



*O sing to God a new song; sing to God, all the earth.
Let the field exult, and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for you.*

- Psalm 96:1, 12

Summer Worship
August 27, 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
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 3

August 27, 2023

Preaching Today	Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i>
Liturgist	Sue Reynolds
Assisting in Worship	Lexi Boudreaux, <i>Transitional Minister</i> Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Creative Worship & Arts Director</i> Kate Layzer, <i>Minister of Street Outreach</i> Leslie Pelton-Cairns and Adam Weiss, <i>Deacon Co-Chairs</i> Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i> Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Psalm 96 collage by Audrey Bellinger <i>All Psalm collages can be viewed in a digital gallery on our website.</i>

Today's Programs and Events

9:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:00 a.m.	Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:00 a.m.	Lemonade on the Lawn and Cake Reception for Lexi Boudreaux

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: 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

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

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in C Major

J.S. Bach

***HYMN 242**

God of Life

***GREETING**

Sue Reynolds

- L: Come home to the presence of God in this time,
C: as we pause to drink in the comfort of community.
- L: Come home to the center of your spirit,
C: resting in the stillness of prayer.
- L: Come home to the hope of expectation,
C: and prepare our hearts for holy surprises.
- L: Come home to connection and resilience,
C: for we are the body of Christ.
- L: Come home to this space of belonging and becoming,
C: for God's presence is here in this sacred time and space.

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Prayer of St. Patrick

Mark Schweizer

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

- L: Let us pray for healing, pardon and peace:
**All: Before you, O God, and before one another,
we confess the harm we have brought on our lives,
the lives of others, and the life of the world.
Forgive us, we pray, for what we have done
and what we have left undone.
Lead us toward wholeness, renew us,
and enable us to grow in love and in faith.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

**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.*

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.

*HYMN 271

Lead Me, Lord

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Lexi Boudreaux

READINGS

Ephesians 5:18-19
1 Thessalonians 5:12-18
Colossians 1:3-6, 11-12; and 3:16-17

SERMON

Dan Smith

*HYMN 378

God, We Thank You For Our People

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Higginbotham

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Kate Layzer

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

***DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise God, all creatures here below;
 Praise God for all that love has done,
 Creator, Christ and Spirit one. Amen.**

ENDING OF AN AUTHORIZED MINISTRY AND LITURGY OF FAREWELL**INTRODUCTION*****WORDS OF GRATITUDE AND GRACE**

Leslie Pelton-Cairns

Leslie: In June, 2021, First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, United Church of Christ, called Lexi to serve as our Transitional Minister, after a year as our Ministerial Intern and two years as Pastoral Associate. Now, with thanks and honor, we bring this ministry to a close and dissolve the pastoral bond that has united us in the labor of the gospel and the joy of Christian fellowship for these fruitful years.

Lexi: Dear First Church, thank you for the love, kindness, and support you have given me in these 5 years.
 As I lay down the duties of the pastoral office,
 I ask first for your forgiveness for all the mistakes I have made,
 things done and left undone.

**C: God is kind and merciful.
 We receive your regret with thanks,
 and we forgive you freely.**

Lexi: I am also grateful for your faithfulness
 and for all the ways you have responded
 to the leadership I have offered you.
 I will carry with me always
 the rich gifts of this fellowship
 and all that you taught me here.

**C: We receive your thankfulness,
 and we humbly accept that God is calling you
 to other places and new ministries.
 We are grateful for your time among us.
 We, too, ask for pardon for the mistakes,
 things done and left undone.**

Lexi : God is kind and merciful.
I receive your regret with thanks,
and I forgive you freely.

**C: Your many gifts to us will always be part of who we are.
Your example and influence will not leave us when you go.
May God bless you and us abundantly,
as we move forward in faith along different paths.
May our hearts always listen for the call of God,
and our wills be ready to respond and follow,
for the sake of Christ's gospel. Amen.**

***VOWS OF RELEASE**

Adam Weiss

Adam: Members and friends of First Church in Cambridge,
do you release Lexi Boudreaux from the duties of Transitional Minister
and from the promises she made to us on the day of her installation?

C: We do, with the help of God.

Adam: Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry
as it unfolds in new ways, especially in her new call
as Pastor of the First Congregational Church in Hopkinton, New Hampshire?

