



*Praise God, all you nations! Extol her, all you peoples! For great is her steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of God endures forever. Praise God!*

- Psalm 117

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Regathering Season  
October 15, 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.

**October 15, 2023**

**Preaching Today** Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, *guest preacher*  
**Liturgist** Susie Hayward  
**Assisting in Worship** Carla Arevalo, *Pastoral Associate*  
Ahmaad Edmund, *Pastoral Associate*  
Jan Jeffers Lo, *for the Shelter Oversight Committee*  
Lee Prouty, *tech support*  
Dan Smith, *Senior Minister*  
Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

**Bulletin Cover Image** Psalm 117 collage by Audrey Bellinger  
*All Psalm collages can be viewed in [a digital gallery](#) on our website.*

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

### Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: For a Deeper Dive, Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)  
9:30 a.m. Confirmation Class for 8/9th graders, The Well  
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, Middler, and Bible 101 classes  
12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall  
12:30 p.m. Conversation with Rev. Dr. Cannon, Harter Room and via Zoom  
12:30 p.m. Newcomers Gathering with New Member Prep, Hastings Common  
2:00 p.m. Cambridge Common Youth Group, meet on Cambridge Common  
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 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](http://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](mailto:info@firstchurchcambridge.org)

### Minister On Call

If you have an urgent pastoral need, please call 617-547-2724 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**

Fantasia

William Byrd

**\*HYMN 417**

All My Hope on God Is Founded

**\*GREETING**

Susie Hayward

L: Siblings in the Spirit, whether you are here for an hour or a lifetime,  
welcome to this household of grace!

**C: Here, where our lives are grounded in the hope and healing of God;**

L: here, where we grow together in community and belonging;

**C: here, where we pray and work together for peace and justice in our world.**

L: Sisters, brothers, siblings in the Spirit, come gather in,

**C: and let God renew our trust, faith and love!**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

Susie Hayward and Dan Smith

**ANTHEM**

Mercy's Free

Lionel Breedlove

**CONFESSING**

**INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

**SUNG PRAYER**

Sanctuary

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,  
pure and holy, tried and true.**

**With thanksgiving, I'll be a living  
sanctuary for you!**

*(Twice through)*

**SILENCE**

**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 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.*

**\*HYMN 340**

**Peace Before Us**

*Children up through 7th grade are now invited to Church School classes. Godly Play (PreK-4th grade), Middlers (5th grade), and Bible 101 (6/7th grade) 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.*

**OPENING THE WORD**

**PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING**

**RESPONSIVE READING**

Psalm 33:1-5

L: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.  
Praise befits the upright.

**C: Praise the Lord with the lyre;  
make melody to God with the harp of ten strings.**

L: Sing to God a new song;  
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

**C: For the word of the Lord is upright,  
and all God’s work is done in faithfulness.**

L: God loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

**READING**

Isaiah 56:1-7

**SERMON**

Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon

**\*HYMN 504**

God of Justice, God of Mercy

**SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ahmaad Edmund

**MINISTRY MOMENT**

Jan Jeffers Lo

**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



Give Online



Give by Text



I've Given Already

## OFFERTORY

My God, My Portion, and My Love

Trad., arr. James Hopkins

## \*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Praise God, the Source of life and birth,  
Praise God, the Word, who came to earth,  
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame,  
All glory, honor, to God's name. Amen.**

## GOING FORTH

## \*HYMN 516

O Day of God, Draw Near

## \*BENEDICTION

## \*VOLUNTARY

Alman

William Byrd

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### 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.

OPENING HYMN

417 All My Hope on God Is Founded

1. All my hope on God is found-ed, who does all my trust re-new.  
 2. Day by day the al-might-y giv-er boun-teous gifts on us be-stows;  
 3. Still from earth to God e-ter-nal hymns of grate-ful praise be sung,

Safe through change and chance God guides me, on-ly good and on-ly true.  
 with de-light our souls are nour-ished, plea-sure leads us where we go.  
 high a-bove all prais-es prais-ing for the gift of Christ the Son.

God un-known, One a-lone seeks to claim my heart as home.  
 Love does stand at God's hand; joy a-waits each new com-mand.  
 Hear Christ's call one and all; those who fol-low shall not fall.

