

Lent
March 17, 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

March 17, 2024

Preaching Today	Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i>
Liturgist	Barb Hume
Leading Worship	Kate Layzer, <i>Minister of Street Outreach</i>
	Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i>
	Beth Spaulding, <i>for the Leavetaking Team</i>
	Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck, <i>First Church member</i>

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m.	Adult Formation: Courage That Inspires - Leah Penniman 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: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments and After-Worship 1:1 Conversations, MJH
12:15 p.m.	A Time for Alice, Harter Room and via Zoom
6:00 p.m.	Faith & Life Group: Now What?: Retirement's Inner Work, via Zoom
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

Tocatta in G minor

Johann Pachelbel

***HYMN 12**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

***GREETING**

Barb Hume

L: Sisters, brothers, siblings, come, you who seek courage in community.

C: Come, you who long for healing and wholeness!

L: Beloved, come: you who yearn for a deeper life and a fairer world.

C: Come and find this courage through the Spirit's call

L: to truth that sets us free, to love as wide as the sea!

C: Come now, draw near to God with thanks and praise!

WORDS OF WELCOME

CONFESSING

ANTHEM

Kyrie

Hans Leo Hassler

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

SUNG PRAYER

Lead Me, Lord

Hymn 271

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

***GREETING OF PEACE**

***HYMN C-26**

Lord, Your Grace Shines Like the Morning

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.

**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.*

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

John 12:20-36

SERMON

Dan Smith

*COVENANT TESTIMONY

All: We believe that our covenant with God and each other calls us:
to love God with all that we are,
and our close and distant neighbors as ourselves;
to seek peace through justice and equity for all people;
to engage in nonviolent resistance to evil;
to respect and preserve God's earth;
to foster community across every barrier and division;
to attend to God's unfolding and reconciling Word;
to support each other in our frailties and strengths,
that we may embody the love that overcomes fear and death.
This we testify, confessing always our reliance on God's grace in Christ,
and on the power of the Holy Spirit.

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

Beth Spaulding

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Kate Layzer

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

*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 from your
bank account or by credit/debit card:*



OFFERTORY

Christ Be With Me

Noel Rawsthorne

*DOXOLOGY

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine
demands my soul, my life, my all! Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 18

Praise to the Living God

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir

Johann Pachelbel

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.



SCAN ME

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment [here](#)
or by scanning the QR code.

OPENING HYMN

12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3. To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4. Thou reign - est in glo - ry, thou dwell - est in light,

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
 we blos - som and flour - ish as leaves on the tree,
 all praise we would ren - der; O help us to see

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee.

WORDS: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1867, alt.
 MUSIC: Welsh melody from John Roberts' *Caniadau y Cyssegr*, 1839

ST. DENIO
 11 11.11 11

Lead Me, Lord

271

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy right-eous-ness, make thy way
 plain be - fore my face. For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord,
 on - ly, that mak - est me dwell in safe - ty.

WORDS: Psalms 5:8, 4:8
 MUSIC: Samuel S. Wesley, 1861

LEAD ME, LORD
 378.548

PEACE HYMN

C-26 Lord, Your Grace Shines Like the Morning

1. Lord, your grace shines like the mor - ning, sweet - ly
2. Bit - ter is our long night's dream - ing, muf - fled
3. You are mer - cy, you are heal - ing, though, save
4. Praise to you, O God most pa - tient! in our

pier - cing our deep night; comes up - on us with - out
in a cloth of pain; shut in where no light comes -
dark, we noth - ing see; new day breaks, your love re -
dark - ness you see light; sor - row turns to ju - bi -

warm - ing; sor - row yields be - fore your light.
stream - ing, till we wake to you a - gain.
veal - ing: hope in what is yet to be.
la - tion in your ev - er - last - ing sight!

WORDS: Kate Layzer
MUSIC: Peter Sykes

For the dedication of a new central chancel window,
Spring 1994

CLOSING HYMN

18

Praise to the Living God

1. Praise to the liv - ing God, the God of love and light, whose
 2. Praise to the liv - ing God, from whom all things de - rive, whose
 3. Praise to the liv - ing God, who knows our joy and pain, who
 4. Praise to the liv - ing God, a - round, with - in, a - bove, be -

word brought forth the myr - iad suns and set the worlds in flight;
 Spir - it formed up - on this sphere the first faint seeds of life;
 shares with us our com - mon life, the sa - cred and pro - fane.
 yond the grasp of hu - man mind, but whom we know as love.

whose in - fi - nite de - sign, which we but dim - ly see, per -
 who caused them to e - volve, un - wit - ting, toward God's goal, till
 God toils wher - e'er we toil, in home and mart and mill; and
 In these tu - mul - tuous days, so full of hope and strife, may

vades all na - ture, mak - ing all a cos - mic u - ni - ty.
 hu - man - kind stood on the earth, as liv - ing, think - ing souls.
 deep with - in the hu - man heart God leads us for - ward still.
 we bear wit - ness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

WORDS: Curtis Beach, 1966, alt.
 MUSIC: George J. Elvey, 1868

DIADEMATA
 SMD

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for the family and friends of longtime First Church member Alice Kidder, who died peacefully last Sunday, surrounded by family and following an extended time of declining health.
- We pray for Carla Arevalo, who is recovering from a tonsillectomy.
- We pray for George Williams, who is recovering from surgery at home after being hospitalized recently for stomach pain.
- We pray for Devin Hansen's uncle Ben, who is in the hospital to manage a reaction to anesthesia.
- We pray for Mike Stevens, who is recovering from aortic valve replacement surgery this past week.
- We pray for Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder.
- We pray for Brent and Poppy Coffin as Poppy experiences a significant decline in her struggle with Alzheimer's.
- 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; Lisa DiNardo's friend Graziella Macchetta; 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 who are 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 the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where ongoing armed conflicts have led to more than 6 million people killed and more than 5 million people displaced from their homes. We pray also for those who have experienced devastating incidents of gender-based violence during the conflicts.
- We pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, throughout the Middle East, in Ukraine, and in Sudan. This week, we pray especially for the people of Haiti, given the heart-wrenching turmoil and gang-related violence leading to the near-collapse of the government and human services sector.
- We pray for 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 experience of vitriolic public discourse and of state laws that restrict and criminalize transgender health care, personal expression, and wider LGBTQ+ education.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- In the wake of the recent Alabama court ruling that has upended fertility care in the state, we continue to 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.



In Memoriam

A memorial service for beloved First Church member Alice Kidder will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 20, in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a reception to follow in Margaret Jewett Hall.

Prayer for Israel and Palestine

As the war in Gaza and Israel continues, our hearts cry out in prayer. With the death of 1400 Israelis and over 31,000 Palestinians so far, we pray for an end to the war and immediate de-escalation of tensions in the region that are threatening a wider and more lasting conflict. We decry the horrifically violent Hamas attacks against Israel on October 7, as well as the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli government and military.

We hold that every person is made in God's image and that every life is precious. We pray for the safe return of all hostages. 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 courageous, 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.



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

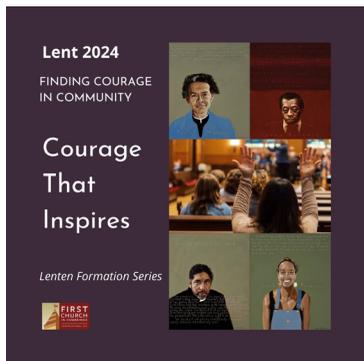
Use your phone's camera to hover over the QR code marked "scan me;" this will take you to the Members & Friends page of our website, where you'll find the bulletin online, as well as links to news, events, and more.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Lenten Formation Series: Courage That Inspires Today, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

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

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

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

TODAY: **Courage that Inspires - Leah Penniman**

Confirmation Class for 8/9th 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 "The Death and Resurrection of Jesus."



A Time for Alice

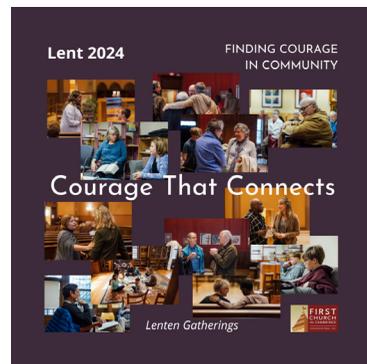
Today at 12:15 p.m., Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Gather with us after worship to share our grief, stories, and love for one another and for our beloved Alice Kidder, who died peacefully on March 10, surrounded by family and following an extended time of declining health. Please see Dan's Pastoral Letter [here](#). This will be a hybrid session, led from the Harter Room and on Zoom.

After-Worship 1:1 Conversations

Today at 12:15 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

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.



LENT AT FIRST CHURCH



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.](#)

Lenten Taizé Service

Tuesday, March 19, 8:00 - 8:45, Harter Room

All are welcome to join us for a short evening service of candlelight, meditation, and singing in the Taizé tradition. Emma and Owen Duke will be leading this casual time to reflect and find calm in the season of Lent.



Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, March 19, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., [via 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 will be reading an excerpt from Chapter 2 (pp.13-18) from [Practicing Our Faith](#), edited by Dorothy Bass. The chapter is entitled "Honoring the Body," and Martha Mueller Cook will send out the reading, some supporting materials, and the Zoom link. Please try to come prepared to share a passage from the reading that is particularly compelling for you. You are welcome to join at any time; homework is not a requirement for participation!

Getting Off Gas: Solutions for a Just Transition

Wednesday, March 20, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

First Parish UU, 1446 Mass Ave., Harvard Square

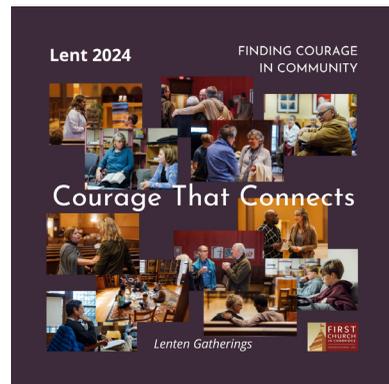
Transitioning away from gas to heat our buildings is an important part of addressing climate change. But how do we do that? Come hear about local strategies, including key legislation and the exciting alternative of networked geothermal energy—and learn what you can do! Speakers include Audrey Schulman, co-founder and co-executive director of HEET; MA State Rep. Steven Owens, sponsor of the Future of Clean Heat bill; and Cambridge City Councillor Patricia Nolan. Child care will be available, and masking is encouraged. [RSVP HERE](#)



LENT AT FIRST CHURCH

Lenten Gatherings: Courage That Connects - Soup Supper Thursday, March 21, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., The Parsonage (44 Garden St.)

We have set some time aside to break bread and find courage and nourishment of body and soul through a series of informal gatherings that will be hosted at the Parsonage. 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 plan to attend, please RSVP to [Dan Smith](#).***



Choir Rehearses for Holy Week Services

Thursday, March 21, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

The First Church Choir will meet for one more evening rehearsal in preparation for Holy Week services. Come and join us in our preparations! For more information, contact Music Director Peter Sykes at: psykes@aol.com.

New Parish List On Its Way

First Church seeks to update our membership database with new information about YOU, including updated contact info like a new email address, phone number, or physical address. On Wednesday, February 21, all those in our directory database should have received an email from First Church providing you with the information we have for you on file. The message included instructions for accessing our online directory, where you can make changes to your profile and see your giving history to First Church. ***If you did not receive the email on February 21, please contact [Office Assistant Bruce Dillenbeck](#) to provide your info for our database.*** We sincerely appreciate your help in keeping our records in order, and we plan to have a new Parish List ready by Easter Sunday.



Easter Flowers

If you wish to donate memorial flowers for loved ones this Easter, please send the names of those to be remembered to Kirsten Manville in the First Church office by March 24. Contributions of \$20 to help defray the cost of flowers can be made [online](#) or by check in the offering basket (payable to First Church in Cambridge, with a memo line of "Easter Flowers"). ***Please send an email to Kirsten (operations@firstchurchcambridge.org) with the names, even if you pay by check through the offering basket or online; this way we can make sure no one is missed.***

PALM SUNDAY BEGINS HOLY WEEK



Art Exhibit for Palm Sunday, Sunday, March 24

Hosanna! If cloaks were strewn before Jesus, then art may be an exaltation for Palm Sunday as well. See art for the four evangelists in Margaret Jewett Hall during our All-Church Palm Sunday Breakfast and in the Narthex during the palm procession. First Church member Henry Gates uses four color forms to symbolize the four Gospels.



Palm Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, March 24, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us for our annual All-Church Palm Sunday Breakfast, where we enjoy conversation and connection over hot cross buns and other breakfast goodies. At the close of the breakfast, we hand out palms and make our way to the church lawn for our palm procession.



Palm Sunday Processional to Hybrid Morning Worship

Sunday, March 24, 10:55 a.m., Church Lawn

We remember Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem. We greet him with a "parade" of young and old, waving palms and singing traditional songs. Come join us as we make our way on the road with Jesus! You are also welcome to go directly to the Sanctuary in person or via livestream.



Leavetaking Team Update

Sunday, March 24, 12:15 - 1:00 p.m.

Margaret Jewett Hall

Join the Leavetaking/Farewell Team (Bruce Hoppe, Amy Matias, Beth Spaulding, and Alex Steinert-Evoy) after worship on Palm Sunday for an opportunity to hear more about what we have planned and how we can minister to each other during this time of pastoral transition.



Young Adults: Brunch at Zoe's Diner

Sunday, March 24, 12:15 - 2:00 p.m.

Zoe's Diner, Harvard Square

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for brunch and casual fellowship at Zoe's Diner in Harvard Square! We'll meet at coffee hour after church and walk over together. 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.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



As we continue to find courage in community, walk with us through Holy Week to hear the gospel stories of what Jesus encounters and endures in his final days. During Holy Week, we come face to face with the human realities of injustice, persecution, suffering, and death. Together, we seek God's presence there and in the dawning promise and unending love of Easter.

Maundy Thursday Service with Communion and Tenebrae
Thursday, March 28, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Sanctuary and via livestream

We recall the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples "to love one another as I have loved you." We remember this truth revealed to us during his last meal with his friends by celebrating Holy Communion. And in a candle-lit, then darkened, sanctuary, we call to mind Jesus' anguish and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. We depart in silence.

Parents are encouraged to use their judgment; this service is likely most suitable for children older than 10.

Good Friday Service of Lamentation

Friday, March 29, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Chapel and via livestream

We gather to lament the world's pain and injustice and to remember Jesus' death on the cross. Join us for this solemn service of ritual, readings, and song that will help us hold the grief of our lives and world.

Parents are encouraged to use their judgment; this service is likely most suitable for children older than 10.

Easter Sunday Hybrid Morning Worship

Sunday, March 31, 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Sanctuary and via livestream

Christ is Risen! We celebrate God's gift of new life and love stronger than death as we recall and sing out the story of the Risen One, who meets on the way!



**GBIO Action Brings Together Over 1,700
in Support of Housing Justice!**

On March 3, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization convened ALL of GBIO at ISBCC in Boston for an all-out housing justice assembly! Thank you to the 70+ First Church folks who came out to support GBIO’s platform and send the message to legislators that reversing our housing crisis can’t wait. Over 1,700 of us stood together! [Read all about it in the Boston Globe.](#)

As you heard at the action, the fight isn’t over! Here’s what you can do NOW to help us get over the finish line:

Join us for a Lobby Day at the State House!

Wednesday, April 17, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Meet us at the State House steps to remind our legislators of their commitments from our In-District Meeting (IDM) campaign, and show them we won’t back down!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Call Senate President Spilka and House Speaker Mariano!

They hold the most power to ensure the items we’re advocating for get passed.

[Find President Spilka’s information here.](#)

[Find Speaker Mariano’s information here.](#)

Call YOUR local senator and representative

Tell them to reach out to President Spilka and Speaker Mariano and encourage them to support our platform!

