

Eastertide April 28, 2024

FIRST CHURCH

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.

April 21, 2024

Preaching Today Liturgist	Ahmaad Edmund, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> BBB
Leading Worship	Carla Arevalo, Pastoral Associate
.	Lee Prouty, tech support
	Dan Smith, Senior Minister
	Peter Sykes, Music Director
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck. First Church member

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m.	Celebrating Past and Present: A 20-Year Look-Back,
	Harter Room and <u>via Zoom</u>
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 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 "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: <u>www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give</u>

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

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 <u>First Church Communications Request</u> form.

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

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE congregational **388 YEARS** ON THE WAY 1636-2024

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY	Prelude in G Major	Felix Mendelssohn
*HYMN	In the Garden	see page 4
*GREETING L: C: L: C: L: C: L:	Siblings in the Spirit, grace and peace to you from God! From God the Life Giver, peace to you! Let us praise our God in the presence of Love — Love divine, stronger than death! Let us praise God in the companionship of the Risen Christ — The Risen Christ, source of truth, who abides with us now! Together, let us proclaim God's justice and love for all creation!	BBB

WORDS OF WELCOME

CONFESSING

ANTHEM

Amazing Grace

Traditional, arr. P. Sykes

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

C: God of Justice, when we settle for the way things are instead of the way you would have them be, forgive us. When we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision, increase our trust in you.
When we offer charity, but fail to work for justice, show us what your love requires.
When we walk ahead or behind, instead of with our neighbor, open our eyes to their humanity.
When we tire of the struggle, and tomorrow feels overwhelming, restore our hope and renew our courage, In the name of Jesus, our brother, Amen.

*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.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

*HYMN 442

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

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				
READING	Mark 9:14-29			
SERMON		Ahmaad Edmund		
*HYMN 487	Abide with Me			
SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER				

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan Smith

Carla Arevalo

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

- 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	How Can I Keep From Singing	Robert Lowry
*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!	
*PRAYER OF DEDICATION	GOING FORTH	
*HYMN 80	Our God, Our Help in Ages Past	
*BENEDICTION		
VOLUNTARY	Fugue in G Major	Felix Mendelssohn

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.

OPENING HYMN

In the Garden

C. AUSTIN MILES

C. AUSTIN MILES



PEACE HYMN





⁻Hymn Insert 1-

SERMON HYMN



CLOSING HYMN



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 after a long 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 George Williams, who is back in the ICU following a fall and ongoing complications from surgery in December.
- 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; and Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder. 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 also pray for migrant families living at the recently-opened MA Safety Net Family Shelter in East Cambridge and with whom we are now working at our First Church Welcome Center.
- 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. 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.
- 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.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

• 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 34,000 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

Celebrating Past and Present: A 20-Year Look-Back Today and Sunday, May 5, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and <u>via Zoom</u>

Join Dan Smith, Lindsay Miller, and Perry and Susie Neubauer (among others) to share in a guided look-back 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.



Confirmation Class for 8/9th Graders, The Well

Our year-long Confirmation journey for 8th and 9th graders continues today with a session entitled "Making Meaning of Death."

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.*





The Way Knows The Way

We were blessed to be accompanied through Holy Week by the song *The Way Knows the Way,* which comes from independent artist and songkeeper Lyndsey Scott. If you'd like to continue to follow her work, you can find more information here: <u>https://www.lyndseyscott.earth/</u>

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.

Refugee Ministry Welcome Center

The first opening of our new Welcome Center was a success, and we look forward to hosting guests again on Tuesday, April 30 and May 7. From 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., we will 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



Men's Breakfast

Saturday, May 4, 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

EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH

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, May 5.



Young Adults: Mount Auburn Cemetery Walk Sunday, May 5, 12:15 - 3:00 p.m. Meet at Coffee Hour after Worship

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for an afternoon stroll through the beautiful flowers and ponds of Mount Auburn Cemetery! Meet us at coffee hour, and we'll walk over together, stopping to pick up lunch along the way. 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 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 are also welcome to participate and receive a blessing of who you are. First Church members have been participating in a cohort of Southern New England UCC churches working towards becoming trans- and nonbinary-affirrming churches. A Faith & Life Group has also been assembled on this topic. The Blessing of Names will be our first time bringing this work into the wider First Church community. Please let Lisa McCarty (lisa.j.mccarty@gmail. com) know by Sunday, May 5, if you would like to participate.

EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH

Friday Café spring clothing drive



MEN'S & WOMEN'S SHORT-SLEEVED SHIRTS, TEES, BUTTON-DOWNS, JEANS, SHORTS, LIGHT JACKETS, HOODIES, CAPS, SNEAKERS, AND SANDALS.



PLEASE BAG ITEMS, LABEL THEM "FRIDAY CAFÉ," AND DROP OFF IN THE LOBBY OF FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE, 11 GARDEN 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 <u>Amazon wish list</u>, 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.

Young Adults: Faith on Tap

Monday, May 13, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Bow Market, Somerville

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for casual fellowship and happy hour drinks at Bow Market 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. Let Emma Duke



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

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

Schedule a Meeting with Dan

As I share in <u>this followup letter</u> 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 <u>my</u> <u>Calendly site</u> to pick a time and place, via Zoom or in person! - Dan Smith



Requests from the Leavetaking/Farewell Team

The Leavetaking/Farewell Team is requesting items for two different projects to honor and celebrate Dan's ministry for and with us.

Scrapbook: Any physical items (photos, cards, artwork, etc.) can be left in the plastic bin in the church office. Please add a note with your contributions so the team knows who/when/where they are from. Any electronic submissions (photos, emails, etc.), can be sent to Beth Spaulding. Please submit your items by May 15!

Photos for a slideshow to run during the party on June 9: please email any photos to Beth Spaulding by May 15.

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

PENTECOST IS MAY 19



Join us for hybrid worship on Pentecost Sunday a day where we celebrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us through movement and song, prayer and reflection. Pentecost will be a special celebration this year with baptisms and the Rite of Confirmation. Come honor the spiritual journeys of our nine Confirmands and hear selections from their statements of faith! We will welcome adults as well, who have discerned they, too, are ready to join First Church and make us their spiritual home. The service will also include a Spirit-filled testimony from our

Community Minister in Latin America, and a bittersweet Leavetaking Blessing for Ahmaad and Carla! Come wearing something red, if you'd like, and celebrate the Spirit's presence amidst all of our comings and goings!



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.

LOOKING AHEAD

Join us to celebrate 20 years of ministry!

DAN'S FAREWELL PARTY

Sunday, June 9, 2024 Worship at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream Party at 12:15 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall First Church in Cambridge 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA

All are welcome!

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



Monday, April 29

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

Tuesday, April 30

- 9:00 a.m. First Church Welcome Center opens, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
- Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom 10:30 a.m.
- 7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: MLK Book Study, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Staff Policy Committee, via Zoom

Wednesday, May 1

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom Christian Formation Committee, via Zoom 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, May 2

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

Friday, May 3

12:00 p.m. Friday Café, MJH

Saturday, May 4

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

Sunday, May 5

- 9:30 a.m. Celebrating Past and Present: A 20-Year Look-Back, Harter Room and via Zoom
- Confirmation Class for 8/9th graders, The Well 9:30 a.m.
- 10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream 11:00 a.m.
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library
- 12:15 p.m. **Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall**
- Young Adults: Mount Auburn Cemetery Walk, meet in MJH 12:15 p.m.
- Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream 7:30 p.m.

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

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See our Events Calendar for Zoom links and details.

Sign up here to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

