



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

Regathering Season
October 22, 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

October 22, 2023

Preaching Today	Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i>
Liturgist	Susie Neubauer
Assisting in Worship	Carla Arevalo, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Justin Brueggeman, <i>guest musician</i> Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Creative Worship & Arts Director</i> Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i> Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i> Emma Thomas, <i>Ministerial Intern</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Psalm 117 collage by Audrey Bellinger <i>All Psalm collages can be viewed in a digital gallery on our website.</i>

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 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
12:00 p.m.	All-Church Fire Drill
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments in Hastings Common
12:30 p.m.	Congregation-Wide Meeting on First Church Cockerel Weathervane, MJH
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 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 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

Elegy

George Thalben-Ball

*HYMN 100

By Gracious Powers

*GREETING

Susie Neubauer

L: Grace, mercy and peace to you from God!

C: And to the whole world, peace!

L: Siblings in the Spirit, our God is with us night and morning.

C: and never fails to greet us each and every day.

L: God meets us wherever we are,

C: renewing our lives, restoring our souls,

L: and brings our spirits to comfort and rest.

C: Then let us gather now, and give God thanks and praise. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Susie Neubauer and Sarah Higginbotham

ANTHEM

Psalm 16

Bay Psalm book, text alt. Denise Karuth

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

All: God of tender mercy and love,

**we confess that we sometimes lose sight
of your abiding presence in hard times.**

**We forget to share our sins and our sorrows
with each other and with you.**

**We forget that we are only human,
and so forgiven by you, and loved, and free.**

Be an ever-present help through stress and struggle.

**Be our rock and our strength, our shield and our assurance,
that we may not fear nor falter.**

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 C-28

God's Forgiveness Waits

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

READING

Exodus 33:12-23

SERMON

Dan Smith

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Carla Arevalo

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Emma Thomas

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

O Lord, Give Thy Holy Spirit

John Harper

***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 461**

We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

***BENEDICTION**

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in C

J. S. Bach

***FIRE DRILL**

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

100

By Gracious Powers

Unison

1. By gra-cious powers so won-der-ful-ly shel-tered,
 2. Yet is this heart by its old foe tor-ment-ed,
 3. And when this cup you give is filled to brim-ming
 4. Yet when a-gain in this same world you give us

and con-fi-dent-ly wait-ing, come what may,
 still e-vil days bring bur-dens hard to bear;
 with bit-ter suf-f'ring, hard to un-der-stand,
 the joy we had, the bright-ness of your sun,

we know that God is with us night and morn-ing,
 O give our fright-ened souls the sure sal-va-tion
 we take it thank-ful-ly and with-out trem-bling,
 we shall re-mem-ber all the days we lived through,

and nev-er fails to greet us each new day.
 for which, O God, you taught us to pre-pare.
 out of so good and so be-loved a hand.
 and our whole life shall then be yours a-lone.

WORDS: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1944; tr. Fred Pratt Green, 1972
 MUSIC: Herbert G. Hobbs, 1976; harm. Jan Helmut Wubbena, 1976

BONHOEFFER
 11 10.11 10

PEACE HYMN

C-28

God's Forgiveness Waits

God's for-give-ness waits, pa-tient as God a-lone, work-ing up-on the

The first system of musical notation for the hymn. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "God's for-give-ness waits, pa-tient as God a-lone, work-ing up-on the".

hu-man heart like wa-ter drip-ping on a stone; like

The second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "hu-man heart like wa-ter drip-ping on a stone; like". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a simple bass line.

wa-ter on a stone, wear-ing the stone a-way, God's mer-cy calls un-

The third system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "wa-ter on a stone, wear-ing the stone a-way, God's mer-cy calls un-". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a simple bass line.

to it-self the hard-ened heart that can-not pray. The

The fourth and final system of musical notation. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "to it-self the hard-ened heart that can-not pray. The". The piano accompaniment concludes with chords and a simple bass line.

PEACE HYMN, cont'd.

heart that can-not pray will some-day praise God's name with ev-ery voice on

earth un-til the stones them-selves God's grace pro - claim. Praise

God! the time-less one, for God's for-give-ness waits, e - ter-nal, ten-der,

age-less, true, to save the world that God cre - ates.