WORDS: Joachim Neander, c. 1680; para. Robert Bridges, 1899, alt.  
 MUSIC: Herbert Howells, 1930, 1977

MICHAEL  
 87.87.337

PEACE HYMN

340

Peace Before Us



1. Peace be - fore us, peace be - hind us, peace be - neath our feet.
2. Love be - fore us, love be - hind us, love be - neath our feet.
3. Light be - fore us, light be - hind us, light be - neath our feet.
4. Christ be - fore us, Christ be - hind us, Christ be - neath our feet.



*Additional verses: joy, truth, hope.*

WORDS: David Haas, (b.1957), alt., based on a Navaho prayer  
MUSIC: David Haas, (b.1957); harm. FCC, 1997

PRAYER FOR PEACE  
445.447

Words, music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc.  
Harm. © 1998 FCC Houston TX



- Peace with - in us, peace a - bove us, let all a - round us be peace.  
Love with - in us, love a - bove us, let all a - round us be love.  
Light with - in us, light a - bove us, let all a - round us be light.  
Christ with - in us, Christ a - bove us, let all a - round us be Christ.



504

God of Justice, God of Mercy



1. God of jus - tice, God of mer - cy, make us mer - ci - ful and just!
2. How can we, as peo - ple cho - sen by your grace for serv - ice here—
3. You have formed us, God of rain - bows, in your im - age for your will.
4. Grant all peo - ple work with mean - ing, strength to care for those they love.
5. So the vi - sion you have plant - ed in each hu - man mind and heart



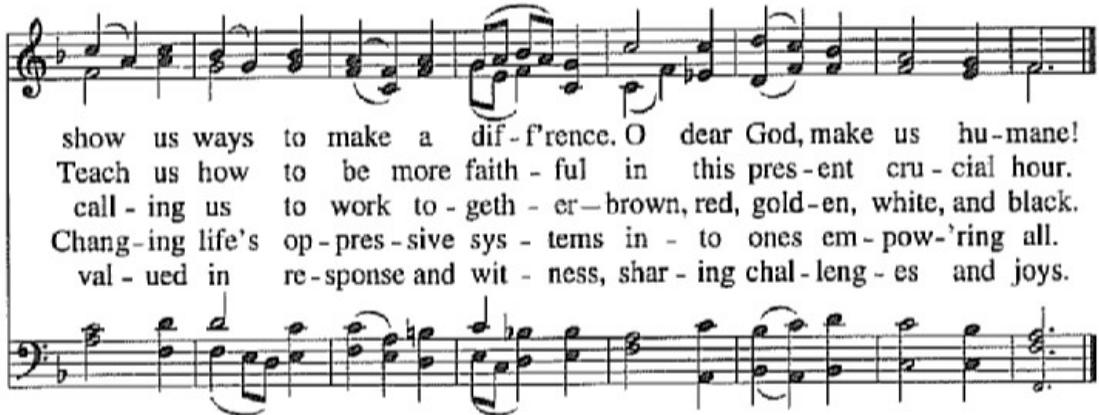
Help us see all your cre - a - tion as from you a sa - cred trust.  
 how en - dure an - oth - er's hard - ship with - out of - fering hope or cheer?  
 See - ing our di - verse re - flec - tions, trust - ing you, we mar - vel still;  
 Food for ta - ble, truth for tell - ing, chal - leng - es to rise a - bove.  
 now be - comes the spark of ac - tion call - ing us to do our part.



And when peo - ple cry in an - guish for their own or oth - ers' pain,  
 God, for - give us, we be - seech you, when our love fails to em - power.  
 for our col - ors, strengths and tal - ents show what one a - lone would lack,  
 But re - mind us, God of jus - tice, this is now our work, our call!  
 Keep that vi - sion clear be - fore us: men and wom - en, girls and boys,



