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**Christmastide**

**FIRST CHURCH  
IN CAMBRIDGE**

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

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE, CONGREGATIONAL, UCC

December 27, 2015

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

VOLUNTARY                      *Fantasy on Two Well-Known Christmas Carols*    John Ebenezer West

\*HYMN 136                              *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

\*LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE    George Dyer

L:     The people who walked in darkness  
       have seen a great light!

**C:     Glory streams from heaven afar! Alleluia!**

L:     The Daystar shines upon us!

**C:     The darkness cannot put it out!**

*The Christmas Candle is lit.*

L:     The light of Christ!

**C:     Thanks be to God!**

L:     Let us pray. Praise to you, O God!

**C:     for the light of Jesus!**

L:     for the mystery of love,

**C:     the dawn of hope,**

L:     the gift of faith!

**C:     Praise to you, O God  
       who finds us in the shadows of night  
       and shines a human face to light our way. Amen.**

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM                              *Ding Dong, Merrily on High*    Traditional carol, arr. P. Sykes

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

*\*You are invited to stand. Hymns preceded by a "C" may be found in the beginning section of the hymnal. The C (Cambridge) - section contains hymns written and composed by current and past members of First Church.*

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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.  
We are done with the Christmas candlelight  
and ready for the bright light of Epiphany.  
We are done with the old year and ready for a new one.  
On this third day of Christmas, slow us down.  
Let us linger in the lull,  
glad for the gift of Jesus,  
grateful for the simple pleasures of life,  
and focused on how we treat ourselves and others.  
Let the brightening days of this Christmas season  
fill us with your love,  
that we may see your world illumined anew.  
Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

\*GREETING OF PEACE

\*HYMN 155

*Once in Royal David's City*

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

INVITATION

Kate Layzer

WELCOME

ADDRESS

THE BAPTISMAL VOWS

THE CONGREGATION'S PROMISES

BLESSING OF THE WATER

THE BAPTISM

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

\*FINAL BLESSING

L: Friends, let us ask God for a blessing!  
All: **Holy God, Creator of us all,  
give to these children 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.  
And may the grace of Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all forevermore. Amen.**

\*PRESENTATION

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING Isaiah 61:10-62:3

READING Luke 2:22-40

SERMON

Dan Smith

\*HYMN 166 *God, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace*

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 and address God in words most meaningful to your heart.)*

All: **Our Father, 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

OFFERTORY                                      *See, Amid the Winter's Snow*                                      John Goss

\*DOXOLOGY

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

\*HYMN (insert)                                      *On This Day Earth Shall Ring*

\*BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL RESPONSE                                      *Christmas Benediction*                                      Beverly Taylor

VOLUNTARY                                      *From Heaven on High to Earth I Come*                                      J. S. Bach

## **WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...**

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](http://www.firstchurchcambridge.org).

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

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 and down the hallway (up four stairs to the door on the right). Fussy babies and their caregivers are invited to the Hastings Room, just across the hall from that same door, where the service is broadcast through speakers.

**PREACHING TODAY** is Dan Smith, Senior Minister. Assisting with worship is Kate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach. Peter Sykes, Director of Music, is playing the organ and directing the choir. Our liturgist today is First Church member George Dyer. We are celebrating the baptism of Julia Amirana. Her parents are Rita and Omar Amirana, and her godparents are Abe Amirana and Jasmine Tarkoff.

**YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED** Please keep in your prayers all who are undergoing treatment for cancer. Please pray for our nation as we confront an epidemic of fear and violence against Muslims and persons of color. Pray for the peace of Israel and Palestine in the face of continued violence. Please pray for relief for migrants and refugees from Syria and other regions. Please keep in your prayers people struggling with grief, illness, addiction or mental health concerns, job related transitions, marital or relationship troubles, or loneliness.

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](mailto:parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org) or by calling 617-547-2724.

## **TODAY'S HAPPENINGS**

**NIGHT SONG: Solemn Mystical Compline Tonight at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary** Join us for this contemplative and spiritually transporting candle-lit experience of choral literature, ancient and contemporary chant, and instrumental music. There is no spoken word, no sermon— just the opportunity to experience the Divine through music, being still, and silent meditation.

## **FUTURE HAPPENINGS**

**NEW YEAR'S DAY AT THE FRIDAY CAFÉ** Yes, we will be open on New Year's Day! We will be serving homemade lasagna (both meat and vegetarian) and salad. Can you make one or the other and bring it by church this week? Sign up at <https://meattrain.com/7410em> or text or email Kate Layzer to make arrangements (617-851-5074, [klayzer@gmail.com](mailto:klayzer@gmail.com)). THANK YOU!

**COME CELEBRATE EPIPHANY! January 6, 2016** Epiphany ("manifestation") is a Christian feast so ancient that it predates Christmas. It celebrates God's self-revelation in Jesus. It is a season of light shining in darkness, a time when the wise leave their books to seek a child, wine brims from clay water jars, and the voice of God rings in our ears: "You are my beloved, my child, my delight!"

