

Season of Epiphany January 21, 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 21, 2024

Preaching Dan Smith, Senior Minister

Liturgist Jack Haskell

Leading Worship Ahmaad Edmund, *Pastoral Associate*

Lee Prouty, tech support Christine Reynolds, Clerk Peter Sykes, Music Director Emma Thomas, Ministerial Intern

Bulletin Cover Image Freddie Funck, First Church member

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Called to Repair, including 8/9th grade Confirmands,

Harter Room and <u>via Zoom</u>

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via li

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and <u>via livestream</u>11:20 a.m. Church School: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes

12:15 p.m. Newcomers Gathering, Hastings Common
12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
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 "<u>virtual visitor card</u>" 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 <u>contact information</u> for our ministerial, program, and building staff on our website. For general information and inquiries: info@firstchurchcambridge.org

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 Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern Dieterich Buxtehude

*HYMN 1 We Limit Not the Truth of God

*GREETING Jack Haskell

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 Pescador de Hombres (Lord, You Have Come) Cesaréo Gabarain

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 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.

Teach us to see your world illumined anew, as with the eyes of Jesus. Amen.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

*HYMN 403 Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

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 Ahmaad Edmund

READING Mark 1:14-20

SERMON Dan Smith

*HYMN 413 How Clear Is Our Vocation

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING Christine Reynolds

PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD Emma Thomas

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

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:



OFFERTORY Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light Constance Pyle

*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

*HYMN 444 Lord of All Hopefulness

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY Christe, qui lux est et dies Samuel Scheidt

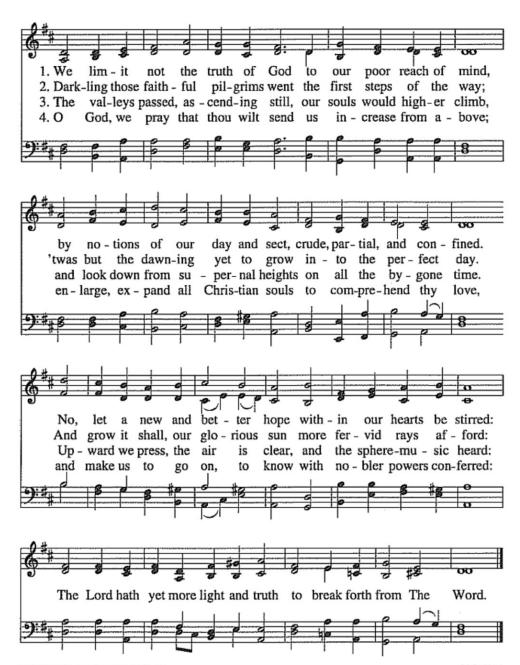
First Church Land Acknowledgment



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.

