



CHRISTMASTIDE

**FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE**

Congregational 1633-1636
United Church of Christ
Garden and Mason Streets
Cambridge, Massachusetts

FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL
381 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 1 7

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...

Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, we are thankful that you are with us today, and we hope that you will stay for a bit after worship for refreshments and conversation. First Church is an Open and Affirming, Just Peace congregation of the United Church of Christ. If you'd like to know more about us, please introduce yourself to one of the ministers after church and explore our website at www.firstchurchcambridge.org.

Children of all ages are welcome in our worship. Picture books, children's Bibles, and activity packets can be found in the Children's Book Corner located by the door to the parish building (to the right of the chancel). Children may visit the Book Corner at any point during worship. Nursery care for infants and toddlers is located through that door, up the ramp, and through the fire door. Fussy babies and their caregivers are invited to use Hastings Common, through the same door.

Large print bulletins and assistive listening devices are available.
Please ask a greeter for assistance.

WORSHIP LEADERS December 31, 2017

Preaching

Tony Amoury Alkhoury, Ministerial Intern

Liturgist

David Torrey, First Church Member

Assisting with Worship

Dan Smith, Senior Minister

Playing Organ and Directing Choir

Peter Sykes, Director of Music

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

The Old Year Is Past

J. S. Bach

***HYMN 136**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

***GREETING**

David Torrey

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Polish carol, arr. Willcocks

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

All: **Holy God, we confess**

**that we move too quickly to the next thing,
busy with lists of things to do, places to go, and people to see.**

We are done with the old year and ready for a new one.

On this seventh day of Christmas, slow us down.

Let us linger in this Christmastide

and at the threshold of a New Year,

glad for the gift of Jesus,

grateful for the simple pleasures of life,

and focused on how we treat ourselves and others.

Let these brightening days

fill us with your love,

that we may see your world illumined anew.

Amen.

**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.*

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Quem pastores laudavere

Traditional carol,
harmonized by
Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Quem pastores laudavere,
Quibus angeli dixere,
Absit vobis jam timere,
Natus est rex gloriae.*

*The one praised by the shepherds,
to whom the angels said,
“Now lay aside your fears,”
has been born the king of glory.*

*Ad quem magi ambulabant,
Aurum, thus, myrrham portabant,
Immolabant haec
Nato regi gloriae.*

*To whom the wise men made their way,
bringing gold, frankincense, and myrrh,
sincere which they offered with open hearts
to the newborn King of glory*

*Christo regi, Deo nato,
Per Mariam nobis dato,
Merito resonet vere
Laus, honor, et gloria. praise,*

*To Christ the king, born God,
given to us through Mary,
let there resound as is truly fitting
honor, and glory.*

***DOXOLOGY**

**To God, all glorious heav’nly light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God, the Spirit, now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise! Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GOING FORTH

***HYMN 160**

Go Tell it On the Mountain

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL RESPONSE**

Christmas Benediction

Beverly Taylor

The Word is flesh and dwells among us! Glory to God in the highest!

VOLUNTARY

In Dulci Jubilo

J. S. Bach

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED

- For calm and peace and justice in Palestine and Israel and throughout the Middle East in the wake of President Trump's announcement declaring Jerusalem the capital of Israel.
- For the people of Venezuela, facing a serious hunger crisis.
- For our political leaders and for our democratic institutions. God grant our elected officials the wisdom and courage to stand up to wealthy donors, the NRA, and other special interests. Help them to hear the voice of the people, that they might yet create laws and enact policies that bring justice and healing to the sick, poor, incarcerated, addicted, and vulnerable.
- For survivors of sexual assault, and all whose lives have been impacted by sexual harassment, amid national news of allegations and admissions.
- For our nation as we wrestle with the lasting legacy of white supremacy and racial terror, and for our church as we struggle with and raise consciousness about our ancestral complicity in Northern slavery and in the subjugation of Indigenous peoples.
- For the Rohingya people of Myanmar, who are experiencing horrific atrocities as they are displaced from their home, and for all the world's refugees.
- For undocumented immigrants seeking sanctuary in houses of worship around the country, including First Church Amherst and University Lutheran Church in Harvard Square. May our federal government find a path of compassionate justice for all immigrants seeking safety, security, and well-being in our nation.

