSING OF THE WATER

#### THE BAPTISMS

Graham Hendren Funck Winifred Hendren Funck Malcolm Hendren Funck

#### \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- L: Beloved in Christ, let us give thanks!
- All: We thank you, God, for these precious lives entrusted to our care, and for the waters of baptism that mark us as your people. Thank you for the gifts your Spirit gives us in this sacrament, and for life in the church, where we help each other grow. Give to Freddie, Graham, and Malcolm strength for life's journey, courage in the time of trial, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the comfort of everlasting life. These things we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

-2-

Sarah Higginbotham

Lexi Boudreaux

Audrey Bellinger

#### \*PRESENTATION

#### \*HYMN 41

#### Sing Amen (Masithi)

Children from PreK to 4th grade are now invited to Godly Play class. Students can meet their teachers at the side door by the Children's Book Corner. Caregivers can find the children in the Chapel after worship.



#### **CONFIRMANDS' PROMISES**

L: Friends in Christ, in the presence of God, I ask you: Do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Christ?

#### Candidates: We do.

L: Do you hold Jesus Christ as the center of your faith?

#### Candidates: We do.

L: Do you promise to follow Christ's path, offering compassion and working for justice?

#### Candidates: We do, with the help of God.

L: Do you promise to grow with this congregation in faith, and further with us Jesus' mission in the world?

#### Candidates: We do, with the help of God.

(cont'd. on next page)

- L: Freddie, Graham, Owen, Campbell, and Erik are asking to be confirmed in the faith and family of Jesus Christ. You have heard the promises they have made. What is your will?
- All: By God's grace, they are worthy. Let them be confirmed!

#### PRAYER FOR THE CANDIDATES AND LAYING ON OF HANDS

#### ADDRESS TO THE CONFIRMANDS

#### \*COVENANT OF FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

All: We who are now brought together and united into one Church under the Lord Jesus Christ, our Head, in such sort as becometh all those whom he hath redeemed and sanctified to himself, do solemnly and religiously, as in his most holy presence, promise and bind ourselves to walk in all his ways according to the rule of the Gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances, and in mutual love and respect each to other, so near as God shall give us grace.

#### \*WELCOME

#### **OPENING THE WORD**

#### PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

#### **RESPONSIVE READING**

#### Psalm 46

- L: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
- C: though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
- L: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.
- C: God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.
- L: The nations are in an uproar; empires crumble; you utter your voice; the earth melts.
- C: The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

- L: Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations you have brought on the earth.
- C: You make wars cease to the end of the earth; you break the bow and shatters the spear; you burn the shields with fire.
- L: "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."
- C: The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

#### REFLECTION

Lexi Boudreaux and Sarah Higginbotham

#### SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

Dan Smith

Phil Jones and Casey Marsh

#### PRAYERS FOR THE 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 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

#### OFFERTORY

Yesu Mfumu

Bantu hymn from Zaire

Jesus, the Lord, said he would return. He will return; let us rejoice! Even if you do not believe the Son of God, he will return. Let us rejoice! Let us thank the Son of God. He will return. Let us rejoice! O Jesus, risen now to bless, do thou thyself our hearts possess; that we may give thee all our days the willing tribute of our praise! Amen.

#### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

#### **GOING FORTH**

\*HYMN 241 We Will Build Your Church, O Christ

#### \*LEAVETAKING BLESSING FOR CARLA CARBAJAL AND AHMAAD EDMUND

\*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Concerto in A minor

Vivaldi-Bach

#### **First Church Land Acknowledgment**



We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

SCAN ME YO

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment <u>here</u> or by scanning the QR code to the left.

