

Christmas Day December 25, 2023

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Congregational 1633-1636 United Church of Christ Garden and Mason Streets Cambridge, Massachusetts

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...

Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

We're glad you are worshiping with us today! First Church is a vibrant, multi-generational, engaged, urban church. We care a lot about each other and what's happening in the world around us. Wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome here.

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL 387 YEARS ON THE WAY 1636-2023

December 25, 2023

Leading Worship Kate Layzer, *Minister of Street Outreach*

Peter Sykes, Music Director

Liturgist: Dean Eaton

Bulletin Cover Image Freddie Funck, First Church Member

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming, Just-Peace church, committed to inclusivity and non-violence. We love the teachings of Jesus with our minds as well as our hearts! We believe and question, question and grow. We're an old church with forward-looking ways. We have plenty of passion, theological opinions, good music, food and fellowship. If you're looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one!

We offer a variety of programs, events, and activities for adults, children, and families. Please explore our <u>website</u> and visit us on a Sunday. If you are looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one! We pray that you will always be showered with the Love that came to Earth at Christmas. It never ends. It is yours forever.



First Church Land Acknowledgment

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

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

Christmas Day Worship and Communion

For those participating at home, we invite you to bring bread or crackers and water, juice, or wine to your home altar, so that you may participate in Holy Communion.

All are welcome at the Table!

VOLUNTARY Noel Claude Daquin

*CAROL (insert)

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

*GREETING Kate Layzer

* LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

L: The light of Christ!

C: Thanks be to God!

*CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION AND GREETING OF PEACE

READING Isaiah 52:7-10

*CAROL (insert) Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

READING Luke 2:8–14

*CAROL 135 Angels, We Have Heard on High

READING Luke 2:15-20

MUSICAL MEDITATION The Bells William Byrd

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

L: In peace, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: That the heart of the world might rejoice this day at the birth

of a merciful savior, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer! (continued on next page)

^{*}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.

L: That the work of justice may capture every human heart and lead to peace, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For an end to all war and violence, that all people may live in hope and safety, so that free of fear we build a new tomorrow, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the health of the earth, and the integrity of all creation, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the sick, the troubled, the sorrowing and the dying, that they may know the comfort of God's mercy, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For our enemies and all who have done us harm, and for all whom we have harmed, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the church throughout the world, that we may love God, God's world and one another, welcome and serve all people and show forth the mercy of Christ Jesus, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: And now, in the words our savior gave us, we make bold to pray together,

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.

CHRISTMAS HOLY COMMUNION

*INVITATION AND REMEMBERING

L: Friends, on this Christmas day, let's share what we know in our hearts: Who is invited to this welcome table of love?

C: Everyone!

L: Everyone! The young and the old,

C: the rich and the poor,

L: all kings and lowly shepherds,

C: all angels, all sinners, all saints, All: all together in communion!

L: And what do we remember at this table?

C: We remember Jesus' birth in a manger,

and his presence as God with us.

L: We remember his life and his love.

C: We remember his suffering and death.

L: We remember his rising and the promise of new life.

C: We remember he taught us that we are holy,

All: that every person and all creation is holy and beloved in God's sight.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

*THANKSGIVING

L: Let us give thanks.

All: We thank you, gracious God,

for making yourself known to us

in the human life of Jesus.

Keep us always in the joy of Christmas Day,

like Mary and Joseph, like angels and shepherds – servants of your love and bearers of your grace. Glory be to you in the church and in all creation,

now and forever, Amen. Alleluia!

*CAROL 134 Joy to the World!

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.



^{*}BENEDICTION AND PEACE OF CHRIST

OPENING CAROL

On This Day Earth Shall Ring



SECOND CAROL



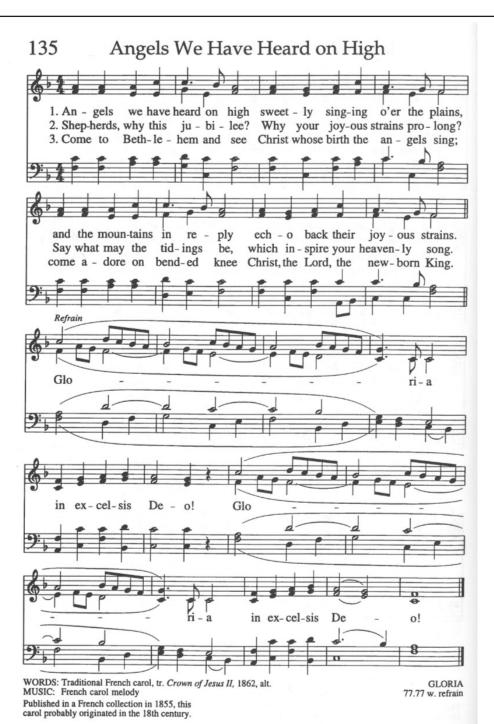
SECOND CAROL, cont'd.



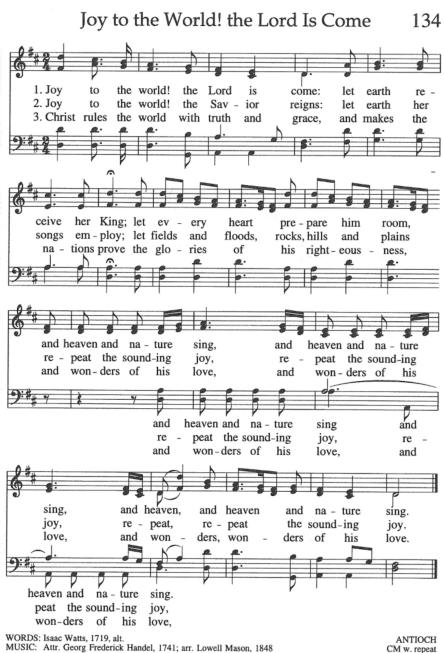
Our offering supports the many ministries of our church, with 10% for missions in the community and beyond.

Please use our new <u>all-in-one link</u> for gifts for 2023 or 2024, from your bank account or by credit/debit card:





BIRTH



This is Congregationalist Watts' paraphrase of Psalm 98. His free paraphrasing helped wean churchgoers from singing only literal renditions of the Psalms.

ANTIOCH CM w. repeat