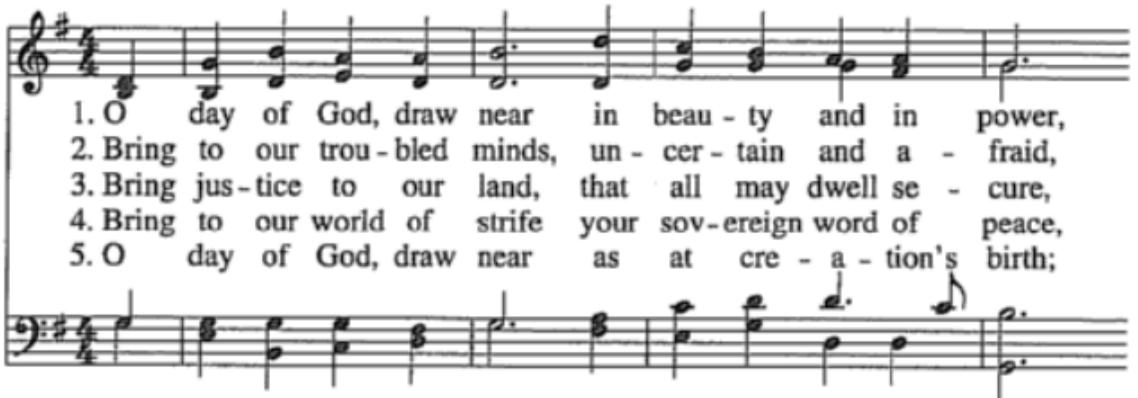
CLOSING HYMN



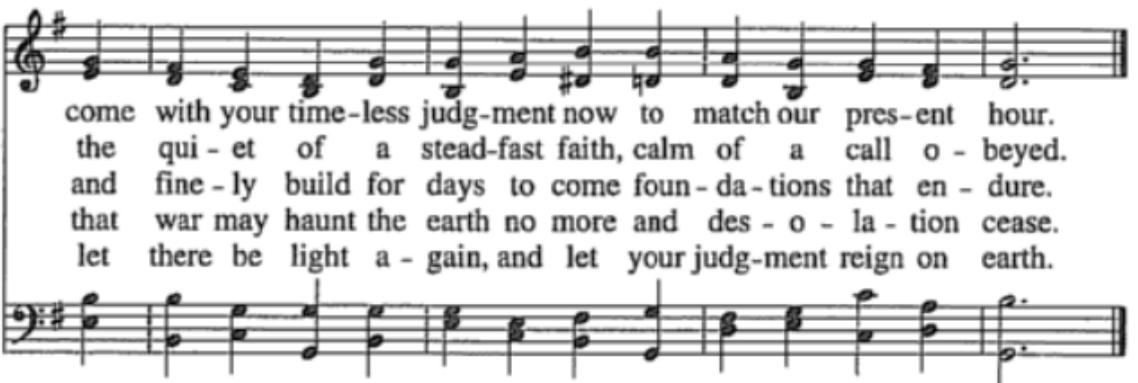
show us ways to make a dif-f'rence. O dear God, make us hu-mane!  
 Teach us how to be more faith-ful in this pres-ent cru-cial hour.  
 call-ing us to work to-geth-er—brown, red, gold-en, white, and black.  
 Chang-ing life's op-pres-sive sys-tems in-to ones em-pow-'ring all.  
 val-ued in re-sponse and wit-ness, shar-ing chal-leng-es and joys.

O Day of God, Draw Near

516



1. O day of God, draw near in beau-ty and in power,  
 2. Bring to our trou-bled minds, un-cer-tain and a-fraid,  
 3. Bring jus-tice to our land, that all may dwell se-cure,  
 4. Bring to our world of strife your sov-ereign word of peace,  
 5. O day of God, draw near as at cre-a-tion's birth;



come with your time-less judg-ment now to match our pres-ent hour.  
 the qui-et of a stead-fast faith, calm of a call o-beyed.  
 and fine-ly build for days to come foun-da-tions that en-dure.  
 that war may haunt the earth no more and des-o-la-tion cease.  
 let there be light a-gain, and let your judg-ment reign on earth.

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

### Prayer for Israel and Palestine

We pray for an end to the war and the heartwrenching, horrific violence in Israel and Palestine. We pray for all hostages and their families; for those living in daily fear for their and their loved ones' safety; and for all who are grieving the hundreds of deaths of Israelis, Palestinians, and others in Israel, Gaza, and around the world, including members of our congregation who have close ties with people who are currently in the area.

We decry the violent Hamas attacks and terrorism in all forms. We pray for redoubled diplomatic efforts to address underlying systemic justice issues in the region, including the existing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories. We continue to pray for a just peace in Israel and Palestine and throughout the region. We also pray for Jews and Muslims, nearby and around the world, who are facing increased threats and acts of anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim discrimination, hatred, and violence.