C: We do, with the help of God.

Adam: Lexi, do you release this local church
from turning to you and depending on you?

Lexi: I do, with the help of God.

Adam: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here
and on the relationship with others who will come to serve after you?

Lexi: I do!

***PRAYER**

L: Let us pray:

**C: O God of love and mercy,
You are near to us now, and your presence is a balm.
Help us to trust that the future rests in your care.**

L: Lexi's time among us saw laughter and tears,
hope and disappointment, depth and growth,
and an unwavering faith that you are making all things new.

**C: Teach us to savor our memories with thanks,
as we move in new directions,
faithful to the gospel and to your vision for us,
a way of hospitality, mercy and abundant life.**

L: Shelter us in the palm of your hand
until the day when by your grace we will know
a joyful reunion of feasting and song in your house forever,
where there is no more leaving and goodbye,
but only welcome eternal and everlasting joy. Amen.

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 414

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

*BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Thuma Mina

Hymn 344

1. (Send me, Lord.)
**Send me, Jesus, send me, Jesus,
send me, Jesus, send me, Lord.**
2. (Lead me, Lord.) **Lead me, Jesus...**
3. (Fill me, Lord.) **Fill me, Jesus...**
4. (Thuma mina.)
**Thuma mina, thuma mina,
thuma mina, somandla.**

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in C Major

J.S. Bach



First Church Land Acknowledgment

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

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment [here](#) or by scanning the QR code above



OPENING HYMN

242

God of Life

1. God of life, in Christ you lead us, guid - ing us a -
 2. God of words and Word In - car - nate, words that chal - lenge
 3. God of mus - ic, psalms and an - thems, help us sing your
 4. God of days and years and e - ons, still you call as

long the way. In our past, through joys and sor - rows,
 and em - brace, grant us bold - ness in our speak - ing,
 faith a - new: mel - o - dies ex - pand - ing wor - ship,
 in the past. Work un - done de - mands our la - bor;

you have been our strength and stay. Keep us faith - ful,
 while we know your lov - ing grace. Give us words both
 har - mo - nies en - rich - ing, too. May our lives be
 jus - tice years for peace at last. Yours the vi - sion

true dis - ci - ples, in our learn - ing and our praise,
 clear and win - some, lov - ing hearts and list'n - ing ears,
 hymns in ac - tion, tuned to Christ in note and rhyme,
 and the chal - lenge; ours the mis - sion and the praise.

cel - e - brat - ing past and pres - ent, con - se - crat - ing fu - ture days.
 cel - e - brat - ing past and pres - ent, con - se - crat - ing fu - ture years.
 cel - e - brat - ing past and pres - ent, con - se - crat - ing fu - ture time.
 Cel - e - brat - ing past and pres - ent, con - se - crat - ing fu - ture days.

Lead Me, Lord

271

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy right-ous-ness, make thy way

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

plain be - fore my face. For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord,

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff features a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a quarter note G5. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment.

on - ly, that mak - est me dwell in safe - ty.

The third system concludes the piece. The treble staff has a quarter note A5, a quarter note B5, a quarter note C6, and a quarter note D6. The bass staff ends with a final chord. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

WORDS: Psalms 5:8, 4:8
MUSIC: Samuel S. Wesley, 1861

LEAD ME, LORD
378.548

378 God, We Thank You for Our People

1. God, we thank you for our peo - ple, roots dug deep with - in the soil,
 2. Thank you, God, for gen - tle plea - sure: les - sons learned and se - crets told,
 3. Still we must con - fess be - fore you, some - times, Sav - ior, we have failed;
 4. By your Spir - it of cre - a - tion keep us bold for risk - ing still,

har - dy spir - its, rich in lov - ing, strong for strug - gle, bold for toil.
 hopes and mem - o - ries saved as trea - sure, passed to young ones by the old,
 though we wor - ship and a - dore you, some - times love has not pre - vailed.
 ea - ger in an - ti - ci - pa - tion, ev - er strong to do your will.

