



Advent

**FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE**

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

ADVENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Now let us ask for healing, pardon and peace.
C: **In your presence, God, and in each other's company,
We confess that our lives and the life of the world
are cast in shadow by what we do and by what we fail to do.
But we know a light shines in the darkness
and the darkness does not overcome it.
Pardon our deliberate faults.
Heal our weaknesses and fears.
Give us strength to grow in the love we lack.
Illumine our souls with the first glimmers
Of the Coming Light of Christ, our Comfort and Redeemer. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

Children from Preschool to 8th grade are now invited to leave for church school. Teachers will meet children at the side door to accompany them to their classrooms. Parents can meet their children in Lindsay Chapel (through Margaret Jewett Hall and to the left) after worship.

*HYMN 118 *Return, My People*

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING Isaiah 40: 1-8

READING Matthew 3: 1-12

SERMON Dan Smith

*HYMN 113 *Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old*

PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

L: God be with you.
C: **And with your spirit.**
L: Let us pray . . .(intercessions, silence, 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 AND CITY MISSION SOCIETY GIFT SHOP OFFERING

Members of the congregations who have brought unwrapped gifts for the CMS Christmas Shops will now be invited to bring them forward and place them in the large baskets at the front of the communion table. Anyone who wishes to donate money to the CMS Shops may also bring those gifts forward and place them in the smaller basket. Once all have returned to their seats, our regular weekly morning offerings for the support of our ministry will be received.

OFFERTORY

Noel Nouvelet

trad. French carol,
arr. by Richard Proulx

*ADVENT DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Hope in our God who reigns above,
Who holds us all in steadfast love,
Whose Spirit blows across the earth,
Preparing us for second birth! Amen.**

*HYMN 122

Now Bless the God of Israel

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

O Sapientia

Healey Willan

*O Wisdom who camest forth from the mouth of the most high,
reaching mightily from one boundary of the world
to the other and pleasantly ordering all things,
come to teach us the way of prudence.*

VOLUNTARY

*The Advent bulletin cover was created by Alice Dwyer,
as part of a church school creative arts project.*

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.

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 Sheehan Scarborough, Ministerial Intern. Our liturgist is Elizabeth Lovance, Co-Chair of the Stewardship Committee. The Godly Play 2 church school class is lighting the Advent candles. Susie Longfield is directing the bell choir. Peter Sykes, Director of Music, is playing the organ and directing the choir.

The YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED section of the liturgy is 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 office at parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org or call 617-547-2724.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS HIGHLIGHTS

In an effort to reduce paper consumption and be better stewards of the environment, we will no longer be printing weekly bulletin announcements along with the liturgy. Instead, we will print bi-weekly booklets with news, announcements, and calendars, which will be available at the sanctuary entrances. For more information about these and other announcements, please pick up a News and Announcements booklet or visit the Latest News section of the website at www.firstchurchcambridge.org.

ADVENT STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW Sundays, December 8, 15, and 22, 10:00 a.m. Brent Coffin and Dan Smith will be leading three ten O’Clock Hours to introduce the Gospel of Matthew, what is unique about it and what characterizes it. They will bring specific texts for our study, which will serve as an introduction and show how Matthew’s Gospel can be seen as a context for our lives.

FAMILY CHOIR REHEARSALS December 8, 15 and 22 at 10 a.m., in the Choir Room Join the Family Choir as it prepares to sing in the Un-Pageant on December 22. All ages and musical experiences are welcome.

FIRST CHURCH ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS FAIR Sunday, December 8, 12:15 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall Looking to keep it simple and socially conscious this holiday season? Want to avoid the malls but still need that perfect gift for a loved one? The Alternative Christmas Fair (during the Coffee Hour on December 8) benefits First Church’s ministries and also local justice organizations.

YOUTH GROUP GATHERING Sunday, December 8, 2:30 p.m. Meet at First Church for Ice Skating at the Frog Pond.

SPIRITUALITY & MENTAL HEALTH GROUP Sundays at 2 p.m., Tower Room We meet as persons with questions about our inner lives, pursuing wellness, and to consider how our faith and our soundness inform each other. Participation in the group is open to any and all who identify with our purpose. To learn more, see Carter West (cartergw24@gmail.com.) or Terry McKinney (tmckinney@firstchurchcambridge.org).

NIGHT SONG: SOLEMN MYSTICAL COMPLINE Sundays at 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary Night Song is based on Compline, the last daily service of Christian worship, dating back to monastic life in the Middle Ages. Offered in the quietness of the evening, Night Song invokes a sense of protection and peace for the night that is to come. Join us for Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony.

ADVENT HAVRUTA GROUPS Thursdays, December 12 and 19 Two *Havruta* groups on Matthew will be offered (one in the morning, one in the evening) during Advent, on Thursdays, December 12 and 19. These sessions will go very deeply into texts from Matthew and will provide a foundation and a vision for what these texts could mean to us. The morning group will meet at 7 a.m. in the Hastings Room. The evening group will meet at 7 p.m. in room 202.

ADVENT CHORAL MUSIC Sunday, December 15 For this year’s special Advent Choral Music Sunday service the choir will sing “Machet die Tore Weit,” by George Philipp Telemann, on the Advent text “Lift high your heads ye mighty gates. The piece is for choir, strings, and continuo.

CHRISTMAS PARTY AND POTLUCK Sunday, December 15, 12:15 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall. All are welcome to gather together for a delicious potluck meal, caroling and fellowship. A spiral-cut ham and vegetable quiches will be the main course. If your household's last name falls between A-M, would you please bring a green leafy salad (with dressing) to Margaret Jewett Hall before worship. If your last name falls between N-Z, would you please bring a dessert. If you are in a pinch for time, juices and sparkling water would be most welcome!

Come visit our Annual Alternative Christmas Fair

Sunday December 8, 2013
12:30 PM to 2:00 PM

- Wood carvings ● Toys
- Cards ● Woven goods
- Food ● and More

from Palestine, Guatemala,
South Africa . . .



The Alternative Christmas Fair benefits First Church ministries and social justice organizations, including:

- Canaan Fair Trade
- Folk Art Mavens (Palestinian refugee women)
- Heifer International
- Kids4Peace
- RIM (Refugee Immigration Ministries)
- A Thread of Hope (Guatemalan women)
- Tremendous Hearts (South African AIDS orphans)



Held in Margaret Jewett Hall
First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
Harvard Square
11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138
www.firstchurchcambridge.org

First Church Covenant Testimony

Adopted 1990

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 with justice and equity for all people;
To engage in non-violent 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 that love which overcomes fear and death.

This we testify, confessing always our reliance on God's grace in Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL
375 YEARS
ON·THE·WAY

The Staff of First Church in Cambridge

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FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE, CONGREGATIONAL

United Church of Christ

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