- We pray for Marianne Jensen and her ongoing healing following recent surgery.
- We give thanks for the life of Brian O'Donovan, who died last week from glioblastoma and who was celebrated here in a service of music, poetry, and heartfelt reflection on Wednesday.
- We pray for Jodi Melichar and her family, including husband Bappu and son Kiran, as they mourn the loss of her father Dr. Bob Melichar, who died recently after a long struggle with Alzheimer's.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who has been re-hospitalized this week for various serious medical issues.
- We pray for Poppy and Brent Coffin as Poppy recovers from fractured wrist and vertebrae following a bad fall
- We pray for Gaylen Morgan, who is grateful for our cards and prayers, and who is recovering well at home from vestibular surgery.
- We pray for Karen Anne Zee, who is recovering at home from spinal surgery following a fall.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing slow-progressing ALS; Jim Rae, Ami Brenner's father; 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.

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We continue to pray for the health of our democracy in the wake of the House Speaker's removal last week. May our elected representatives find moral courage, may the Holy Spirit protect and guide our social movements for justice, and may we each continue to do our small part to make God's kin-dom in this time.
- We pray for workers who are unemployed, laid off, or displaced. We pray for immigrants waiting for work permits or desperate for work, and for union workers who are striking for better pay and working conditions.
- We continue to pray for all impacted by and recovering from recent natural and climate related disasters – the earthquake in Morocco, wildfires in Maui, floods in Leominster and Libya. We continue to pray for our rapidly warming planet and for redoubled efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, including in Ukraine, Sudan, and Haiti. As we prepare to welcome two refugees through the WelcomeCorps, we pray for all political and climate refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water.
- 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.*

## TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

### Photography of First Church Community Today, October 15

[Theory One Design](#), our website developer and communications consultant, are with us today with cameras in hand to snap a selection of photographs of our community. We are excited to add new images to our media library for use on our website and in our communications. If you have questions about our use of photos or would like to request that we not use your image, please contact [Dan](#) or [Sarah](#).



### For a Deeper Dive:

#### Reflective Conversational Gatherings with Duncan Hollomon

Today and Sunday, October 22, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

For those with a desire for more in-depth exploration of some of the key concepts and practices in our shared Christian life, Duncan Hollomon hosts two reflective conversational gatherings in October. Together we'll reflect on such knotty questions as "What does a belief in God look like? Is it necessary to being a Christian?" "What is the role of forgiveness? How do we do it?" "What do we mean by sin? Is it part of our nature?" "What is an appropriate response to the notion that Jesus died for our sins?" Rather than analyze such questions in the abstract, our emphasis will be on sharing our personal experience and approach.

In addition to his commitment to creating a container for respectful dialogue, Duncan brings a background in psychotherapy, pastoral counseling, mindfulness meditation, as well as experience with Eastern spiritual traditions such as Buddhism, Sufism and Taoism. "No previous experience required" — just bring a curious mind and an open heart. If there are specific questions or topics that you would like to have explored, please contact Duncan Hollomon at [duncanhollomon@cs.com](mailto:duncanhollomon@cs.com)

### Confirmation Class for 8/9th Graders

Today, 9:30 - 10:45 a.m., The Well

Our 8th and 9th grade Confirmands meet this morning for a session entitled "Creation Meets Evolution."



### 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.



## TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



### **Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon**

**Today at 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and via livestream**

The Missions & Social Justice Committee supports various efforts and organizations for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel, including [Churches for Middle East Peace](#), a group that has been a stalwart witness in this area. We are so pleased to welcome as a guest preacher CMEP Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC). Rev. Dr. Cannon will share her perspectives on the ongoing crisis in Palestine and Israel. Cannon is the

author of several books including the award-winning Social Justice Handbook: *Small Steps for a Better World* and editor of *A Land Full of God: Christian Perspectives on the Holy Land*. Her work has been highlighted in The New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN, Chicago Tribune, Christianity Today, Leadership Magazine, The Christian Post, Jerusalem Post, EU Parliament Magazine, Huffington Post, and other international media outlets.

### **After-Worship Conversation with Rev. Cannon**

**Today, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m., Harter Room and via Zoom**

Join our guest preacher Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon for conversation following the worship service. Grab a cup of coffee or tea in Margaret Jewett Hall (or your own kitchen) before heading to the Harter Room in person or via Zoom for this hybrid time of reflection.