Portions of the YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED section of the bulletin are omitted in the online version to protect the privacy of those mentioned. To find out who we are praying for this week, please contact the church offices at parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org or by calling 617-547-2724.

If you would like us to include a prayer request, please contact Dan Smith, Karin Case, Francine LaChance, or Kirsten Manville by Wednesday morning, or fill out a prayer request card found in your pew.

A PRAYER FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE

God of new beginnings, as we conclude this year and forge ahead into 2018,
we look back and see so many things: things that grieve us,
things that cause us to rejoice,
things that surprise in ways both good and bad,
things that concern us.

Any given year is a time of highs and lows,
of births and deaths,

of exciting opportunities and of unfulfilled hopes.

Yet you are the faithful God who stays with us in and through it all.

We move into this new year knowing that you walk with us;
may we carry your presence with us always. Amen.

—Beth Spaulding, First Church Deacon

TODAY'S HAPPENINGS

HIDDEN SPACES, A Photography Installation in Margaret Jewett Hall Be sure to check out the exhibit which will run through January. And mark your calendar for an exhibit talk by Brandeis sociologist Wendy Cadge and photographer Randall Armor on January 7 at 2:30 p.m.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

COME CELEBRATE EPIPHANY Saturday, January 6 at 6 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall We will celebrate the Festival of Epiphany this coming Saturday. This year's dinner will be potluck through and through. You are invited to bring a main dish casserole (names beginning with A-H), a salad or side dish (names beginning with I-M), dessert (N-R), or drinks (S-Z). After our feast and a brief gathering ritual in the Chapel, we will set off together on a candlelight journey through the darkness, until we arrive at the Sanctuary and circle it with light. Under the dome in the chancel we will renew our own baptismal promises, ending with a joyful "sprinkling" of all present. This event is for all ages, so gather up friends, neighbors, kids, and come share the light! All are invited to bundle up and join us on Epiphany, promptly at 5:45 p.m., on the church lawn, as we renew our witness against gun violence. We will offer a reading of names, before we remove 2017 flags and share a brief prayer for peace in our city and nation.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

FAMILY NIGHTS IN EPIPHANY Tuesdays, 5:30 - 7:00 pm, January 16 and 30, Sage Hall Families with young children are warmly invited to our biweekly pasta-and-potluck suppers in Sage Hall, our indoor playspace. We gather to share a meal and share a bit of our lives as the kids play and the parents try for a bit of grown-up conversation. Our Family Nights in Epiphany will remain informal and “un-programmed,” but look forward to a Lenten series of “Tuesdays Together,” a 5-week series for the whole church. Details can be found elsewhere in this EVENT.

MEN’S BREAKFAST Saturday, January 6 at 8:00 a.m., Hastings Common The dates for our Saturday morning breakfasts for the first half of 2018 are: January 6, February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, and June 2. Join us for a hearty breakfast and even heartier conversations about topics that connect our faith to our lives and our world. Mark your calendars now, and plan to join us regularly. The breakfasts are served in the Kitchen and Harter Room, 8:00 - 9:30 a.m. One-time visitors, friends, and newcomers are always welcome. Questions? Contact David Torrey, davidtorrey@comast.net. If you’d like to sign up for the Men’s Breakfast e-mail list to receive monthly reminders, contact Kirsten Manville, parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org.

REV. DR. JIM ANTAL PREACHING ON JANUARY 7: “Defiant Hope — Christian Witness in a Time of Climate Crisis” Join us on Sunday, January 7th as Minister and President of the the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ and First Church member the Rev. Dr. Jim Antal preaches on the subject of “Defiant Hope -- Christian Witness in a Time of Climate Crisis.” Jim has served the Conference since 2006. In addition to overseeing the extraordinary staff of the Massachusetts Conference, he provides ecumenical and interfaith leadership. Together with the Conference Board of Directors, he is working with the leaders of the Connecticut and Rhode Island Conferences to propose joining together as one Conference. Jim is also the UCC’s national spokesperson on climate change, having authored and championed two General Synod resolutions on the subject. His forthcoming book *Climate Church – Climate World* will be published in March, 2018. Follow Jim Antal on Twitter @JimAntal. And please join us for a conversation with Jim at 10 am on the 7th in the Harter Room.