We will celebrate *Epiphany* on **Wednesday, January 6, at 6:00 p.m.**, beginning in Margaret Jewett Hall. 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 dishes (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!

Also, feel free to bundle up and join us on Epiphany, right at 6:00 pm, on the church lawn as we renew our witness against gun violence. We will offer a reading of names before we remove 2015 flags and share a brief prayer for peace in our city and nation.

**RACE AT FIRST CHURCH, Sundays, January 10 and 17** We make a strong statement with our "Black Lives Matter" sign, but has First Church always taken a principled stand on race and racism? Join us on January 10, at 10:00 a.m., when with Dave Kidder's leadership we'll hear about and discuss where First Church stood on race in America during the first 250 years of its existence. Then on January 17 Karen Anne Zee will lead an exploration of First Church's more recent history on race. Also in the January 17 session Dan Smith, with Karen Anne and Dave, will facilitate a conversation guided by two questions: what does this history mean for us now, and where do we go from here? We look forward to a lively discussion. Please join us!

**GUEST SPEAKER ALEXIS TOLIVER, OF BLACK LIVES MATTER, Sunday, January 10, Hastings Room** Whether you've been deeply involved in the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, following it in the media, or are simply looking for a general introduction, join us January 10, at 12:30 p.m., in the Hastings Room. Alexis Toliver, of Black Lives Matter, Cambridge, will speak about how the movement is developing both locally and nationally. Come learn about BLM strategies and priorities. We hope this informative session will spur further conversation about how we might want to be involved as individuals and as a church community. Questions? Contact Dan Smith, :dsmith@firstchurchcambridge.org, David Kidder, david.e.kidder@gmail.com, or Jean Bellow, jean\_bellow@comcast.net.

***THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING* FILM SCREENING Sunday, January 10, 5:00-8:30 p.m. in MJH** Join Massachusetts Peace Action, Earth Stewardship at First Church Cambridge, and others for a screening and discussion of this new documentary, based on the Naomi Klein book of the same name, that weaves together threads of climate, racial and economic injustice and the movements already rising for a new, non-extractive economy. When: Sunday, January 10, 5:00 pm-8:30 pm in Margaret Jewett Hall, starting with 5:00 pm Potluck and conversation, then 6:00 pm Film screening, and 7:30 pm Small group discussions, ending at 8:30. Cost is a donation. Please RSVP to help us plan numbers at <http://masspeaceaction.org/events/tce-jan10>. Snow Date: January 24. If in doubt, call 617-354-2169

**WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ON RACE? Sunday, January 17, Hastings Room** In this last of our series of four sessions — the two 10:00 Hours and the two 12:30 events on January 10 and 17 — drawing on the insights from our Black Lives Matters discussions, members of First Church's Beloved Community will facilitate a conversation guided by two questions: what does this history mean for us now, and where do we go from here? We look forward to a lively discussion. Please join us!

**FIRST CHURCH HISTORY 101, Sundays, January 24 and 31** Just why does our church have two founding years — 1633-1636? And just what is our connection to that once very small college across Cambridge Common? What were the theological differences that led Cambridge and many other towns to have a "First Church" and a "First Parish"? What did First Church look like before 1872, when our current "meetinghouse" was built? Join Dan Smith and some of our resident First Church historians for a "starter course" in First Church's long and robust past. Consider it preparation for our 380th Anniversary, February 1!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO STAFF AND GUESTS OF THE FIRST CHURCH SHELTER**, who lobbied and testified at the State House in July in support of a Homeless Bill of Rights for Massachusetts. That bill was passed by the House recently, and will be taken up by both houses in the coming session.



**THE RINDGE TOWERS FOOD PANTRY** needs your help. This coming week, put some things on your shopping list, like peanut butter, cooking oil, canned veggies and fruits, and maybe even a little package of cookies for the kids. Collection on Sunday Jan. 3. Start your year with good works! PLEASE be sure that none of your contributions are expired, opened, or breakable, 'cause if they are they have to be discarded. Thanks so much.

*The bulletin cover image is from a series of tile mosaics designed by Perry Neubauer and created by the children of the church in 2007. You can view the artwork in Margaret Jewett Hall.*

## The Week Ahead

### Sunday, December 27

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Multigenerational Service, Sacrament of Baptism, Dan Smith preaching
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

### Friday, January 1

- 1:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall

### Saturday, January 2

- 3:30 p.m. Outdoor Church Sandwich Making, Hastings Room

### Sunday, January 3

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Multigenerational Holy Communion, Kate Layzer, preaching
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Outdoor Church sandwich-making (preschool.-Grade 7)
- 1:00 p.m. Outdoor Church, Cambridge Common
- 2:00 p.m. Youth Group Trip to Sacco's Bowl Haven, Meet in Lobby
- 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Class, Room 22 (The Well)
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

**EPIPHANY POTLUCK DINNER AND WORSHIP Wednesday, January 6** Save the date and join us in a candlelit sanctuary for this First Church traditional celebration of Epiphany.

## The Staff of 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
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