### **Preparing for Joining Sunday**

**Sunday, October 15, 12:15 - 1:00 p.m., Library**

Dear friends, we are happy to walk with you as you contemplate membership at First Church in Cambridge! Do you sense a growing connection to First Church as your spiritual home? Have you recently started attending and enjoy meeting new individuals within our community? Do you wish to support others in their journey? If your answer is “yes” to any of these questions, we extend a warm invitation for you to join us in our preparation session after worship. Explore membership and foster deeper connections with fellow congregants as we prepare for our next Joining Sunday on October 22. For further information about New Member sessions or our Newcomers community events in general, please reach out to [Carla Arevalo](#), the staff liaison for the Welcoming Team.



### **Cambridge Common Youth Group: Scavenger Hunt**

**Today, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., meet on Cambridge Common**

Teens from 8th to 12th grade (which includes our Confirmation Class) are invited to gather for monthly service opportunities and social events on third Sundays from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Today, youth will engage in a Scavenger Hunt in Harvard Square.

## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



### Night Song

Sunday evenings, 7:30 - 8:15p.m.

Sanctuary and via livestream

Night Song is a worship opportunity that offers stillness and sublime music in a darkened sanctuary for respite and reset...

[Read more about Night Song.](#)

### Housing, Housing, Housing!

## WELCOME CORPS

First Church & Friends' [Welcome Corps](#) effort has been preparing for months to welcome two refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa this fall. However, we still really need help with Housing!

1. We need temporary housing for the refugees for 2- 3 months, so if you have any room in your home or know of anyone else who does, please let us know! These newcomers will have Official Refugee Status and full access to government benefits. Our team will support them in a minimum 90-day resettlement effort.
2. Alice Kidder has been heading up our Housing effort to find both temporary and longer-term housing for the refugees, including subsidized housing options. But Alice needs your help! If you have any capability to help us out in this area, please let us know. We would greatly appreciate it. If you can join us in our effort with time or housing, [complete this form as a first step](#). If you have any questions about being a volunteer, please email Martha Mueller Cook at [marthamuellercook@gmail.com](mailto:marthamuellercook@gmail.com).



### Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m.

Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Join Ginny Harlan, Martha Cook, and Dan Smith for a monthly support group where we offer each other companionship and spiritual resources as we grow into our elderhood. In this special season of our lives, let's explore together some of those

Big Questions as we let God's presence and this community hold us. We can become elders together as we seek dignity, courage, grace, hope, peace, and wisdom in the ending phase of our lives. We are using Joan Chittister's book [The Gift of Years](#) as a starting point to conversation and reflection, and our reading for this month is "Newness (pp. 45-50). Please remember to come prepared to share a passage from the reading that is particularly compelling for you. You are also welcome to join at any time; homework is not a requirement for participation!

## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

### All-Church Fire Drill Sunday, October 22

Next Sunday at the end of our worship service, we will conduct a fire drill. The alarm will sound, and we will ask everyone to leave the building through the closest and safest exits before returning for after-church refreshments. Children in Church School classes will exit the building with their teachers. Instructions will be provided during worship in preparation for the drill. Thank you for participating in this effort to keep us prepared for emergencies.



### Listening Session on First Church Cockerel Weathervane Sunday, October 22, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

#### Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us for the third in a series of listening sessions, when the First Church community will have a chance to reflect on, ask questions about and consider next steps following the decision to remove the cockerel, which was announced to the congregation on Sunday, September 10, 2023.

[See this brochure](#) for more history about the cockerel weathervane, as well as a blessing.

### Healing Sunday, October 29 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary and via livestream

Healing Sundays at First Church are an opportunity to reflect together on God's healing peace and to participate in a simple healing ritual involving a brief prayer, laying on of hands, and—for those who wish—anointing with oil, an ancient Christian practice now being revived across the ecumenical spectrum of churches. At the time of the sermon, we offer instead a brief introduction to the ritual and then invite forward all who would like to participate. For those who prefer to remain seated, there will be music and a time of silence for individual prayers.





## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

### First Church Shelter Presents The Annual Doris Beauvais Luncheon and Mitch Snyder Awards Sunday, October 29, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

The First Church Shelter warmly invites everyone to their annual celebration of those doing good and important work for unhoused people across the Commonwealth. Join us for a delicious luncheon followed by the presentation of the 2023 Mitch Snyder awards.

