



Season of Epiphany
January 14, 2024

**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

388 YEARS
ON THE WAY

1636 – 2024

January 14, 2024

Preaching

Carla Arevalo, *Pastoral Associate*

Liturgist

Gail Breeze, *First Church member*

Leading Worship

Emma Thomas, *Ministerial Intern*

Kate Layzer, *Minister of Street Outreach*

Lee Prouty, *tech support*

Christine Reynolds, *First Church Clerk*

Dan Smith, *Senior Minister*

Jennifer Velázquez, *Playing the Organ and Directing the Choir*

Bulletin Cover Image

Freddie Funck, *First Church member*

Today's Programs and Events

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)

12:30 p.m. Called To Repair: Church-Wide Conversation and Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall (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 electronically by using the QR code in the bulletin or explore more options for giving at: www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give

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

Prelude - The New Commonwealth

Ralph Vaughan Williams

*HYMN 247

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word

*GREETING

Gail Breeze

L: Sisters and brothers, siblings all, grace and peace to you from God.

C: And to the whole world, God's love, light, and healing!

L: Arise and show forth the glory and justice of God!

C: With Jesus, our light has come.

God's spirit shines on us, full of grace and peace.

L: Then let us gather and sing God's praise!

C: With you, God, our feast is abundant.

We drink from the rivers of your delight.

L: With you is the fountain of life!

All: In your light we see light!

All glory and honor be yours, almighty and everlasting One!

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Amazing Grace

Traditional, arr. P. Sykes

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

All: Holy God, in your light we see light.

**And so too we see the veils of our ignorance and pride,
the ways we treat ourselves and others
without your mercy, love or justice.**

**Let the brightness of your morning
burn through our fog of aimlessness and sin
and put a new song in our hearts.**

(cont'd. on next page)

**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.*

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

*Our offering supports the many ministries of our church,
with 10% for missions in the community and beyond.
Please use our new [all-in-one link](#) for gifts for 2023 or
2024, from your bank account or by credit/debit card:*



OFFERTORY

Sunshine In The Soul

Eliza E. Hewitt

*DOXOLOGY

**To God, all glorious heav'nly light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God, the Spirit, now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise! Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

*BENEDICTION

*HYMN 464

Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated

VOLUNTARY

God of Grace and God of Glory

arr. David Cherwien



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 [here](#) or by scanning the QR code.

247

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word

1. Bless-ed Je - sus, at your word we are gath - ered all to hear you;
 2. Glo - rious Lord, your - self im - part! Light of light, from God pro - ceed - ing,

let our hearts and souls be stirred now to seek and love and praise you;
 o - pen now our minds and hearts, help us by your Spir - it's plead - ing;

by your teach - ings sweet and ho - ly, drawn from earth to love you sole - ly.
 hear the songs we now are rais - ing; hear, and bless our prayers and prais - ing.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal lines.

PEACE HYMN

439

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

Refrain

Ev - ery time I feel the Spir - it mov - ing in my

heart I will pray. Yes, ev - ery time I feel the

Fine

Spir - it mov - ing in my heart I will pray.

1. Up - on the moun - tain, when my Lord spoke, Out of God's
 2. O Jor - dan riv - er is chil - ly and cold, it chills the
 3. O I have heart - ache and I have woe, and I have

mouth came fire and smoke. Looked all a - round me,
 bod - y, not the soul. There's on - ly one train
 trou - ble here be - low. But while God leads me,

to Refrain

it looked so fine, I asked my Lord if all were mine.
 up - on this track; it runs to heav - en, then right back. O ev - ery
 I'll nev - er fear, for I am shel - tered by God's care.

SERMON HYMN

470

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

1. Pre-cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
2. When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin-ger near,
3. When the dark-ness ap-pears and the night draws near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
when my life is al-most gone,
and the day is past and gone,

through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall:
at the riv-er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

Take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

WORDS and MUSIC: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932

PRECIOUS LORD
66.9D

Dorsey's most widely-known song was written in Chicago in 1932 as he mourned the death of his wife and new-born child.

© 1938 Unichappell Music, Inc.

