

Pledge Dedication Sunday November 19, 2023

FIRST CHURCH

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

November 19, 2023

Preaching Today	Dan Smith, Senior Minister
Liturgist	Rose Whaley
Leading Worship	Justin Breuggeman, guest musician
	Martha Cook, Ginny Harlan, and Alex Steinert-Evoy, for First Friends
	Kate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach
	Karen McArthur, Minister of Stewardship & Finance
	Lee Prouty, tech support
Bulletin Cover Image	"A Future With Hope" logo by Salt

Today's Programs and Events

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
12:30 p.m.	Fall Congregational Meeting & Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall
2:00 p.m.	Cambridge Common Youth Group: Pie-Baking, Christ Church
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: <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 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 <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	There Is a Happy Land	G. Shearing
*HYMN 526	Come, Ye Thankful People, Come	
*GREETING L: C: L: C: L: C: L: C: *WORDS OF N	The peace of God be with you: and God's mercy, abundant and free! Come in, be at home in this place of grace and gratitude. Be at rest in this space of hope! Trust that God will show us the way forward, and God will sustain us, now and into the future. Day by day, God will give us what we need! All praise be to God, the almighty Giver! WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT	Rose Whaley
	We gathered here acknowledge that we are meeting	

All: 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. We acknowledge and deplore the violence and erasure perpetrated upon Indigenous peoples and their lands in the name of this country, and by our First Church forebears. We commit to ongoing listening, learning and acting in ways that honor Indigenous peoples and the land.

Forever, O Lord, Thy Word Is Settled in Heaven

Max Reger

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

ANTHEM

*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.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray:

All: Holy and beloved God, we give you thanks for this day, for cycles of discernment and celebration, of giving and receiving. You know our anxieties and fears, God.
You know when we hold back our love, and when we withdraw from yours.
Lead us God, to give and receive, freely and without fear.
In this season of harvest and thanksgiving, help us trust that there will always be plenty, so that our connection with you is deepened and our relationships strengthened, in Jesus' name. 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.

*HYMN 454

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending

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		Kate Layzer
READING	2 Corinthians 9:6-15	
READING	Matthew 25:14-29	
SERMON		Dan Smith
*HYMN 405	Give to Me Lord, A Thankful Heart	
	SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 GIVE AND PLEDGE







I've Given Already

OFFERTORY

Jesus Christ The Apple Tree

Elizabeth Poston, arr. P. Sykes

*DOXOLOGY

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF OUR GIFTS & 2024 PLEDGES

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 241 We Will Build Your Church, O Christ

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Prelude in D minor

J. S. Bach

Karen McArthur

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Sexton George Williams, who is recovering from emergency eye surgery this past Wednesday.
- We pray for Ginny Harlan's son Michael and his family, who live in Louisville, as Michael has just been diagnosed with Mantle Cell Lymphoma.
- We pray for Krysia Burnham, who is recovering from hip surgery.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who is now recovering in a rehab facility after an extended hospital stay for various serious medical issues.
- We pray for Jennifer Petrallia, who is suffering from debilitating anxiety and depression.
- 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 son-in-law Stewart Bailey; Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray for the many families seeking emergency shelter in cities and towns across Massachusetts.
- We pray for all those in Lewiston, ME, and the surrounding towns, as they continue to cope with their shared experience of a tragic mass shooting. We continue to pray and advocate for common sense national gun control legislation.
- 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, most recently the hurricane in Mexico. 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.

Join the *First Church List* to see and offer up more community prayer requests.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Prayer for Israel and Palestine

We pray for an end to the war and the heartwrenching 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 thousands 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 horrifically violent Hamas attacks against Israel on October 7. We decry retaliation that involves violence against civilians, including deprivation of water, fuel, and food in 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.

54th Annual National Day of Mourning

Thursday, November 23 at 12:00 p.m.

Cole's Hill, above Plymouth Rock, Plymouth, MA

Since 1970, Indigenous people & their allies have gathered at noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the US Thanksgiving holiday. Many Native people do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims &



other European settlers. Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands and the erasure of Native cultures. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Indigenous ancestors and Native resilience. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection, as well as a protest against the racism and oppression that Indigenous people continue to experience worldwide. Join us as we continue to create a true awareness of Native peoples and history. Help shatter the untrue image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, settler colonialism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven destruction of the Earth that they and other European settlers introduced to these shores. *Learn more here*.