This year's recipients include:

- **Steven Murray**, *Grayken Center Overdose Hotline*
- **Princess Baptiste-Maloney**, *Barbara McInnis House*
- **Terry Rumsey & Robin Lasersohn**, *Greenseeds Grants*
- **Ellen Semonoff & Elizabeth Mengers**, *Dept. of Human Service Programs, Cambridge*

### An Appeal from the Gifts Discernment Committee

First Church is an amazing community, and each of us makes a difference here! We each bring a wide variety of life experiences, our own unique humor and insights, and differing gifts or skills. The magic happens when we share them, asking God to help us accomplish together what none of us could accomplish alone. And—surprise!— there is deep joy in getting to know our siblings in faith better, as well as growing in faith and ministry.



Most of us have full schedules and obligations beyond this church. But think for a minute: what could you bring to the magic of this community? The folks on the Gifts Discernment Committee are the matchmakers who try to shepherd your talents and interests to the various committees that lead and enliven our church life.

We welcome a chat if you would like to imagine together some possibilities, based on the amount of time you can share. We welcome suggestions if you know someone who could bring wisdom or talent to a committee—be it Fellowship, Buildings & Grounds, Christian Formation, or maybe Missions and Social Justice, Finance, Shelter Oversight, or Deacons. More information about each of these groups can be found on our website [here](#). Perhaps you have something altogether different in mind, such as helping to organize a particular event? If so, we'd love to hear it.

Do be in touch,

Your Gifts Discernment Committee:

Beth Loomis, Mary Robinson, Dave Kidder, Jenny Stuart, and Gail Breeze

[P.S. Learn more about Gifts Discernment and Service at First Church!](#)

## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

### Debt Retirement Appeal September 20 Update

As was reported by Associate Treasurer Jim Cairns at our Regathering Luncheon, First Church currently has \$301,000 pledged towards our total goal of \$450,000. When we shared an update in July, a few members of the congregation made a “match” challenge of \$50,000 to encourage new and accelerated pledges to help pay down the debt more quickly. As of today, \$230,000 has been pledged to be paid in 2023, which is an increase of \$110,000 since July. We have more than met the match! If all the funds pledged for this year are paid by December 31, we will have cut five years off the loan repayment period and saved over \$63,000 of interest payments.



This is a significant step in our efforts to improve our financial sustainability. However, we still have a way to go to fully retire this loan. At the moment, we have \$71,000 pledged to be paid in 2024 and 2025. We need at least another \$100,000 in pledges for 2024 if we are to maintain our momentum. So, if you have not yet made a pledge we encourage you to prayerfully consider what you might be able to do.

Please reach out to Jim Cairns ([asstreasurer@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:asstreasurer@firstchurchcambridge.org)) or Karen McArthur ([karenmc@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:karenmc@firstchurchcambridge.org)) if you have any questions. You can make a pledge by filling out [this form](#) or emailing Karen. We continue to feel gratitude for the generosity and commitment of this congregation - thank you!

[Learn more about the Debt Retirement Appeal.](#)

# FAITH IN ACTION

## CHRISTIAN & JEWISH VISIONS FOR SOLIDARITY, LIBERATION, & JUSTICE IN PALESTINE/ISRAEL



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1-2PM  
HDS BRAUN ROOM (SWARTZ HALL 101)

### SPEAKERS

**Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon**  
Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace, Evangelical Covenant Church Pastor



**Mikhael Manekin**  
Religion and Public Life Fellow in Conflict and Peace, Director of The Alliance Fellowship

Moderated by Diane L. Moore, Associate Dean of Religion and Public Life

Lunch will be provided. Register at [tinyurl.com/faith-action](https://tinyurl.com/faith-action).



**HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL**  
Religion and Public Life  
Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative



# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## Monday, October 16

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

## Tuesday, October 17

- 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
- 7:00 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, via Zoom

## Wednesday, October 18

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

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

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

## Thursday, October 19

- 6:00 p.m. Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Stewardship Committee, via Zoom

## Friday, October 20

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

## Sunday, October 22

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: For a Deeper Dive, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 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, Middler, and Bible 101 Classes
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common
- 12:30 p.m. All-Church Listening Session on Cockerel Weathervane, MJH
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

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