CLOSING HYMN

464 Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated

1. Take my life, and let it be con-se-crated, Lord, to thee;
2. Take my hands, and let them move at the im-pulse of thy love;
3. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no long-er mine;
4. Take my love: my Lord I pour at thy feet its treas-ure store;

take my mo-ments and my days, let them flow in cease-less praise.
take my feet, and let them be swift and beau-ti-ful for thee.
take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy roy-al throne.
take my-self, and I will be ev-er, on-ly, all for thee.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Homeless Ministries staff and guests as they grieve the passing of former Shelter and Friday Café guest Scott Kenney, who died at home over the weekend.
- We pray for Claire Morgan’s mother Dana Hunt, who was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and will begin treatment this week.
- We pray for George Williams, who continues his extended recovery from several recent surgeries in a Neuro ICU unit following a brain bleed that occurred before Christmas.
- We celebrate with Pastoral Associate Rev. Ahmaad Edmund, who was ordained into the Christian ministry at his home church, Southern Star Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville, KY. We also pray for Ahmaad and his family as they grieve the loss of Ahmaad’s grandfather, Jerry L. Summers, who died on December 20 after a short battle with a terminal illness.
- We celebrate with and pray for Rev. James Ross as he transitions to a new role as Acting Director of the Interfaith Center at the University of Vermont.
- We pray for strength, patience and healing for First Church friend Sophia Revett, who has been enduring several recent hospitalizations.
- We pray for Brent and Poppy Coffin as Poppy experiences a significant decline in her struggle with Alzheimer’s.
- 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; Michael, Ginny Harlan’s son; and Abby Shuman’s uncle Barry.
- We pray for the community of Perry, Iowa, as they grieve and recover from a recent school shooting. We continue to pray for all those who have experienced traumatic gun violence, and we pray for our legislators to find a way forward to enact common sense gun legislation.
- We pray for a warm and safe arrival for Nuro and Idle, two Somali refugees who will soon be welcomed to Cambridge by the First Church & Friends Welcome Corps Team. We also pray for the team’s volunteers as they anticipate these first weeks of transition.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for the many families seeking emergency shelter in cities and towns across our state.
- We continue to pray for all impacted by and recovering from recent natural and climate related disasters. We 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. We pray for the loved ones of the more 100 people killed and all affected by Wednesday’s bombing in Iran. We also 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.



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.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Prayer for Israel and Palestine

We pray earnestly for an end to the war and ongoing heartache in Israel and Palestine. We pray for all hostages and their families, and for the immediate return of hostages; for all living in daily fear for their and their loved ones' safety; and for all who are grieving the thousands of deaths of Palestinians, Israelis, 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 violence against civilians, including deprivation of basic needs for people living and being evacuated inside of Gaza. We pray for redoubled diplomatic efforts to address the already devastating humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories. We continue to pray for a just peace in Palestine and Israel 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 continue to 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.



Join Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)

“Stand in the G.A.P.” response: Give, Act, and Pray

We are grieved by the war between Israel and Hamas. There is still work to do for peace and justice. We believe that, working together, justice can prevail. Peace is possible. Since October 7, CMEP has issued [many public statements and letters](#). CMEP Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, who preached at First Church on October 15, has been making daily update videos, which [you can watch here](#) to stay updated on pressing news in Gaza, Israel, and the West Bank. Find links to prayer calls, briefings, and donation pages [here](#).

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

**Called to Repair: Church-Wide Conversation and Luncheon
Today, 12:30 - 2 p.m.
Margaret Jewett Hall**

Plan to stay after worship today for an important First Church conversation about our call to the work of truth telling and to the spiritual practice of repair and reparations! We will hear and learn from Pastoral Associates Carla Arevalo and Ahmaad Edmund, Ministerial Intern Emma Thomas, and members of the Beloved Community group. Bring your questions, concerns, and hopes about reparations to this interactive session as we consider not only our church's history, but our lives, our family histories, and growing efforts in Cambridge and beyond in the work of healing and repair.



Night Song

Sundays, 7:30 - 8:15 p.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.](#)



JANUARY AT FIRST CHURCH

Invitation to Contribute to Coffee Hour

Please help us make worship as delicious as it is spiritually sustaining! For Coffee Hour each week we are looking for 2-4 households to bring 3 dozen cookies each, or the equivalent of snacks such as cheese & crackers or fruit. In general, the church has a No Nuts policy. If possible, please include a brief list of relevant ingredients for those with allergies.