C-29 Perfect Yet Unfinished



WORDS: Kate Layzer MUSIC: Peter Sykes

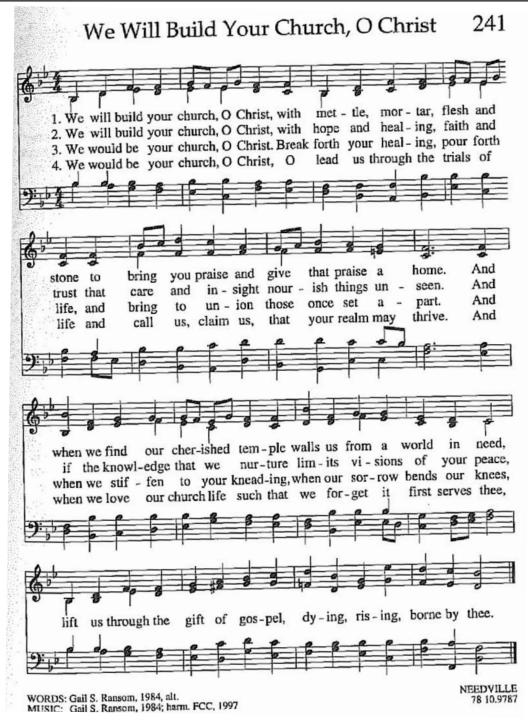
-Hymn Insert 1-

#### PEACE HYMN



<sup>-</sup>Hymn Insert 2-

#### **CLOSING HYMN**



-Hymn Insert 3-

#### COMMUNITY PRAYERS

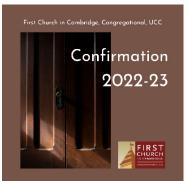
- We give thanks for our Confirmands as they affirm their baptisms and and join as members of our church community.
- In this season of graduations, we celebrate all those who are marking academic milestones this year.
- We pray for Ahmaad Edmund's grandmother Glenda Edmund, who is now home recovering after a recent hospitalization.
- We pray with grateful hearts for Art Anger, who is now recovering at home after over five weeks in acute care and rehabilitation hospitals following a hemorrhagic stroke.
- We pray for Karen Anne Zee as she mourns the loss of her beloved aunt Shirley Smith, who died this past week following a series of strokes.
- We pray for Carol Wilson-Braun as she deals with slow-progressing ALS.
- We pray for Iris Eve, grandchild of Kate Judd's cousin, who underwent surgery on Friday for Hirschsprung's disease.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer: Bridget Melle, Rich Goode's sister; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones's mother; 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 friend of Homeless Ministries Brian O'Donovan. We also pray for those in hospice care: Penny Kilburn, Nancy Kilburn's mother
- We continue to pray for all those in global regions impacted by the violence of war, including Sudan and Ukraine, especially those displaced and seeking refuge in other countries.
- We pray for all whose lives are touched by our nation's raging epidemic of gun violence. We pray for ongoing advocacy to create lasting change in our country's gun safety laws.
- We pray for all who are still reeling in the aftermath of the chokehold-killing of Jordan Neely on a NYC subway. We pray for an end to senseless and dehumanizing violence against unhoused persons and those with mental illness.
- We pray for the wellbeing and safety of our trans siblings as they face the impact of hundreds of bills seeking to restrict transgender health care access and gender expression that have been introduced—and, in some cases, have passed into law—in state houses across the country.
- We pray for our rapidly warming planet and for redoubled efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel amidst ongoing political tensions.
- We pray for those most affected by changes in reproductive rights: for all those struggling with the moral and political complexities of pregnancy and childbearing, and for patients and healthcare providers who are unable to give and receive care in their own states.
- We pray for the 14 men finding sustenance and protection in our First Church Shelter; and we pray for the guests of the Friday Café, who are finding resources and listening ears.

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

#### Choir Conversation Today at 9:30 a.m., Harter Room

The Choir gathers for a pre-rehearsal conversation to discuss plans for rehearsal schedules and Covid safety practices going forward. All Choir members are invited to attend and participate.





#### **Confirmation Sunday**

Today, we mark the end of the Confirmation process for our 9th and 10th graders. Morning Worship includes the Rite of Confirmation, as well as the baptisms of several Confirmands. Join us to recognize their spiritual journeys and to welcome them into membership by covenant. Then, head to Margaret Jewett Hall for a cake reception in their honor!