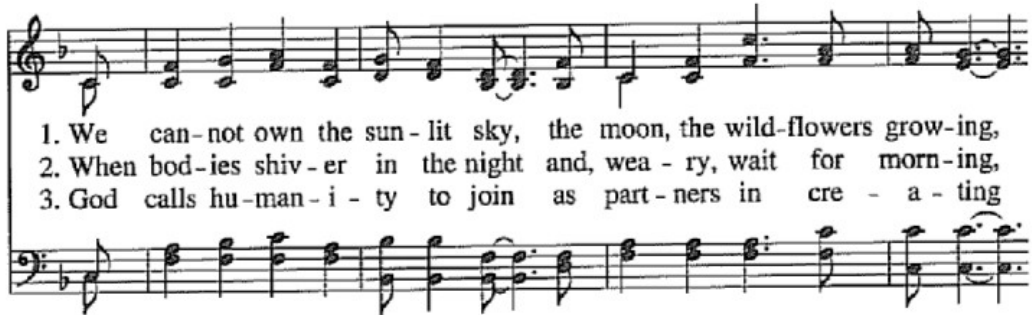
WORDS: Kate Layzer

MUSIC: Peter Sykes

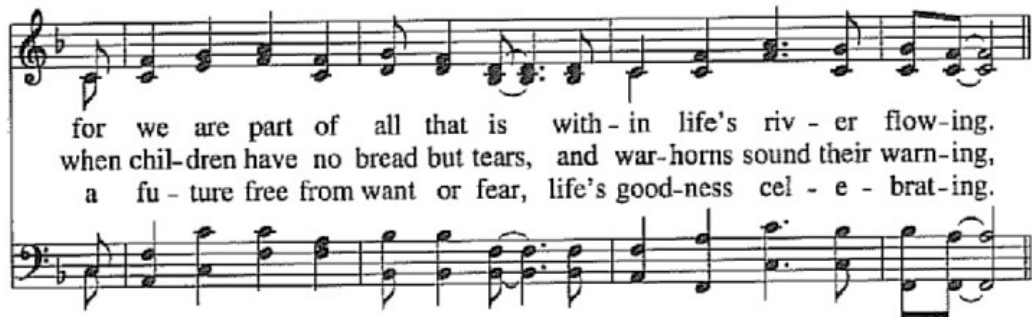
The images in this hymn come from a sermon given by Allen Happe

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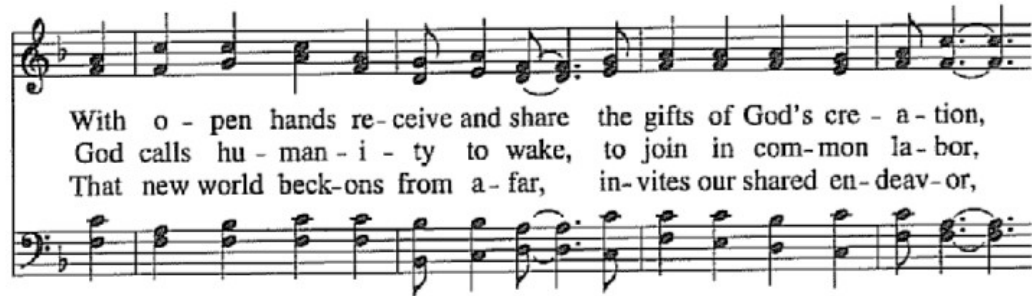
We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky



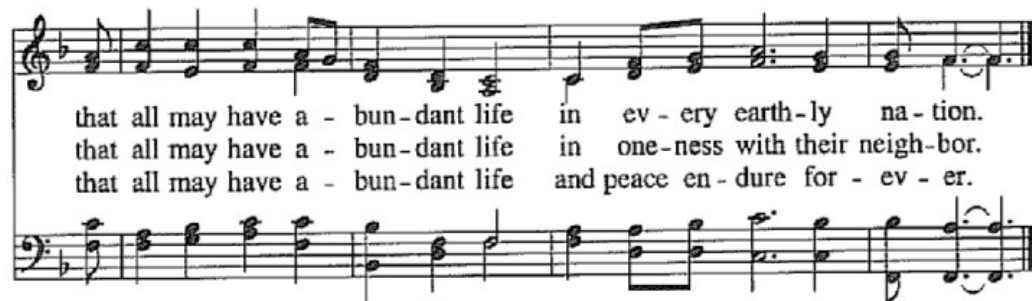
1. We can-not own the sun-lit sky, the moon, the wild-flowers grow-ing,
 2. When bod-ies shiv-er in the night and, wea-ry, wait for morn-ing,
 3. God calls hu-man-i-ty to join as part-ners in cre-a-ting



for we are part of all that is with-in life's riv-er flow-ing,
 when chil-dren have no bread but tears, and war-horns sound their warn-ing,
 a fu-ture free from want or fear, life's good-ness cel-e-brat-ing.



With o-pen hands re-ceive and share the gifts of God's cre-a-tion,
 God calls hu-man-i-ty to wake, to join in com-mon la-bor,
 That new world beck-ons from a-far, in-vites our shared en-deav-or,



that all may have a-bun-dant life in ev-ery earth-ly na-tion.
 that all may have a-bun-dant life in one-ness with their neigh-bor.
 that all may have a-bun-dant life and peace en-dure for-ev-er.

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 upon 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 against Israel last weekend. We decry retaliation that involves violence against civilians, including the shutting off of water, fuel, and food to Gaza. We pray for redoubled diplomatic efforts to address the escalating 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 ourselves, that we will be faithful, compassionate, and open to God's love and leading, and to all whom we encounter through these tension-filled times. Across whatever division or disagreement, may our words and deeds seek to honor the humanity and God-given dignity of every human being.