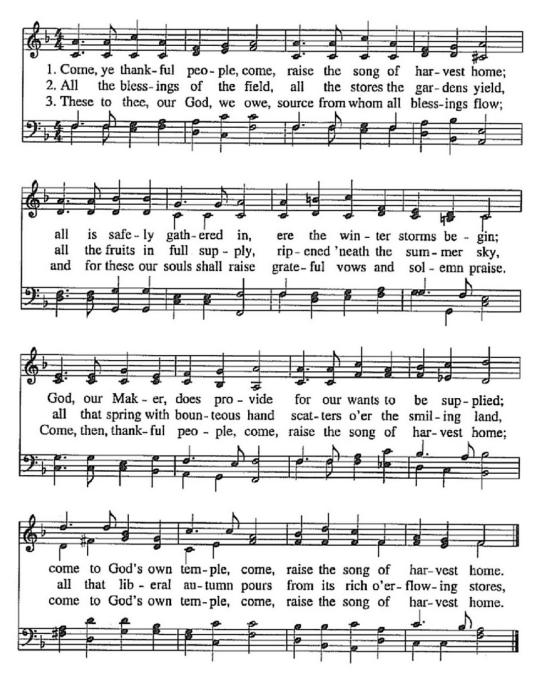


Do you want to follow the hyperlinks, but you're holding a paper bulletin in your hand?

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.

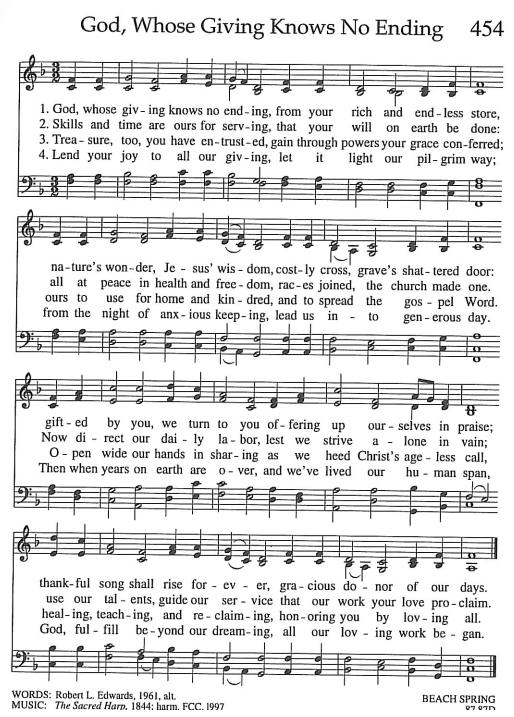
OPENING HYMN

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come 526



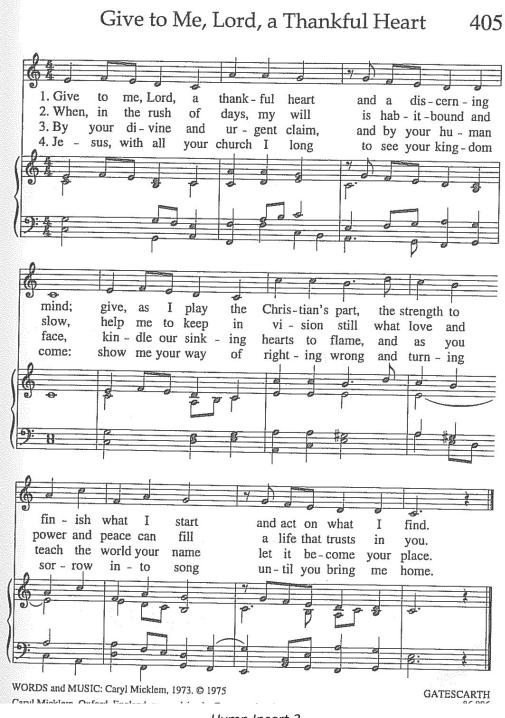
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PEACE HYMN