#### **Night Song**

Sundays, 7:30 - 8:15 p.m., Sanctuary and <u>via livestream</u> Night Song is a worship opportunity that offers stillness and sublime music in a darkened sanctuary for respite and reset. <u>Read more about Night Song.</u>



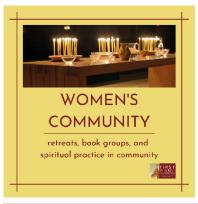


#### **Free Piano**

This Yamaha upright piano, formerly found in the old Hastings Room, is free to a good home. It's in excellent condition and holds its tune well. Please speak with <u>Music Director Peter Sykes</u> for details.

**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.





#### Women's Community Book Group Tuesday, May 23, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Our next selection is *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan, as recommended by Linda Ziebell. Set in Ireland in 1985, this is a tale of hope and quiet heroism, and the cost of silent complicity, as the Church's heartless and cruel treatment of unmarried mothers is discovered. As with other novels by Keegan, the book is short but powerful. Questions? Contact Alex Steinert-Evoy (alex@steinert-evoy.org)

#### Pentecost is Sunday, May 28

Join us for hybrid worship on Pentecost Sunday—a day when we celebrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us through movement and song, prayer and reflection. Come wearing something red if you'd like, and celebrate the Spirit's presence in our midst. Also, plan to stay after church for a special Pentecost art exhibit by First Church member Henry Gates in Margaret Jewett Hall.





#### "Forgotten Souls of Tory Row: Remembering the Enslaved People of Brattle Street" Bottle Tree at First Church

With gratitude to our partners at <u>History Cambridge</u> and the <u>Black Coral Inc.</u> artist collaborative, a bottle tree from "Forgotten Souls of Tory Row: Remembering the Enslaved People of Brattle Street" will be on view on our front lawn from May 28, Pentecost Sunday, through Juneteenth, June 19. The installation honors the

enslaved adults and children who lived and worked on this land, as well as those whose labor on Caribbean plantations helped finance the grand homes of white Tory Row elites. The bottle tree tradition originated in West Africa and was brought to the United States by enslaved people. The tradition was passed down through generations, marking the survival of a cultural practice despite the bonds of slavery. The distinctive blue bottles were placed on trees to capture the energy, spirit and memories of ancestors. *Learn more and see photos from the full installation on Brattle Street.* 



#### Fabric Dyeing and Stitching Workshop May 30, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join textile artists Sarah Fujiwara, Gail Willett and Carol Anne Grotrain for the last of three workshops that represent the next steps on our journey of creating *Wade in the Water: Remembering and Honoring Enslaved Africans and Native Americans at First Church in Cambridge.* Participants will learn about traditional fabric-dyeing methods, assist in stenciling African Adinkra symbols, and begin the embroidery of background images to which we will add the embroidered names of those we remember and honor. Space is limited; please RSVP to Sarah Fujiwara for any or all of the workshops (sarahpfujiwara@gmail.com).

#### Juneteenth Sunday, June 18

Our Morning Worship on June 18 will lift up themes of freedom and liberation with a special focus on Juneteenth, which commemorates the abolition of slavery. The service will feature a "first look" at our emerging community fabric art project: *Wade in the Water: Remembering and Honoring enslaved Persons at First Church.* We will offer a public reading of names and a commemoration of all the enslaved persons associated with First Church over the years. Members of the Lloyd family—descendants of Tony, Cuba and Darby Vassal, who are listed in our records—will be with us. Dan Smith and Egypt Lloyd will share in a reflection and time of blessing. Worship with us as we wade in the water together with generations of ancestors and descendants in this service of remembrance, repentance, relationship-building, and repair.

#### Reparations Conversations Sundays, June 4 and 11, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

Please join us for two conversations about First Church's journey thus far regarding reparations and where the Spirit may be leading us next. We'll talk about the communities most harmed by our history of church members enslaving in the congregation and our painful response to the work of abolition in previous centuries, as well as the living legacy of slavery in the forms of Jim Crow segregation, the war on drugs, redlining, and mass incarceration.