- We pray in celebration with Peter Byerly and Naomi Feingold, who were married last weekend.
- We pray for Marianne Jensen and her ongoing healing following recent surgery.
- 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 Poppy and Brent Coffin as Poppy recovers from fractured wrist and vertebrae following a bad fall.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who continues to be treated in the hospital for various serious medical issues.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing 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.
- We continue to pray for the health of our democracy in the wake of the House Speaker's removal. 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.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

- 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 earthquakes in Afghanistan and Morocco, wildfires in Maui, and floods in 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 Welcome Corps, 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.



For a Deeper Dive:

Reflective Conversational Gatherings with Duncan Hollomon Today, 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 the second of two reflective conversational gatherings. 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. [Read more](#)

All-Church Fire Drill Today, October 22

Today 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.



TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



Congregation-Wide Meeting on First Church Cockerel Weathervane Today, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us for a congregation-wide session after worship, when leaders will summarize what we've heard in listening sessions thus far. We will 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.

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.



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.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

Young Adults: Faith on Tap

Monday, October 23, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Bow Market, Somerville

First Church has a lively group of young adults (undergrad-early 30s). If you're new to church, or to the area, this is a great place to meet new faces and casually connect with peers at FCC. Join the mailing list to stay up to date on get togethers by emailing: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org. Then, join us for our next get-together at Bow Market, Somerville, on Monday, October 23, at 7:00 p.m.



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.

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





A FUTURE WITH HOPE

Stewardship 2024

Sunday, November 5

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation

12:30 p.m. Saints & Stewards Luncheon

Sunday, November 12

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation

Sunday, November 19

11:00 a.m. Pledge Sunday



Joining Sunday, November 12

Have you been thinking about exploring membership at First Church in Cambridge? Do you have a growing sense that First Church is where you belong? Membership at First Church involves joining the church through covenantal promises. In addition to engaging in the life and ministries of the church, members are given the opportunity to vote at congregational meetings. If you are ready to take this next step, we invite you to our next Joining Sunday on November 12. The deadline for submitting your information and a short introductory bio to be included in the bulletin is Wednesday, November 1. [Register here.](#)



New members are invited to gather in Hastings Common at 10:00 a.m. on November 12 to receive their flowers and name tags, and to get any questions answered before worship begins. If you have any questions or would like to talk more about Joining Sunday, please do not hesitate to reach out to [Carla Arevalo.](#)

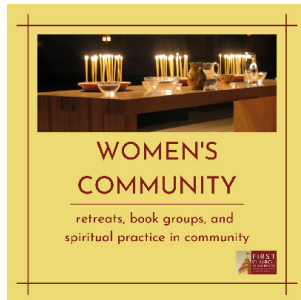
LOOKING AHEAD

Spiritual Practice of Reparations: A Workshop with Dave Ragland Sunday, November 12, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

Our shared local legacies of slavery, colonization, and white supremacy call us to ground our work in ongoing learning, relationship-building, and lasting commitment. Please join us for an afternoon with Dr. David Ragland, co-director and co-founder of the [Truth Telling Project](#) and director of the [Grassroots Reparations Campaign](#). Dr. Ragland will speak about the various ways ordinary people can build a spiritual and practical culture of reparative justice work. There will be time for questions and for envisioning what reparations can look like in our community, along with several immediate, accessible, joyful suggested actions that you can take towards healing and reparation work. Space is limited. [Please RSVP here](#).



Sponsored by First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, in partnership with Old Cambridge Baptist Church, Christ Church in Cambridge, Harvard Epworth United Methodist Church, First Parish Unitarian Universalist, University Lutheran Church and the Massachusetts Reparations Interfaith Coalition.



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

Please join us for a discussion of [The Water Dancer](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates. This dramatic book, set amid the atrocities of slavery, tells the story of a man who uses memory, faith, and unique personal power to reclaim the humanity of enslaved people. Reading this will provide a connection with FCC's "Wade in the Water: Remembering and Honoring Enslaved Persons at First Church" textile art project. All those in the First Church community who identify as women are welcome.

Join Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) "Stand in the G.A.P." response: Give, Act, and Pray

Following on Church for Middle East Peace Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon's October 15 sermon at First Church, you are invited to "Stand in the G.A.P." with CMEP and Give, Act, and Pray. We are grieved by the war between Israel and Hamas. There is still work to do for peace and justice. CMEP has issued a number of statements, which you can read here: [October 12](#), [October 9](#), and [October 7](#). CMEP also affirms the [letter](#) from the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem and co-signed the United Nations in the [call](#) not to ignore Gazans. We have been praying weekly (join on Wednesdays, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m. EST), and giving weekly briefings (join on Thursdays, 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. EST). [Find links to prayer calls, briefings, and donation pages here](#).





THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, October 23

- 4:00 p.m. "Wade in the Water" Project Advisory Team, via Zoom
- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Executive Council, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Young Adults: Faith on Tap, Bow Market, Somerville

Tuesday, October 24

- 7:15 a.m. Reflective Conversations with Brent Coffin, via Zoom
- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, Harter Room

Wednesday, October 25

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

Thursday, October 26

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

Friday, October 27

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

Sunday, October 29

- 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: Creative Arts Workshop
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common
- 12:15 p.m. Annual Doris Beauvais Luncheon with Mitch Snyder Awards, MJH
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

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

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

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
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