Faith - ful Rock of gen - er - a - tions, you whom par - ents' par - ents praised:
 pranks and glo - ries, songs and sto - ries, food by lov - ing hands pre - pared.
 Tem - pers rac - ing, dev - il chas - ing, hearts es - tranged by ice or flame
 Bind us close to one an - oth - er, shar - ing life and death and birth,

here in hope as we re - mem - ber may our song to you be raised.
 God, we bless you for your pres - ence in our tears and laugh - ter shared.
 you trans - form by ways for - giv - ing. Grace a - maz - ing! Grace, your name!
 wel - com - ing as sis - ter, broth - er, all your chil - dren on the earth.

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

414

1. This is a day of new be - gin - nings,
 2. For by the life and death of Je - sus,
 3. Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing,
 4. Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us

time to re - mem - ber and move on,
 love's might - y Spir - it, now as then,
 step from the past and leave be - hind
 to show and share what love can do.

time to be - lieve what love is bring - ing,
 can make for us a world of dif - f'rence
 our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt and griev - ing,
 This is a day of new be - gin - nings—

lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.
 as faith and hope are born a - gain.
 seek - ing new paths, and sure to find.
 our God is mak - ing all things new.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Nancy Kilburn and her family as they mourn the loss of her mother Penny, who died last Sunday afternoon.
- We pray for Perry Neubauer, who has been recovering from shoulder surgery at a rehab hospital.
- We pray for Anita Anger as she negotiates rehab after a recent fall.
- We pray for Ami Brenner's father Jim Rae, who has started a new treatment for melanoma.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing slow-progressing ALS; Ellen Smith, Devin Hansen's aunt; 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 continue to pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, including in Ukraine, Sudan, and Haiti, and especially those displaced and seeking refuge in other countries.
- We pray for all refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water to escape poverty, political persecution, violence, and climate-related disaster.
- We pray for all in Maui who are grieving losses and impacted by recent wildfires, and everyone around the country and globe experiencing deadly heat waves, flooding, and other extreme weather. We continue to pray for our rapidly warming planet and for redoubled efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray for all whose lives are touched by our nation's raging epidemic of gun violence, especially those dealing with related loss and trauma. We pray for ongoing advocacy to create lasting change in our country's gun safety laws.
- We pray for the wellbeing and safety of our trans and gender non-conforming siblings as they face the impact of vitriolic public discourse and of state laws that restrict and criminalize transgender health care, personal expression, and wider LGBTQ+ education.
- 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.

Join the [First Church List](#) to see and offer up more community prayer requests.

THE LAST OF SUMMER AT FIRST CHURCH

Leavetaking Service for Lexi Boudreaux Today

Today we bid farewell to Lexi as she moves forward on her path of faith. It is a time to express gratitude for her invaluable contributions and to wish her well as she embraces new opportunities in service to the Lord. After worship, join us on the lawn for lemonade and a cake reception for Lexi.

You may read letters from our Moderator Moana Bentin and from Lexi Boudreaux in the [Latest News](#) on our website.



Young Adults: Last “Faith on Tap” of the Summer

Wednesday, August 30, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Felipe’s Tacqueria in Harvard Square

Join other 20-30 somethings at First Church for one last summer outing before the hustle of September takes over. Email Phil Jones to RSVP and to stay in the loop for future get-togethers in the fall: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org

Food Pantry Donations on Communion Sundays

Holding Hilary Hopkins in our hearts, First Church continues to provide contributions to the Many Helping Hands Food Pantry. The volunteer-run, donation-driven pantry offers a grocery shopping experience on the second Saturday of each month. You are invited to donate healthy snacks, hygiene products, spices, and (when possible) items bought in bulk/case, as this supports customers having a similar shopping experience. ***First Church donations can be left in the large baskets in the Narthex on the first Sunday of each month, which is next Sunday, September 3.***



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.

LOOKING AHEAD TO OUR FALL REGATHERING



Blessing the Ties: Fall 2023 and Regathering Sunday, September 10

As we regather this fall in worship, in meetings, and on retreat, we look forward to blessing the ties that keep us connected—to one another, to land and lineage, and to our truest selves. As the old hymn goes, “blest be the ties that bind!”