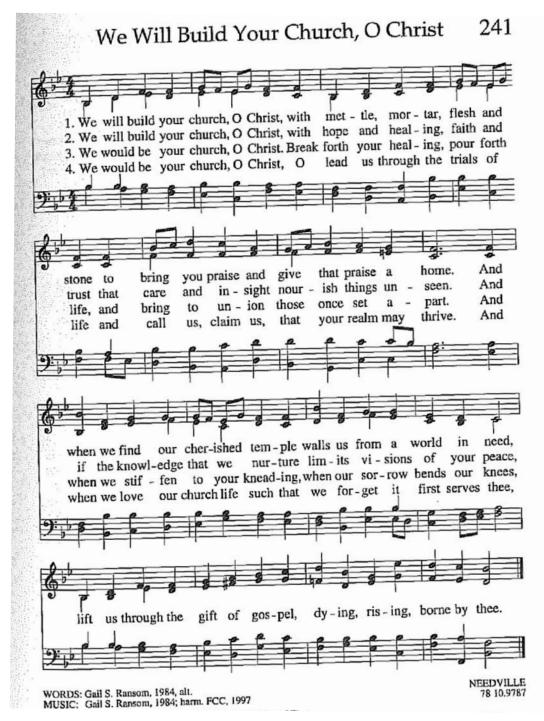
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SERMON HYMN



-Hymn Insert 3-

CLOSING HYMN



-Hymn Insert 4-

THE COCKEREL HAS LANDED!

The great gilded cockerel weathervane that has stood atop First Church in Cambridge for the last 150 years came down on November 15, 2023, to protect it from further damage caused by extreme weather, pollution, and its own venerable age. Under a bright blue sky, three men climbed into the basket of a giant crane and ascended about 100 feet. Hovering above the tip of the church's bell tower, they carefully lifted the 172-pound cockerel from its perch and brought it down in the basket with them.

Once on the ground, the cockerel posed for photographs. Dan Smith, Senior Minister of First Church in Cambridge, offered a blessing. Then the cockerel was placed in a wooden crate custom-built to fit its



dimensions -- 5 feet 5 inches high and 5 feet 4 inches wide. Finally, the secured crate was lifted onto a secure truck and taken for temporary storage at a facility that specializes in the protection of works of art, which the cockerel is.



Now that the cockerel is down, what happens next? That question is in the process of being answered. First Church in Cambridge is a Congregational church, which means that all major decisions, from approving an annual budget to calling a new minister, are made by the congregation as a whole. This has been First Church's practice since it was "gathered in the Spirit" in 1636.

The Congregational process requires careful listening to many voices, thoughtful deliberation, and prayerful discernment. It also may require many meetings. The process to determine next steps for the cockerel is well under way. There have been listening sessions and input from church members and the public. There is still information

to be gathered, such as an assessment of the cockerel's current condition. There is more discussion to be had, but a framework of options is emerging.

First Church in Cambridge is located in the Old Cambridge Historic District, so it requested and received approval from the Cambridge Historical Commission to bring the cockerel down and place it in temporary safe storage. First Church will return to the Commission within six months with a final proposal for its ancient cockerel weathervane.

<u>Read the full story and see a short video of the Cockerel's flight</u> <u>on our website.</u>



TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Confirmation Class for8/9th graders Today, 9:30 - 10:45 a.m., The Well

Our year-long Confirmation journey for 8th and 9th graders continues today with a session entitled "Jesus Christ, Human and Divine."





Pledge Dedication Sunday

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

Find your pledge card and plan on joining us, online or in person. With a past so full of grace, our future, thanks be to God, is likewise full of hope.

Fall Congregational Meeting and Luncheon Today, 12:30 - 1:45 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall and <u>via Zoom</u> Enjoy a light luncheon prepared by Caitlin Anderson and the Friends of Fellowship or join us virtually, as we gather for a special meeting of the congregation to review and vote on the proposed 2024 annual budget as recommended by the Executive Council, as well as updates on the cockerel.

Cambridge Common Youth Group: Pie-Baking

Today, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., Christ Church Cambridge, Zero Garden St. Join the Cambridge Common Youth Group at Christ Church Cambridge to bake pies for the Harvard Square Meals Program at Christ Church and the Friday Café at First Church for Thanksgiving week. Bring a package of frozen pie crust and either a can of pumpkin puree or six



apples. We will make as many pumpkin and apple pies as we can! The rest of the ingredients will be provided. If you need service hours for school, this is an excellent opportunity to accrue two hours of service work.



Night Song

Sunday evenings, 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... *Read more about Night Song*.

NOVEMBER AT FIRST CHURCH

Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, November 21, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., Harter Room and via Zoom Join Ginny Harlan, Martha Mueller 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 "Religion' (pp. 101 - 105). 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!