We'll update the congregation on the Reparations Fund and the work of the Collective, which is convened by



First Church member Karlene Griffiths Sekou. We'll also share information about efforts to engage in repair with the Indigenous communities most harmed by us—the Wabanaki, Massachussett (Wampanoag and Nipmuc) peoples—and plans for learning & action opportunities in the Fall. We'll talk about the spiritual practice of reparations, guided in part by the book *Reparations: A Christian Call For Repentance and Repair*, which asks what Christians are called to do regarding white supremacy's cultural theft of truth, power, and wealth, and why our engagement matters.

We'll reflect on how God is calling First Church to engage in this powerful and life-changing work.

#### Children's Sunday Sunday, June 11

On the second Sunday of June, it is our custom to celebrate the children's formation programs of the church in a Children's Sunday worship service. We are led in liturgy by younger voices, and we recognize our 4th graders with their own Bibles as they "graduate" from Godly Play. We lift up the volunteer teachers and helpers who make our Church School run, and we take time to ask wondering questions about the stories central to our faith and practice.





## The First Church Musicale

Sunday, June 11, 12:15 - 2:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall This year on Children's Sunday, we are bringing back an old favorite: The First Church Musicale! All ages are invited to gather in Margaret Jewett Hall for an indoor picnic luncheon, followed by a time of sharing our creative talents with one another. Sign up to offer a (short) performance that showcases your skills in music, theater, dance, circus, poetry, stand-up comedy, or quirky tricks.

Questions? Contact <u>Sarah Higginbotham</u>. Now, go start rehearsing!

#### Pre-Summer Farewell Reception for Lexi Sunday, June 18 at 12:15 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

Lexi Boudreaux's term as Transitional Minister at First Church comes to an end on August 31, but not before we celebrate the remarkable gifts she has shared with us these last five years, beginning with her time as a Ministerial Intern and as a Pastoral Associate from Harvard Divinity School. Please save the date for a congregational celebration of her ministry after worship on June



18, while most of us are still gathered, leaving time throughout the summer for further goodbyes. Lexi's last Sunday with us will be August 27.

#### **CONFIRMATION AT FIRST CHURCH**

First Church in Cambridge offers a oneyear Confirmation Class to teens, usually every other year. The class meets twice monthly for sessions that cover a range of topics, as listed below.

- Faith and Belief
- Creation Meets Evolution
- Meeting God Through Scripture
- Meeting God Through Experience
- Jesus Christ, Human and Divine
- The History of Christianity: The Cloud of Witnesses
- Forgiveness and Grace
- Reconciliaton and Reparation: First Church History
- Living in a Religiously Diverse World
- Made in God's Image
- This I Believe: Ancient Creeds & Modern Covenants
- Making Meaning of Death
- Christian Values: Discipleship & Vocation, Witness & Service
- The Death and Resurrection of Jesus
- The Sacraments: Baptism and Communion

Our next group of Confirmands will begin their journey this coming September as 8th & 9th graders, led by Carla Carbajal and Phil Jones, with support and guest appearances from Sarah Higginbotham and Dan Smith.





#### Monday, May 22

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4:30 p.m.	Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
7:00 p.m.	Executive Council, via Zoom

See our <u>Events Calendar</u> for Zoom links and details.

Sign up <u>here</u> to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

#### Tuesday, May 23

- 7:15 a.m. Reflective Conversations with Brent Coffin, via Zoom
- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, Harter Room
- 1:30 p.m. Beloved Community, via Zoom
- 3:00 p.m. Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 6:00 p.m. Women's Community Book Group, via Zoom

#### Wednesday, May 24

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 4:00 p.m. Wednesday Meal Distribution Program, Tower Room

#### Thursday, May 25

6:00 p.m. Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom

#### Friday, May 26

12:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)

#### Sunday, May 28 - Pentecost

- 10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Creative Arts Workshop
- 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour, MJH
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

#### Monday, May 29 - Church Office & Building Closed for Memorial Day

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC 11 Garden St. • Cambridge, MA 02138

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