GUEST MUSICIAN ISSA BIBBINS AT FIRST CHURCH ON MLK Jr. SUNDAY Guest Musician, Issa Bibbins, will join us and lead us in some special gospel music during a multi-generational morning worship on Sunday, January 14. An accomplished composer, Issa is the Minister of Music at Roxbury Presbyterian Church. You may remember his original work, *Beyond Sunday Morning*, which premiered at First Church in May, 2017. Issa will also be leading us in a 10 O’clock workshop about the deep tradition of African American spirituals and gospel. Please plan to join us as we make a joyful noise together and also celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

REMEMBRANCE AND REPARATIONS AT FIRST CHURCH Sundays, January 21 and 28 at 10:00 a.m., Harter Room Dan Smith will be leading two 10 am sessions related to the topic of his upcoming sabbatical study - Remembrance and Reparations at First Church." In his grant proposal, he asks: "How can a 21st-century New England congregation publicly remember and own its historic complicity in the racial terrors of slavery? How can such a public remembrance process be leveraged to raise awareness of ongoing racial injustices while creating some specific, meaningful, systemic change that improves the lives of descendants of enslaved persons?" Please join us as we begin a conversation about these and other questions!

NEWCOMERS LUNCHEON Sunday, January 21st, 12:30 pm, Hastings Common If you're new (or feeling new) to First Church, looking for ways to get involved, seeking information about our church or our denomination (The United Church of Christ), interested in meeting others who are new to the church, or in connecting with some folks who already know their way around, this luncheon is for you! Join us for a Newcomers Luncheon and meet our ministers and members, learn about our history, explore membership, learn about opportunities for service and action in the community, and hear about our faith formation and educational programs. A light lunch will be served and childcare will be provided. All are welcome! The next Newcomers Luncheon will be on Sunday February 19. Questions? Contact Karin Case, karincase@firstchurchcambridge.org

TUESDAYS TOGETHER Tuesday, January 23 at 5:30 p.m., Kitchen, Hastings Common and Margaret Jewett Hall After a fabulous first "Life Together Tuesday" in November, we are eager to continue to building a new tradition of gathering on Tuesdays (under a new moniker Tuesdays Together!). Plan to join us in our new Kitchen, Hastings Common, and Margaret Jewett Hall, as we continue to live into our new space and new life together! We'll provide the pasta and sauce. You bring the rest (salad, side, or dessert, cider). We can break bread and continue to lay groundwork for intentional practices of how we serve and share meals in Christian community especially in anticipation of our weekly Tuesdays Together in Lent.

CONSIDER JOINING FIRST CHURCH - Sunday, January 28th, 11 am during Morning Worship Is First Church tugging at your heart? Does it feel like home to you, or like the sanctuary you need? Is your spirit fed by our music, worship and study? Is First Church a place where you are challenged, engaged, and growing? Is it a place you want to bring your children or grandchildren? Do you find an anchor here for your activism and community involvement? Is it a place where you can ask the questions that really matter or pour out your heart? We hope so! If you're experiencing any of these things, we invite you to consider membership in First Church. New members will be welcomed during our 11:00 a.m. service of worship on Sunday, January 28. Karin Case is happy to reflect with you, answer questions, or provide more information. Please be in touch with her (karincase@firstchurchcambridge.org) and let her know of your interest.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

2018 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND LUNCH Sunday, January 28, 12:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall Come one and all to the 382nd Annual Meeting of First Church on Sunday, January 28, following Morning Worship! A delicious luncheon will lead into our meeting. We will celebrate another very full year of ministry including the completion of our building project. We will thank one another for gifts shared and celebrate our outgoing and incoming leaders. We will also do some looking ahead as we see to discern where God is leading us next! Join us for this centuries old tradition of meeting, prayer and song!