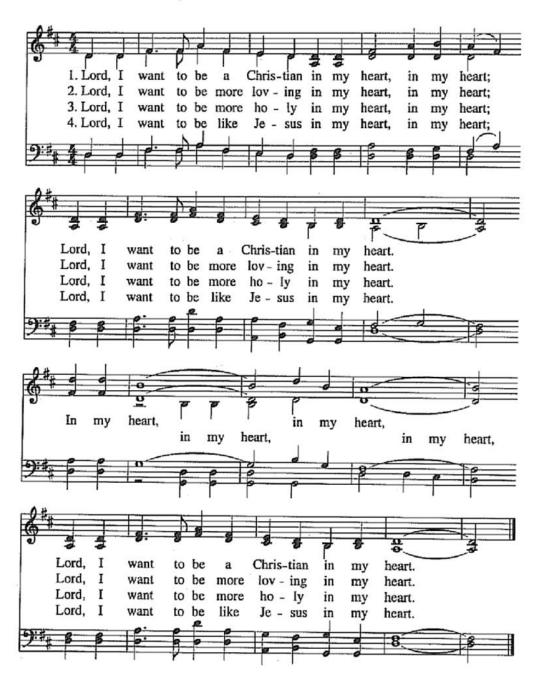
We Limit Not the Truth of God



WORDS: George Rawson, 1853, alt. MUSIC: Anglo-Genevan Psalter, 1556 OLD 22nd CMD

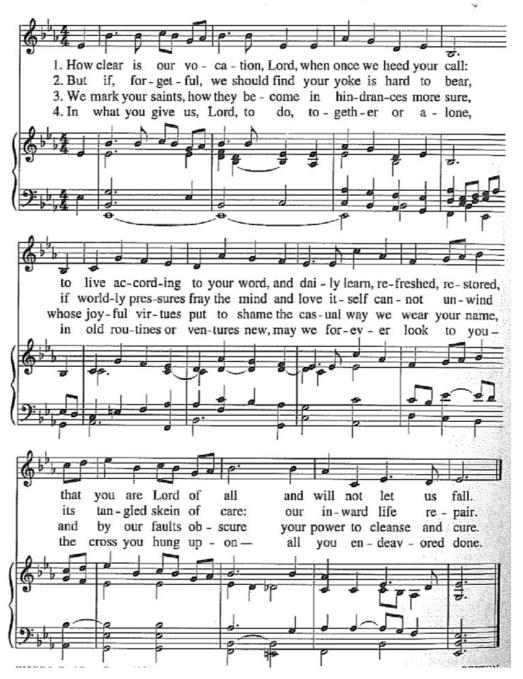
Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

403



-Hymn Insert 2-

413 How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord



-Hymn Insert 3-

444 Lord of All Hopefulness



-Hymn Insert 4-

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.
- We pray for George Williams, who is recovering at home following a brain bleed that occurred before Christmas.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who is recovering at home from day surgery that took place Tuesday.
- We pray for Emma Blanc as she prepares for surgery this coming Wednesday on her right arm to relieve nerve pain.
- 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 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; Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan's mother; 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 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 also pray for all political and climate refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water. We mourn the tragic loss of life at the Texas border this week, and we pray for family, loved ones, and advocates during this time of extreme political tension.
- 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.

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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 tens of 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 <u>you can watch here</u> to stay updated on pressing news in Gaza, Israel, and the West Bank. Find links to prayer calls, briefings, and donation pages <u>here</u>.



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

Called To Repair: Church-Wide Conversations Today and Sunday, February 4, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

Join these important and ongoing 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.



Confirmation Class for 8/9th graders Today, 9:30 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room

Our year-long Confirmation journey for 8th and 9th graders continues today with a session entitled "Reconciliation and Reparation: FCC History." The students will join the Adult Formation "Called To Repair" conversation and then debrief as a class afterwards.

Newcomers Meet & Greet
and New Members Preparation
Today, 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 next Sunday, January 28, please plan to stay a bit longer to look at the Joining liturgy together.



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



Young Adults: Faith on Tap Monday, January 22, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Grendel's Den, Harvard Square

Join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for casual fellowship and happy hour drinks at Grendel's Den in Harvard Square! This event is open to anyone in the age group, whether you're just exploring First Church or have been here a while and are looking to meet some new folks. Let Emma

know to expect you, and if you're not already on the YA Mailing List you can sign up by emailing: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org.

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 **2023 Annual Report 2023 Financial Reports**

LOOKING AHEAD

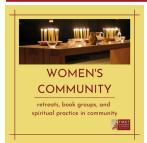
Young Adults: Fresh Pond Walk & Hot Cocoa

Sunday February 4 at 12:15 - 3:00 p.m., Meet up at Coffee Hour

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) for fellowship after church! We'll leave together from Coffee Hour to go for a wintery stroll around Fresh Pond, followed by cocoa at Emma and Owen's apartment. (If the weather is nasty we'll skip straight to the cocoa!) This event is open to



anyone in the age group, whether you're just exploring First Church or have been here a while and are looking to meet some new folks. Let Emma Duke know to expect you, and if you're not already on the YA Mailing List you can sign up at: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org.



involved. Register here.

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

Please join us for an inspiring gathering to discuss <u>Inciting Joy</u> by Ross Gay. This is a series of essays (and we may choose a few to focus on about which we will let you know!) in which "Ross Gay considers the joy we incite when we care for each other, especially during life's inevitable hardships. Throughout *Inciting Joy*, he explores how we can practice recognizing that connection, and also, crucially, how we expand it." Please join us and be filled with joy!

10 Million Names, Slavery & Descendant Communities of New England: Recover. Restore. Remember. Monday, February 12, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

There are at least 44 million descendants of enslaved individuals living today, but slavery separated families, erased names, and obscured facts. The 10 Million Names Project, launched by American Ancestors and its partners in 2023, aims to connect the family stories of these descendants to the 10 million men, women, and children of African descent who were enslaved in the U.S. prior to emancipation and to restore their names to history. Hear from Dr. Vincent Brown, Dr. Kendra Field, and Dr. Kerri Greenidge, members of the 10 Million Names scholars council, as they share histories and legacies of slavery in New England, the ongoing research of the 10 Million Names project, and ways to get



This event will take place in conjunction with the Slave Legacy History Coalition, a descendant-led history organization; First Church in Cambridge; and Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site.

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LOOKING AHEAD



Mardi Gras Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 13, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall All are warmly invited to our annual all-church pancake supper on Mardi Gras! Come celebrate with pancakes and maple syrup, a traditional sweet treat on the eve of the Lenten season. The children will decorate our "Alleluia" banner and bury it in the sanctuary, where it will await its unveiling on Easter morning. We'll

also hear a preview of our Lenten programs and formation opportunities. Pancakes will be provided; please bring fruit or breakfast meats (ready for heating or serving) to share. RSVP to Sarah Higginbotham so she can plan the pancake production.

Overt White Supremacy in New England Workshop Sundays, February 18 & 25, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. First Parish in Cambridge, UU, 3 Church St., Cambridge

Many of us have thought deeply about the culture of white supremacy in which we have been raised. This two-part workshop will build on this work by focusing on the landscape of overt white supremacist activity in New England. In recent months, local neo-Nazi groups have targeted hotels housing newly-arrived



migrants, as well as Gov. Healey's home. Presented by activists from SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice), we'll look closely at several groups and individuals, including their tactics and how they have changed over time. We will also discuss the history of Antifa and the culture wars. In the second session we'll move from the conceptual to concrete, discussing what we can do to resist the influence of these groups in our communities. Believing we are not powerless, we'll consider the Spectrum of Resistance, a tool for discussion developed by the Jewish Partisan Foundation. We'll conclude with a discussion about what actions we can take as people of faith. *Please register by February 5 using this link:* Overt White Supremacy in New England Workshop. While it is not required to attend both sessions, we strongly encourage participants to do so if they can.



Faith & Life Groups: Lent/Spring 2024 Call for Leaders!

Are you interested in leading a small group over Zoom or in person this Spring? Contact Beth Spaulding (bspaulding68@gmail.com) to discuss your idea. Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests, whether exploring a spiritual practice, opening our eyes to the beauty around us, delving into a challenging social issue, or attending to significant life stages (parenting, aging, job transitions, etc.). Faith & Life Groups involve making a short-term commitment

(a single session to several weeks, depending on the group). Pitch your idea for a Faith & Life Group to Beth! $_{-9}$



Monday, January 22

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

Tuesday, January 23

10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom

Wednesday, January 24

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

6:30 p.m. Investments Committee, via Zoom

See our <u>Events Calendar</u> for Zoom links and details.

Sign up <u>here</u> to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

Thursday, January 25

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

Friday, January 26

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

Sunday, January 28

9:30 a.m. First Friends Meeting, Harter Room

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream11:20 a.m. Church School: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes

12:30 p.m. Annual Meeting and Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream