

Eastertide April 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

April 21, 2024

Preaching Today

Dan Smith, Senior Minister

Liturgist

Will Erickson

Leading Worship

Carla Arevalo, *Pastoral Associate* Ahmaad Edmund. *Pastoral Associate*

Lee Prouty, tech support 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. Art Exhibit for Earth Day, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH) 9:30 a.m. Leavetaking and Transition Gathering, Harter Room

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream

11:20 a.m. Church School: Creative Arts

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common12:15 p.m. Newcomers Gathering, Harter Room1:00 p.m. Reparations in Cambridge, 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 <u>contact information</u> for our ministerial, program, and building staff on our website.

Have a church program or event to promote? Complete the <u>First Church Communications Request</u> form.

Have an edit or update for our website? Complete the <u>FCC Website Changes</u> form

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY All Glory Be to God on High J. S. Bach

*HYMN 407 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

*GREETING Will Erickson

L: Siblings in the Spirit, grace and peace to you from God!

C: From God the Life Giver, peace to you!

L: Let us praise our God in the presence of Love —

C: Love divine, stronger than death!

L: Let us praise God in the companionship of the Risen Christ —

C: The Risen Christ, source of truth, who abides with us now!

L: Together, let us proclaim God's justice and love for all creation!

WORDS OF WELCOME

CONFESSING

ANTHEM Wade in the Water Traditional

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

C: God of earth and heaven,

when we have not touched, but trampled you in creation, when we have not met, but missed you in one another, when we have not received, but rejected you in the poor, forgive us, we pray, and grant us your peace and mercy.

Amen.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

*HYMN 228 O Holy Dove of God Descending

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^{*}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.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

INVITATION Dan Smith

INVOCATION Carla Arevalo

THE BAPTISMAL VOWS

CONGREGATION'S PROMISES

L: Jesus Christ welcomes all who desire new life into the faith and family of Christ.Do you who witness and celebrate this sacrament promise these siblings in faith your love, support and care?

C: We do!

L: Will you help them grow in faith and witness with them to the love and mercy of Christ?

C: We will, with the help of God!

L: Do you renew your own promises to live in the freedom of Christ and resist the power of evil?

C: We do, with the help of God!

BLESSING OF THE WATER

THE BAPTISMS

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*BLESSING

L: Friends, let us ask God for a blessing!

All: Holy God, Creator of us all,

give to these siblings strength for life's journey,

courage in the time of trial,

the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the comfort of everlasting life.

*HYMN 244

Like a Tree Beside the Waters

Children up through 7th grade are now invited to Church School: Creative Arts Workshop in Margaret Jewett Hall. Caregivers can find the children in Margaret Jewett Hall after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING Psalm 23

HOMILY Dan Smith

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS Ahmaad Edmund

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Emma Thomas

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 <u>all-in-one link</u> for gifts from your bank account or by credit/debit card:



OFFERTORY For I Am Persuaded Mark Schweizer

*DOXOLOGY

O Jesus, risen now to bless, do thou thyself our hearts possess; that we may give thee all our days the willing tribute of our praise!

GOING FORTH

*HYMN C-3 Psalm 23

LEAVETAKING BLESSING FOR JOANNE PAUL

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY Improvisation



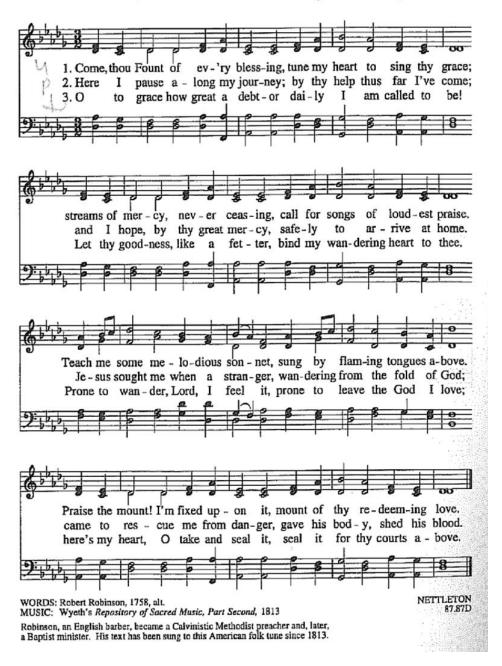
SCAN ME

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.

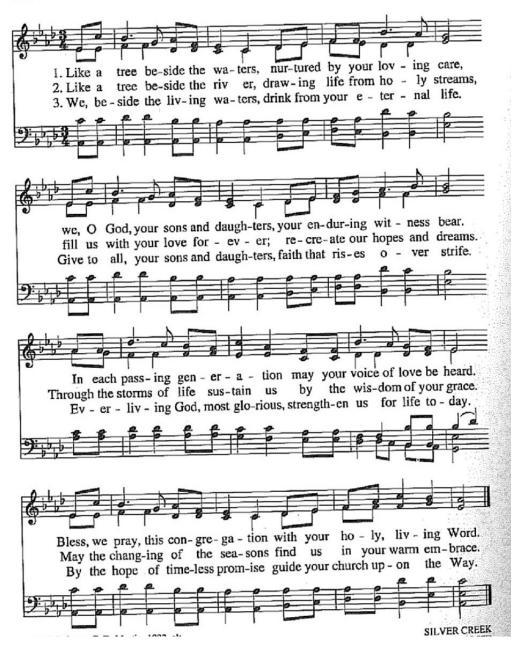
407 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



PEACE HYMN



244 Like a Tree Beside the Waters





COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Tim Brenner and his family as they grieve the loss of Tim's father, Peter, who died
 peacefully surrounded by family this past Tuesday night after a longtime struggle with
 Alzheimers.
- We pray for Marian Smith who is recovering from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.
- We pray for Mike Wendelin and his family as they grieve the unexpected death of Mike's brother Phil.
- We pray for First Church 2nd grader Grant Baker and his family as Grant recovers from a recent scheduled surgery.
- We pray for all who are living with significant health challenges and their families and caregivers: Poppy Coffin, who is experiencing Alzheimer's Disease; Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing ALS; Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder; and George Williams, who is still recovering from interventions following a brain bleed. We also pray for those in treatment for cancer: Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan's mother; 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 especially for the people of Taiwan and surrounding countries in the wake of a deadly 7.4 magnitude earthquake. 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 genderbased 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. 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 wisdom and justice to prevail as our court system tackles issues of immigration in its rulings.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- 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.
- 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 <u>First Church List</u> to see and offer up more community prayer requests.

Prayer for Israel and Palestine

As the war in Gaza and Israel continues, and as the threat of famine in Gaza looms, our hearts cry out in prayer. With the death of 1400 Israelis and over 33,000 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

Transition at First Church: Leavetaking Gathering Today, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

As we move through a season of pastoral transition, the Leavetaking Team offers an opportunity to meet in a small group to hold each other's thoughts, worries, ideas, hopes, and feelings.





Art Exhibit for Earth Day Sunday, April 21, Margaret Jewett Hall

The seven days of Creation are symbolized in seven paintings by First Church member Henry Gates. A constant form carries a message through the color spectrum as we behold the fragile earth. Come view the art, and reflect on our stewardship of planet Earth.

Newcomers Gathering Sunday, April 21 at 12:15 p.m., Harter Room

We are hosting a drop-in opportunity to explore what membership at First Church in Cambridge means and to learn more about the history and values of our community. There will



time for us to wrestle with questions, build deeper connections with one another, and help each other feel more oriented to this place of belonging and becoming. For those who are ready to join, this will also be a time to review our joining liturgy and receive answers any questions you may have. Current members of First Church who are interested in engaging in these conversations and in being a resource for those who are newer are invited to join! Come with your questions, your story, and your appetite for new connections. Light snacks will be provided.



Reparations in Cambridge Sunday, April 21, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Learn about reparations in Cambridge and a new Reparationist Club. Join local community members for an interactive discussion on how the City of Cambridge is approaching reparations and pathways to repair harm from the racial caste system. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn further on transitional justice, human rights, caste, transnational solidarity, and reparations through monthly Reparationist Club meetings

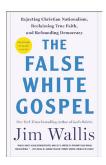
held by local reparative justice organization, <u>Grow to Consume</u>. Please register here: <u>bit.ly/repaircambridgemarch</u>

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Jim Wallis presents *The False White Gospel* Sunday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m.

University Lutheran Church, 66 Winthrop St., Cambridge

Jim Wallis is a writer, preacher, and justice advocate who believes the gospel of Jesus must be transformed from its cultural and political captivities, and always be "good news" to the poor and oppressed. He is a *New York Times* bestselling author, public theologian, renowned preacher, and commentator on ethics and public life. For more information about this free public event, contact: office2@unilu.org.





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.

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 3-4 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: ladinardo@hotmail.com.



Friday Café spring clothing drive MEN'S & WOMEN'S SHORT-SLEEVED SHIRTS, TEES, BUTTON-DOWNS, JEANS, SHORTS, LIGHT JACKETS, HOODIES, CAPS, SNEAKERS, AND SANDALS. FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE VISIT: Www.thefriday.cafe PLEASE BAG ITEMS, LABEL THEM "FRIDAY CAFE," AND DROP OFF IN THE LOBBY OF PIRST CHURCH IN CAMERIDGE, ITEMSERDE ST.

Friday Café Spring Clothing Drive

The Friday Café welcomes donations of gently used casual clothing for the spring season. Right now we have an especially urgent need for men's pants. Please consider checking your closets, visiting your local thrift store on our behalf, or ordering from our Amazon wish list, where we've listed men's basic jeans in a few different sizes. Thank you for helping our guests meet this very essential need!

Visit thefriday.cafe for full details on donating.

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

Schedule a Meeting with Dan

As I share in this followup letter to my February 4 farewell letter, my last Sunday in worship will be June 9. I hope to see many of you there, and before as well! Starting in late April, I'm clearing much of my weekday schedule for 1:1s and small group meetings with as many of you as possible. This is time for whatever you may need—a last pastoral check-in, a chance to wrap up a shared project, a time to laugh and/or cry together, a goodbye hug. Please visit my Calendly site to pick a time and place, via Zoom or in person!



- Dan Smith



Update from the Interim Search Team

The Interim Search Team is now in the process of completing the first round of interviews with potential candidates for the full time position of Interim Minister. In the coming week we will be deciding which candidates we will be inviting back for a second interview. The Team feels grateful that this work has been interesting and enriching. We will continue to keep you posted on our progress - Jim Cairns, Claire Morgan, Stephen Weller, and Linda Ziebell

Celebrating Past and Present: A 20-Year Look-Back Sunday, April 28, and May 5, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

Join Dan Smith, Lindsay Miller, and Perry and Susie Neubauer (among others) to share in a guided lookback at our shared ministry these past 20-plus years! We'll start with some stories about past ministers, leaders, and earlier generations of First Church, who gave us a firm foundation for our current strength



and vitality. We'll also share highlights of how the Spirit has been alive and guiding us in recent decades. How are we different from who we were 25 years ago? How are we the same? How is our past leading us toward future generations of First Church and its leaders? Come share your reflections, and help us weave together this ongoing story of life in community, transitions and all.

EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH



Refugee Ministry Welcome Center Opens April 23

First Church is hosting a Welcome Center on Tuesdays, April 23 & 30 and May 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to welcome migrant families living at the recently-opened MA Safety Net Family Shelter in East Cambridge. These families need to vacate the shelter every weekday, and we hope to provide a safe and welcoming space that includes a

midday meal, ESOL classes, childcare for children aged 0-4 (who are not old enough for school), information on free City family resources, and time for relaxing and socializing.

To make this happen - we need volunteers! We especially need:

- Two people for childcare
- Translators for Haitian Creole and Spanish
- People to manage the meal
- Volunteers for set-up and logistics
- In addition, there is an "off-site" need for someone to compile info on Cambridge family resources (playgrounds, waterparks, etc.) to share; much of this information is available on City websites.

If you would like to volunteer or learn more, please reach out to Martha Cook at: marthamuellercook@gmail.com

Seraphim Singers Stars and Planets Concert Featuring Peter Sykes Friday, April 26. 8:00 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, 379 Hammond St, Chestnut Hill, MA

Join Seraphim Singers for a musical exploration of the stars and planets! Organist Peter Sykes will perform his transcription of Gustav Holst's orchestral suite The Planets. Between the move-



ments of Holst's work choral pieces will illuminate a glorious journey through the heavens, including a newly commissioned work Stars by Patricia Van Ness on Sara Teasdale's poem of the same title. Tickets are available at the door or through www.seraphimsingers.org. Contact Beth Spaulding with any questions.

EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH



Young Adults: Bowling!

Monday, April 29, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m., Sacco's Bowl Haven, Davis Square Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for casual fellowship, pizza, and BOWLING at Sacco's Bowl Haven (American Flatbread) in Somerville! 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. The church young adults budget will cover lanes and shoes, so please let Emma know if you can make it. If you're not already on the YA Mailing List you can sign up by emailing: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org.



A Blessing of Names Sunday, May 12 at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

Please join us for Morning Worship on Sunday, May 12, when we will offer a trans- and nonbinary-affirming Blessing of Names liturgy and ritual. We invite members of our community to be re-welcomed into the church using the name that best reflects who they are. Trans and nonbinary folks whose names have not changed are also

LOOKING AHEAD



Saying Farewell

to our

Pastoral Associates



Ahmaad Edmund & Carla Arevalo

Sunday, May 19
9:30 a.m. Farewell Gathering, Harter Room and via Zoom
11:00 a.m. Leavetaking Ritual in Morning Worship, Sanctuary



Saying Farewell to Pastoral Associates Ahmaad Edmund and Carla Arevalo Sunday, May 19, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Amidst a wider season of staff transition at First Church, we are preparing to celebrate and say farewell to our two wonderful Pastoral Associates, Ahmaad Edmund and Carla Arevalo. Please find some time in the coming weeks to say thank you and goodbye to Carla and Ahmaad. On May 19, Pentecost Sunday, we will have a formal leavetaking ritual! For our 9:30 hour that day, we will share in a time of celebration of their ministry and wishing them well for their future endeavors. Ahmaad is heading to Washington, DC for a fellowship with the Faith and Politics Institute. Carla (who will be with us for two more Sundays through June 2) is heading to North Carolina with her fiancé for a Ph.D program at the University of North Carolina.

Stay tuned for more details about Dan's Farewell on June 9.



WIDER COMMUNITY EVENTS



The 3rd Bob Moses Conference Experience will be held virtually on April 27 and 28, 2024, and will focus on education and mass incarceration. We anticipate that the conference will contribute to building a platform for grassroots activism and policies crafted to truly undo the remnants of slavery. In order to chart a new course, we must understand where we have been. The Bob Moses Legacy Conference series is a serious attempt to support the thinking and doing necessary to help the country move in the direction of building a democracy in the spirit of Reconstruction. This is the work we would like to take on. Register here.

Supported by The Bob Moses Fund of the Cambridge Community Foundation, by donations from participants, and collaborating organizations and institutions.



Monday, April 22

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

7:00 p.m. Executive Council. via Zoom

Tuesday, April 23

9:00 a.m. Refugee Ministry Welcome Center, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH) Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom 10:30 a.m.

6:30 p.m. Investment Commitee, via Zoom

Faith & Life Group: MLK Book Study, via Zoom 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24

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

Thursday, April 25

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

Friday, April 26

Friday Café, MJH 12:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 28

9:30 a.m. Celebrating Past and Present: A 20-Year Look-Back, Harter Room and via Zoom

See our Events Calendar

Sign up here

for Zoom links and details.

to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream

11:20 a.m. Church School: Classes

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

> First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC 11 Garden St. • Cambridge, MA 02138