[SIGN UP HERE](#). Questions? Difficulty with the online signup?

Contact Lisa DiNardo at lardinardo@hotmail.com

JANUARY AT FIRST CHURCH



Aging with Grace

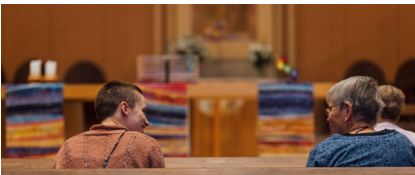
January 16, 3 - 4:15 p.m., Harter Room and Zoom

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 "Mystery" (pp. 73-77). You are welcome to join at any time; homework is not a requirement for participation!

Called To Repair: Church-Wide Conversations **Sundays, January 21 and February 4, 9:30 a.m.,** **Harter Room and Zoom**

Save the following dates for important First Church conversations about our call to the work of truth telling and to the spiritual practice of repair and reparations! We will hear and learn from Pastoral Associates Carla Arevalo and Ahmaad Edmund, Ministerial Intern Emma Thomas, and members of the Beloved Community group. Bring your questions, concerns, and hopes about reparations to these interactive sessions as we consider not only our church's history, but our lives, our family histories, and growing efforts in Cambridge and beyond in the work of healing and repair.



Newcomers Meet & Greet and New Members Preparation **Sunday, January 21, 12:15 - 12:45 p.m., Hastings Common**

Those feeling new to First Church, or interested in meeting someone new to our community, are warmly invited to our first Meet & Greet of the year! Some of what you can expect: friendly faces, meet some "first friends", questions answered, snacks, and an informal atmosphere for conversation. For those who are thinking seriously about joining First Church by covenant as members on the following Sunday, January 28, please plan to stay a bit longer to look at the Joining liturgy together.

Volunteer Opportunity for MLK day

Many Helping Hands 365 will be hosting a MLK Day of Service from 2-5pm. Everyone is welcome and no admission fee is required. For more information and details check out their [website](#) or scan the QR code.



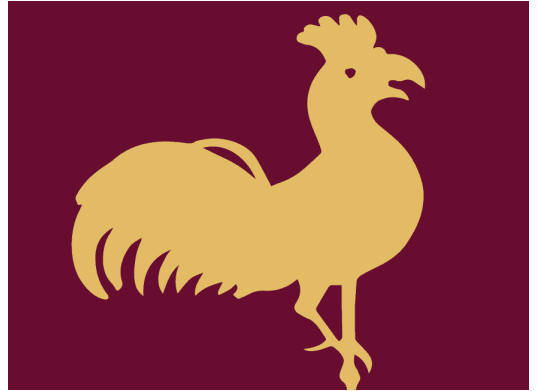
JANUARY AT FIRST CHURCH

Annual Congregational Meeting and Luncheon

Sunday, January 28, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

Come, one and all, to the Annual Meeting of First Church in Cambridge following Morning Worship. A hearty luncheon will lead into our meeting, where we will celebrate another full year of ministry. We will thank one another for gifts shared and celebrate our outgoing and incoming leaders. Join us for this centuries-old tradition of meeting, prayer, and song.



Call to Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that
the Annual Meeting of First Church in Cambridge, Congregational,
United Church of Christ, will be held in its 388th year
at 12:30 p.m., Sunday the 28th of January, 2024,
in person in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom conference:

1. to approve the minutes of Congregational Meetings held in 2023;
2. to receive and act upon the 2023 reports of the Staff, Officers, Executive Council, Boards, Committees, Teams, and Groups of the Church;
3. to receive a financial update for 2023 and 2024;
4. to consider next steps for the First Church Cockerel;
5. to consider any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of the Executive Council,

Chris Reynolds, Clerk
Cambridge, Massachusetts
January 4, 2024



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, January 15

Building and Office Closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tuesday, January 16

- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, The Landing
- 1:30 p.m. Beloved Community, via Zoom
- 3:00 p.m. Aging with Grace, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 4:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, via Zoom

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

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

Wednesday, January 17

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

Thursday, January 18

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

Friday, January 19

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

Sunday, January 21

- 9:30 a.m. Confirmation Class, the Well
- 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Call to Repair, Harter Room
- 10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
- 12:30 p.m. Newcomers Meet & Greet and New Members Preparation, Hastings Common
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

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