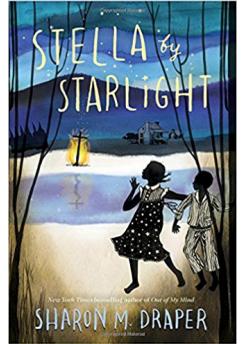
[Find your legislators’ contact information here.](#)

LOOKING AHEAD

Middler Book & Bible Study

Sunday, April 7, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Join First Church's 5th graders to hear about their learning during this Church School year. Prepare by reading [Stella By Starlight](#), a middle reader novel set in rural North Carolina during the Jim Crow era that students have explored side-by-side with Biblical stories about Moses and his life experiences. Copies of the novel are available at church for a donation of \$7; you can also find it in your local library or download it to your e-reader. Set aside some time to read the engaging story before April 7.



Did you read *Stella By Starlight* with the Middler class of 2017-18? If you have a copy of the book already that you'd be willing to lend to another, please bring it with you to church any Sunday before April 7!



Critter Count



Share a critter sighting
in Harvard Square!



Newtowne School Critter Count

The Newtowne School has started a "critter count" to learn about the other animals we share Harvard Square with. So far over 20 species have been seen! If you would like to share a sighting, email: ben@newtowneschool.org, or scan the QR code for more details.



the Friday Café is now collecting
gently used clothing
for neighbors in need (adults)

jeans sweats thermals flannels
hoodies jackets rain gear coats hats
gloves scarves sneakers warm
boots toiletries camping gear

more @thefriday.cafe

LOOKING AHEAD

First Church Welcome Corps Team Update

Formed almost one year ago, the First Church and Friends Welcome Corps Team has been preparing and waiting for our matched Welcome Corps refugees, Nuro and Idle, to arrive. The team recently learned that they are delayed indefinitely for unknown reasons. While we have little insight into the continued stalled status of Nuro and Idle, the context here in Massachusetts has greatly changed since we first started this effort, and even more so since we started waiting for a match in September.



As you know, the Commonwealth is experiencing an extreme migrant crisis, and the Governor has not only declared a State of Emergency, but has recently called on churches to aid in the resettling of migrants. There has been extensive coverage by local news of the role of area churches, and we would like to join that effort. We do not feel comfortable simply sitting on the sidelines with a wealth of financial and volunteer resources that can be mobilized now to help struggling migrants already here.

Our Welcome Corps Team has decided to put our match status “on hold” so that we can explore how First Church can use its resources in a relevant and engaged way to support migrants already in our community. We are actively researching connections in this sphere, with some ideas including:

- Joining other area churches who are currently supporting newly-arrived migrant families living in shelters;
- Working with the Somali Development Center (with which we had already connected);
- Partnering with MIRA, IFSI, or other local refugee agencies;
- Exploring how we could support the emergency shelter opened in the old East Cambridge Registry of Deeds building that needs assistance to remain open more hours.

We greatly welcome connections, ideas, or resources that any of you may have in this sphere. We also want to reassure everyone that Nuro and Idle will not be held up due to our change, but will likely be reassigned to a local refugee agency who is already slated to resettle another family member.

We know this is a big change for all of us, but we are looking forward with enthusiasm to helping with the migrant crisis currently unfolding here at home.



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, March 18

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

Tuesday, March 19

10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom
1:30 p.m. Beloved Community, via Zoom
3:00 p.m. Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting, via Zoom
4:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Reading Mary Oliver, via Zoom
7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: MLK Book Study, via Zoom
7:30 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, via Zoom
8:00 p.m. Lenten Taizé Service, Harter Room

Wednesday, March 20

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
6:30 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Reparations Book Group, via Zoom
7:30 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

Thursday, March 21

5:00 p.m. Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom
5:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper, The Parsonage (44 Garden St.)
7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Harter Room

Friday, March 22

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

Sunday, March 24 - Palm Sunday

10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Breakfast, MJH
10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:55 a.m. Palm Procession begins on the church lawn
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. Leavetaking Team Update, MJH
12:15 p.m. Young Adults: Brunch at Zoe's Diner, meet in MJH
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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