MONDAY NIGHT MEDITATION, Mondays at 6:00 p.m. The Well Are you looking for a place to settle in for some silence and quiet reflection in the midst of a busy week? Discover an oasis of calm every Monday night from 6-7:00 p.m. in The Well (Room 22). Whether you're interested in trying meditation for the first time or deepening your current practice, an experienced meditator or simply curious, all are welcome. This ongoing series will meet every Monday night, except in the case of holidays and building closures. For more information or to receive updates about meditation at First Church, contact Karin Case, karincase@firstchurchcambridge.org

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Thank you to all who have pledged their share of support for our 2018 mission and ministry. Thanks to your generous support, we are well on our way to our goal of increasing our pledged contributions by 9-10%.

As of mid-December, we received 99 pledges from 155 members and friends, totaling \$375,415, which is 10.5% above the amount pledged by those same people in 2017. We are in the process of following up with those who haven't yet responded so that we can report at our annual meeting at the end of January.

As we complete the second year of our three-year Capital Campaign, we have received \$1,361,433.37 of \$1,843,427.83 pledged, which is 74%. Thank you to all who have contributed!

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, December 31

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (No Christian Formation)
- 11:00 a.m. Multigenerational Morning Worship, Tony Amoury Alkhoury Preaching, Sanctuary

Monday, January 1

First Church building and office closed in observance of New Year's Day

Wednesday, January 3

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room
- 11:30 a.m. Staff Holiday Lunch

Thursday, January 4

- 6:00 p.m. Gifts Discernment, The Well
- 7:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Harter Room

Friday, January 5

- 1:00 p.m. Friday Café, MJH

Saturday, January 6

- 6:00 p.m. Festival of Epiphany Potluck & Worship, MJH

Friday, January 7

- 10:00 a.m. Adult Formation, A Conversation with Jim Antal, Harter Room
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Jim Antal preaching
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Outdoor Church Offering, MJH
- 12:15 p.m. Wendy Cadge Sacred Spaces Art Exhibit Reception, MJH
- 1:30 p.m. Confirmation Class Afternoon Retreat, MJH
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

THE STAFF AT FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Senior Minister

Rev. Dan Smith
617-547-2724, ext. 23
dsmith@firstchurchcambridge.org

Minister

Rev. Dr. Karin Case
617-547-2724, ext. 26
karincase@firstchurchcambridge.org

Minister of Stewardship & Finance

Rev. Karen McArthur
617-547-2724, ext. 22
karenmc@firstchurchcambridge.org

Minister of Street Outreach

Rev. Kate Layzer
617-851-5074
klayzer@gmail.com

Ministerial Interns

Jen Bloesch
jen@firstchurchcambridge.org
Tony Amoury Alkhoury
tony@firstchurchcambridge.org

Director of Music

Peter Sykes
617-645-0833
psykes@aol.com

Director, Creative Worship & Arts

Sarah Higginbotham
617-547-2724, ext. 42
shigginb@firstchurchcambridge.org

Staff Composer

Patricia Van Ness
www.patriciavanness.com

Poet-in-Residence

Jean-Dany Joachim
jeandany@gmail.com

Music Intern

Kira Garvie

Shelter Director

Jim Stewart
617-661-1873
jstewart@firstchurchcambridge.org

Parish Administrator

Kirsten Manville
617-547-2724, ext. 21
parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org

Communications Coordinator

Francine LaChance
617-547-2724, ext. 45
francine@firstchurchcambridge.org

Administrative Assistant

Lang Haynes
617-547-2724, ext. 41
Lang@firstchurchcambridge.org

Sextons

Douglas Casey, Tina Quimby,
George Williams, Kimel Williams,
617-642-3980

Would you like to give to
First Church in Cambridge?
Here are easy ways to do it:



First Church Give



First Church Pledge

Give by Text: Text \$ __ to 617-841-8044



FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL, 1633–1636
United Church of Christ
11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138
www.firstchurchcambridge.org