BRIAN O'DONOVAN LEGACY SERIES ANNUAL HOLIDAY BENEFIT VARIETY SHOW



TOMMY & LOUISE & FRIENDS

DAVID COFFIN MATT & SHANNON HEATON KLEZMER ENSEMBLE - NEC KIERAN JORDAN | MARGIE DELANEY ESSENCE - ACAPELLA GROUP - TUFTS UNIV ENCHANTED - ACAPELLA GROUP - TUFTS UNIV MARY CASEY & THE O'DONOVAN FAMILY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29 - 7:30PM

TICKETS \$35 - burren.com or 24hourconcerts.showare.com To benefit The Friday Cafe - a daytime drop-in program in Harvard Square, that offers a welcoming space for homeless & housed adults. THE BURREN | 247 ELM STREET, DAVIS SQ, SOMERVILLE | BURREN.COM

Friday Café Benefit Concert Wednesday, November 29 at 7:30 p.m.

The Burren, 247 Elm St, Davis Square, Somerville Kick off the holidays with joy and gladness while supporting the work of the Friday Café! This festive event will feature artists like the Revels' David Coffin, world-class Irish musicians Shannon & Matt Heaton, the New England Conservatory Klezmer Band, Tufts *a cappella* groups Essence and Enchanted, and others. All ticket sales benefit the Friday Café.

Don't wait: This show is expected to sell out.

LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT

Advent 2023

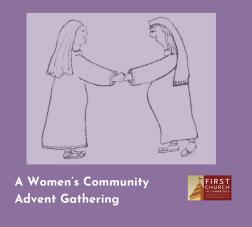
O Come, O Come O Come, O Come

O Come ...what? What are we longing for? Is it peace? Is it justice? Is it solace or silence? Is it healing or wholeness? Is it a simple gift of love? For what is your heart most yearning and waiting in this season of Advent? The familiar hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel reminds us, eventually, that it is ours to "Rejoice! Rejoice!" For Emmanuel, which means "God with us" comes at Christmas! But first, in this season of anticipation, we are invited to



slow down, to wonder, to wait, to pray, and to prepare our hearts, to make space in our souls. "God with us" comes to us and meets us right where we are. Join us this Advent in worship and community, in study and small groups, as we yearn, sing, and pray together ... O Come, O Come...!

Sheltering in Friendship



Sheltering in Friendship:

A Women's Community Advent Gathering Saturday, December 2, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

All those who identify as women are invited to join us for a restorative exploration of the role of friendship in our lives. We will enter an alternative space of togetherness, where we will rest, deepen our connections, play, and reflect together. We will ground ourselves in our own life stories and in the story of Mary learning of her pregnancy and seeking shelter and comfort in her cousin Elizabeth's house.

Childcare is available, either onsite or via financial support for a babysitter of your choosing in your own home. Please RSVP at <u>this link</u> by November 30, and contact <u>Emma Thomas</u> with any questions.

LOOKING AHEAD TO ADVENT

Adult Formation: Exploring the Seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany Sundays, December 3 and 10, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

Join First Church member Beth Spaulding for an opportunity to delve into the richness of these seasons in the life of the church. We'll look at the themes of the seasons and how they are expressed in music and art, and we'll share memories of our own experiences.

Advent Workshop Sunday, December 3, 12:15 - 1:30 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

On the first Sunday of Advent, plan to join us after worship for a variety of arts and craft activities to prepare for the season. Bring your Advent candle ring to decorate with greens (new candle rings and candles will be available until we run out). Choose among other crafts, including beeswax candle-dipping, ornament-making, and more. Enjoy a bagel-and-cider lunch as you take in the creative energy around you. All are welcome! And volunteers are needed! If you would like to lead a simple craft at the workshop—no experience necessary; instruction and supplies provided—please contact <u>Sarah Higginbotham</u> to learn more.





Advent Season Gift-Giving and Donation Suggestions The Missions & Social Justice Committee is pleased to share with you a list of organizations with which First Church partners closely and who are seeking donations in this holiday season. In the case that you and your family are in a position to support any of these organizations, we hope that you find the list helpful. If you have any questions, please reach out to Molly Baker at: mollybaker96@gmail.com, co-chair of the Missions & Social Justice Committee. <u>Find the full list on our</u> website.



Monday, November 20

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

7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room and 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, November 21

- 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

Wednesday, November 22

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

Thursday, November 23 and Friday, November 24 Church Office & Building Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

Sunday, November 26

- 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, Library
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
- 12:30 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Holiday Art Workshop Art for God, Chapel
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

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

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