The word Religion is rooted in the Latin word “ligare,” meaning to “bind.” Here at First Church, through our community and covenant we are bound to one another, which is a good thing! The joys and challenges of our lives and our world are too great to encounter alone. We need each other, and the world needs our kind of multigenerational and intergenerational community that draws from the deep and timeless wells of wisdom, resource, and grounding, shared by elders and children, ancestors and descendants. Join us for the first time or again this Regathering Sunday, September 10, for Hybrid Worship at 11:00 a.m. and for a Regathering Lunch in Margaret Jewett Hall at 12:15 p.m., as we join together and bless the ties that have kept this beloved community together “from generation to generation!” Staff and lay leaders will offer a brief orientation to our fall programs and offerings, as well as other important updates about our life together at First Church that you won’t want to miss!

Fall Pastoral and Building Staff Changes

This fall, we are thrilled to welcome back **Carla Arevalo Carbajal** and **Ahmaad Edmund** in their new roles as half-time Pastoral Associates! As they complete the third year of their Master of Divinity program at Harvard Divinity School, they will no longer be ministerial interns, but full members of our staff. In addition, we will soon welcome HDS third-year Master of Divinity student **Emma Thomas** as our new Ministerial Intern! [Read more about Carla, Ahmaad, and Emma.](#) In case you missed it, in June, we said farewell to beloved Sexton **Kimel Williams**, who was ready for a change after many years. And, Labor Day is the last day for our newest Sexton **Jason Taggart**, who will be returning full-time to his career as master-brewer... [Read more about our Sexton staff.](#)

Registration Now Open: All-Church Fall Retreat at Craigville Friday, September 29 - Sunday, October 1

Register now to join us on the Cape for a weekend of community-building in fellowship, formation, and fun. All ages are invited to come together as a multigenerational community to talk, laugh, play, dance, eat, sing, worship, and connect! [Complete this registration form](#) and stay tuned for more details on this year’s retreat theme.



LOOKING AHEAD TO OUR FALL REGATHERING



Register for Church School 2023-24

First Church's Church School offers a variety of opportunities for Christian formation for children and youth, including age-based classes, creative arts and pastoral care workshops, child care for little ones, and youth group activities for teens. All children from infants through high school seniors are welcome in the Church School! You can read all the details on the [Faith Formation for Children & Youth](#) page on our website.

Registering your children helps us to prepare for them, but drop-ins are always welcome. [Please complete this registration form](#) to let us know a bit about your children. Church School begins on Regathering Sunday, September 10.

Do you have any extra room in your home and heart to help house Welcome Corps refugees arriving in America?

Then we especially need you to support our effort! "First Church & Friends" is now an official sponsor group for [Welcome Corps](#), and we are preparing to welcome two refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa in October 2023. These newcomers will have Official Refugee Status and full access to government benefits; our team will support them in a 90-day resettlement effort. Our plan is to house them in Cambridge during this period, where they will have full access to our community and City benefits; they could then move elsewhere once more established.

We are asking for volunteers able to house two refugees for 2-3 months. They will be related adults, so they can share one bedroom. You may have heard that Governor Healey has declared a State of Emergency regarding the lack of housing for refugees and has asked for residents to open their homes. We at First Church are subject to the same issues in finding housing for the Welcome Corps newcomers.

If you think you might be able to provide housing or know someone who can, please call Alice Kidder at 617-276-7622 to discuss, or email her at flintkiddr@aol.com. If you can join our effort in any other way, big or small, [please review and complete this form](#). If you have questions about being a volunteer, please email Martha Mueller Cook at: marthamuellercook@gmail.com.





THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, August 28

5:30 p.m. Executive Council & Deacons Farewell Barbeque for Lexi, The Parsonage

Tuesday, August 29

1:00 p.m. Communications Team Meeting, Harter Room

Wednesday, August 30

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

11:30 a.m. Staff Lunch with Lexi

7:00 p.m. Young Adults: Faith on Tap, Felipe's in Harvard Square

Friday, September 1

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

Sunday, September 3 - Morning Worship returns to 11:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream

12:00 p.m. Lemonade on the Lawn

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

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

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

617-547-2724 • info@firstchurchcambridge.org • www.firstchurchcambridge.org

 [/firstchurchcambridge](https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchcambridge)  [/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchInCambridge)  [/c/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstChurchInCambridge)