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Season of Epiphany  
January 28, 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

1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 4

## January 28, 2024

<b>Preaching</b>	Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i>
<b>Liturgist</b>	Amy Matias
<b>Leading Worship</b>	Carla Arevalo, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Ahmaad Edmund, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Karen McArthur, <i>Minister of Stewardship &amp; Finance</i> Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i> Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
<b>Bulletin Cover Image</b>	Freddie Funck, <i>First Church member</i>

### Today's Programs and Events

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 <a href="#">via livestream</a>
11:20 a.m.	Church School: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes
12:30 p.m.	Annual Meeting & Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall and <a href="#">via Zoom</a>
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and <a href="#">via livestream</a>

### 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](http://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](mailto: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

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 (insert)

We Who Are Now Brought Together

### \*GREETING

Amy Matias

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

Psalm 1 (Bay Psalm Book, 1640)

alt. Denise Karuth

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

## 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**

*(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.*

**burn through our fog of aimlessness and sin  
and put a new song in our hearts.  
Teach us to see your world illumined anew,  
as with the eyes of Jesus. Amen.**

## **DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

### **\*GREETING OF PEACE**

### **\*HYMN C-20**

The Household of God

*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.*

## **JOINING OF NEW MEMBERS**

### **INVITATION**

Carla Arevalo and Dan Smith

### **CANDIDATES' PROMISES**

### **\*COVENANT OF FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE**

L: United with the church of every time and place,  
we covenant with Christ, with these siblings, and with one another, saying:

**All: We who are now brought together and united into one Church  
under the Lord Jesus Christ, our Head,  
in such sort as becometh all those  
whom he hath redeemed and sanctified unto himself,  
do solemnly and religiously. as in His most holy presence,  
promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways  
according to the rule of the Gospel,  
and in all sincere conformity to His holy ordinances  
and in mutual love and respect each to other,  
so near as God shall give us grace.**

### **ADDRESS TO NEW MEMBERS**

### **WELCOME**

L: Friends, let us welcome these new members  
and affirm the ministry we share in Jesus Christ.

**All: We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church.  
We promise you our friendship and prayers.  
We will share with you the hope and labor of Christ.  
By the power of the Spirit, we are one family for the glory of God!**

## OPENING THE WORD

### PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

#### READING

Mark 1:21-28

#### HOMILY

Dan Smith

#### \*HYMN 247

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word

## SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Ahmaad Edmund

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

Karen McArthur

*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:*



**\*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**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.**

**GOING FORTH****\*HYMN 352**

Go Forth for God

**\*BENEDICTION****VOLUNTARY**

Toccatà

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

**New Members Joining Today**

**David and Carol Anne Grotrian** share a long marriage, ballroom dancing, and sketching outdoors. David is a graphic designer and illustrator. Carol Anne is a quilter, dyer, and fiber arts teacher. Originally from the Midwest, their studios are in their home in Cambridge, where they have lived for many years. First Church is so grateful to Carol Anne for sharing her gifts as a textile artist with our *Wade in the Water* project, remembering and honoring enslaved persons at First Church.

**Liz Williams** was born and grew up in the UK and moved to Massachusetts with her husband Simon in 1987. At the time a software engineer, she raised three children in the Boston Metrowest area and began attending a UCC church. During that time, Liz discerned a call to ordained ministry, attended Andover Newton Theological School, and was ordained in 2016. Liz served the Wollaston Congregational Church in Quincy as Pastor; she retired from that position and from parish ministry last year. She's now discovering what semi-retirement looks like and hoping to begin training as a Spiritual Director soon. Liz anticipates more travel to the UK and Minnesota to visit family, but she's looking forward to making First Church her faith community and participating in some of the many ministries of the church.

**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.

# OPENING HYMN

## *We who are now brought together*

Mary Luti

Peter Sykes

We who are now brought to - geth - er, e - ven we,  
We who are now brought to - geth - er, Spi - rit - led,  
We who are now joined to - geth - er in God's sight  
We who are now joined to - geth - er in all ways

drawn by the love of our Sa - vior, ev - en he,  
called and made ho - ly by Je - sus, hum - ble Head,  
so near as grace may be giv - en day and night,  
of - fer to you, O Cre - a - tor, praise on praise

pro - mise to walk on his path - way, faith - ful, free.  
pro - mise to live by the gos - pel, as he said.  
pro - mise to love one an - oth - er, God's de - light.  
grate - ful - ly: one con - gre - ga - tion, all our days.



PEACE HYMN

C-20

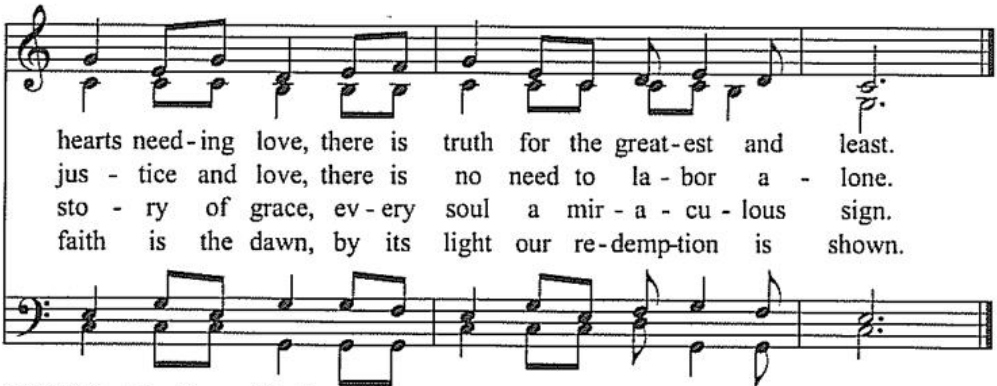
The Household of God



1. The\_ house - hold of God has\_\_\_ room for us all, ev - ery -  
2. The\_ house - hold of God has\_\_\_ work for us all, by\_\_\_  
3. The\_ house - hold of God gives a voice to us all, we can  
4. The\_ house - hold of God has\_\_\_ hope for us all, in the



one has a place at the feast, the\_\_\_ best and the worst have\_\_\_  
man - y have seeds been\_\_\_ sown, in the har - vest of heal - ing, of  
sing in a cho - rus di - vine, we can hear ev - ery life as a  
dark - ness a hand holdsour own, as we walk by that guid - ance our



hearts need - ing love, there is truth for the great - est and least.  
jus - tice and love, there is no need to la - bor a - lone.  
sto - ry of grace, ev - ery soul a mir - a - cu - lous sign.  
faith is the dawn, by its light our re - demp - tion is shown.

WORDS: John Evans-Klock

MUSIC: Peter Sykes



247

Blessed Jesus, at Your Word



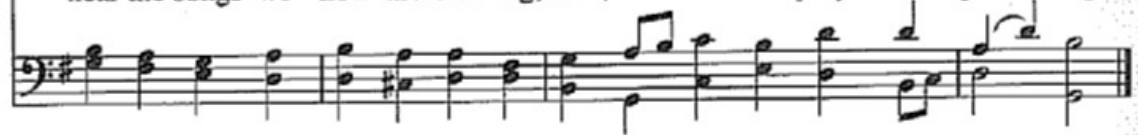
1. Bless-ed Je - sus, at your word we are gath - ered all to hear you;  
 2. Glo - rious Lord, your - self im - part! Light of light, from God pro - ceed - ing,



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.



# CLOSING HYMN

## Go Forth for God

352

1. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace; be of good  
 2. Go forth for God, go to the world in love; strength - en the  
 3. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength; hold fast the  
 4. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy, to serve God's

cour - age, armed with heaven - ly grace, in God's good Spir - it  
 faint, give cour - age to the weak; help the af - flict - ed;  
 good, be ur - gent for the right; ren - der to no one  
 peo - ple ev - ery day and hour, and serv - ing Christ, our

dai - ly to in - crease, till in the king - dom we be - hold God's  
 rich - ly from a - bove God's love sup - plies the grace and power we  
 e - vil; Christ at length shall o - ver - come all dark - ness with his  
 ev - 'ry gift em - ploy, re - joic - ing in the Ho - ly Spir - it's

face. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace;  
 seek. Go forth for God, go to the world in love;  
 light. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength;  
 power. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy,

WORDS: John Raphael Peacey, 1975  
 MUSIC: *Trente quatre Pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

OLD 124th  
 10 10.10 10.10

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Peggy Steven’s husband Mike Stevens, who is having aortic valve replacement surgery this Monday.
- We pray for George Williams, who is recovering at home following a brain bleed that occurred before Christmas.
- We pray for Emma Blanc as she recovers from surgery on her right arm to relieve nerve pain.
- We pray for Brent and Poppy Coffin as Poppy experiences a significant decline in her struggle with Alzheimer’s and as she recovers from Covid and a bacterial infection.
- 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 recently, 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.

***Join the [First Church List](#) to see and offer up more community prayer requests.***

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

### Prayer for Israel and Palestine

As the war in Gaza and Israel enters its fourth month, we continue to pray for an end to war, for a just peace, and for the immediate return of all hostages. We decry the horrifically violent Hamas attacks against Israel on October 7 that killed 1200 Israelis and over 200 Palestinians since. We also decry the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli government and military that has killed over 25,000 Palestinians.

We grieve the loss of life on all sides of the conflict and pray for immediate deescalation of tensions in the region that are threatening a wider or more lasting war. 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](#).



#### 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

### Annual Congregational Meeting and Luncheon

Today, 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](#)



### 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.](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

### GBIO Housing Justice Campaign Continues!

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) is staging In-District Meetings (IDMs) with our local senators and representatives across Greater Boston, asking them directly to support our legislative and budget asks. GBIO stands to win billions of dollars for public housing, increased access to housing for people leaving incarceration, and the construction of new homes. Every one of us has a role to play by showing up, and bringing our neighbors! There will be many IDMs over the coming weeks and months. Some that are coming up:



#### **Brookline/Newton/Wellesley, Monday, January 29, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Union Church in Waban**

with Sen. Cynthia Creem and Reps. Kay Khan, Ruth Balser, and Alice Peisch  
Register at: [bit.ly/gbioidmcreem](http://bit.ly/gbioidmcreem)

#### **Central Square/East Cambridge/East Somerville/Charlestown/Everett/Chelsea Tuesday, January 30, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. St. Paul's AME Church, Cambridge**

with Sen. Sal DiDomenico and Reps. Dan Ryan and Mike Connolly (invited)  
Register at: [bit.ly/gbioidmdidomenico](http://bit.ly/gbioidmdidomenico)

**Then, mark your calendars for March 3!** Right after church, we will convene ALL of GBIO in downtown Boston for an all-out housing justice assembly!



### MEN'S BREAKFAST

a monthly gathering  
for sharing our stories and reflections



### Men's Breakfast

#### **Saturday, February 3, 8:00 - 9:30 a.m., Harter Room**

All who identify as men at First Church are invited to join us in person on Saturday morning for our monthly gathering, a time to reflect and rejoice. If you would like to be added to the Men's Breakfast email list to receive reminders of these gatherings, please contact Peter Byerly: [p.byerly@comcast.net](mailto:p.byerly@comcast.net)

### Food Pantry Donations on Communion Sundays

First Church continues to provide contributions to the Many Helping Hands Food Pantry. The volunteer-run, donation-driven pantry offers a grocery shopping experience on the second Saturday of each month. You are invited to donate healthy snacks, hygiene products, spices, and (when possible) items bought in bulk/case, as this supports customers having a similar shopping experience. ***First Church donations can be left in the large baskets in the Narthex on the first Sunday of each month, which is next Sunday, February 4.***





## UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

### Called To Repair: Church-Wide Conversations

Sunday, February 4, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

Harter Room and via Zoom

Join the last in our current series of 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 First Church leaders Linda Ziebell, Martha Cook, and others. 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.



### Young Adults: Fresh Pond Walk & Hot Cocoa

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

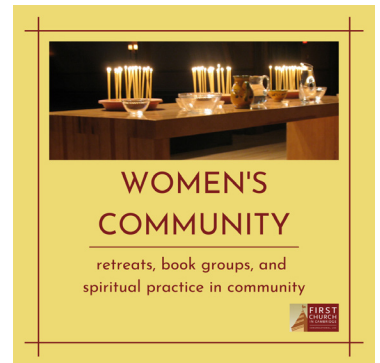
Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) for fellowship after church! We'll leave together from Coffee Hour to go for a wintery stroll around Fresh Pond, followed by cocoa at Emma and Owen's apartment. (If the weather is nasty we'll skip straight to the cocoa!) This event is open to

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](mailto:youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org).

### 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 [Inciting Joy](#) 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!



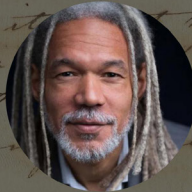
## UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

# 10 MILLION NAMES, SLAVERY, AND DESCENDANT COMMUNITIES OF NEW ENGLAND

**INTRODUCING 10 MILLION NAMES:  
RECOVER. RESTORE. REMEMBER.**



**KENDRA  
TAIRA FIELD,  
PHD**



**VINCENT  
BROWN,  
PHD**



**KERRI  
GREENIDGE,  
PHD**



**February  
12, 2024  
6:00 PM**

**First Church in Cambridge  
11 Garden Street  
In-person and streaming online**

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL.  
REGISTER HERE:**



[HTTPS://GO.NPS.GOV/10MILLIONNAMES](https://go.nps.gov/10millionnames)



**10 Million  
Names**

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 involved. [Register here.](#)

*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.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



### **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.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT

### Lent 2024 FINDING COURAGE IN COMMUNITY



### Lent 2024: Finding Courage in Community

The 40 days of Lent begin on Ash Wednesday, February 14, and culminate in Holy Week observance leading up to Easter Sunday, March 31. Here at First Church, our theme for this Lent is Finding Courage in Community. With so much uncertainty ahead, political and otherwise, let's come together to find the courage and resilience that inspires us, connects us, grounds us in the deep resources and spiritual practices that our faith tradition offers.

As was the case last Lent, we will be surrounded and encouraged by several stunning new portraits on loan from Robert Shetterly and [\*Americans Who Tell the Truth\*](#). Through worship, small groups, and some time set aside for one-to-one after-worship conversations, let's en-courage one another, deepen our community of resistance and resilience, and lean into God's truth and healing for the journey ahead!

### Lenten Formation Series: Courage That Inspires Sundays, February 18 - March 17, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

We'll begin on the first Sunday of Lent with a general orientation to the liturgical season of Lent by our own Beth Spaulding. Then, join First Church leaders, staff, and guests as they guide us through a time of prayerful meditation and learning from the remarkable lives and stories of various Americans Who Tell the Truth. The four portraits on loan to us this year will be rotated between the Harter Room and Hastings Common so that we may sit with the featured truth teller each week in the Harter Room.

**February 18: The Liturgical Season of Lent, led by Beth Spaulding**

**February 25: Courage that Inspires - Rev. William Barber II**

**March 3: Courage that Inspires - James Baldwin**

**March 10: Courage that Inspires - Pauli Murray**

**March 17: Courage that Inspires - Leah Penniman**

## LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT

### Lenten Gatherings: Courage That Connects

#### Midweek Soup Suppers

*(specific time and locations coming soon)*

During March, we set some time aside to break bread and find courage and nourishment of body and soul through a series of informal gatherings and conversation that will be hosted both at the Parsonage (44 Garden Street) and in the homes of First Church members. After a meal and a gently guided conversation about where we are needing and finding courage, First Church Deacons will offer a simple ritual of Communion to close out the gathering. If you'd like to host a soup supper, please contact Dan Smith or Sue Reynolds (susanreynolds235@gmail.com).

#### After-Worship Conversations

**Sundays, February 18 - March 17 at 12:15 p.m.**

Looking for a simple spiritual practice to take on this Lent? What about a commitment to reaching out to another member of our faith community for 1:1 conversation? Consider sharing your faith journeys, and perhaps some struggles, with each other. We'll have conversation prompts and extra snacks available as you find a quiet spot in the building (or even outside on a walk) for conversation and connection.

### Faith & Life Groups: Lent/Spring 2024

#### Call for Leaders by February 5!

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 by Monday, February 5!***

## FAITH & LIFE GROUPS







# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## Monday, January 29

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 6:00 p.m. Deacons Transition Dinner, Parsonage
- 7:00 p.m. GBIO In-District Meeting with Sen. Cynthia Creem, Union Church in Waban

## Tuesday, January 30

- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. GBIO In-District Meeting with Sen. Sal DiDomenico, St. Paul's AME Church, Cambridge

## Wednesday, January 31

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

## Thursday, February 1

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

## Friday, February 2

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

## Saturday, February 3

- 8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast, Harter Room

## Sunday, February 4

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Called To Repair, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 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: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
- 12:15 p.m. Young Adults: Fresh Pond Walk & Hot Cocoa, meet at Coffee Hour
- 12:15 p.m. Executive Council & Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room
- 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.

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