



Christmas Day
December 25, 2023

**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
387 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1636 - 2023

December 25, 2023

Leading Worship Kate Layzer, *Minister of Street Outreach*
Peter Sykes, *Music Director*
Liturgist: Dean Eaton
Bulletin Cover Image Freddie Funck, First Church Member

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming, Just-Peace church, committed to inclusivity and non-violence. We love the teachings of Jesus with our minds as well as our hearts! We believe and question, question and grow. We're an old church with forward-looking ways. We have plenty of passion, theological opinions, good music, food and fellowship. If you're looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one!

We offer a variety of programs, events, and activities for adults, children, and families. Please explore our [website](#) and visit us on a Sunday. If you are looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one! We pray that you will always be showered with the Love that came to Earth at Christmas. It never ends. It is yours forever.



First Church Land Acknowledgment

We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusetts people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusetts, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment [here](#) or by scanning the QR code to the left.

Christmas Day

Worship and Communion

For those participating at home, we invite you to bring bread or crackers and water, juice, or wine to your home altar, so that you may participate in Holy Communion. All are welcome at the Table!

VOLUNTARY

Noel

Claude Daquin

***CAROL (insert)**

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

***GREETING**

Kate Layzer

*** LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE**

L: The light of Christ!

C: **Thanks be to God!**

***CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION AND GREETING OF PEACE**

READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

***CAROL (insert)**

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

READING

Luke 2:8–14

***CAROL 135**

Angels, We Have Heard on High

READING

Luke 2:15-20

MUSICAL MEDITATION

The Bells

William Byrd

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

L: In peace, let us pray to God.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer!**

L: That the heart of the world might rejoice this day at the birth of a merciful savior, let us pray to God.

C: **Lord, hear our prayer!**

(continued on next page)

**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.*

L: That the work of justice may capture every human heart and lead to peace, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For an end to all war and violence, that all people may live in hope and safety, so that free of fear we build a new tomorrow, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the health of the earth, and the integrity of all creation, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the sick, the troubled, the sorrowing and the dying, that they may know the comfort of God's mercy, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For our enemies and all who have done us harm, and for all whom we have harmed, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: For the church throughout the world, that we may love God, God's world and one another, welcome and serve all people and show forth the mercy of Christ Jesus, let us pray to God.

C: Lord, hear our prayer!

L: And now, in the words our savior gave us, we make bold to pray together,

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.**

CHRISTMAS HOLY COMMUNION

*INVITATION AND REMEMBERING

L: Friends, on this Christmas day,
let's share what we know in our hearts:
Who is invited to this welcome table of love?

C: Everyone!

L: Everyone! The young and the old,

C: the rich and the poor,

L: all kings and lowly shepherds,

C: all angels, all sinners, all saints,
All: all together in communion!
L: And what do we remember at this table?
C: We remember Jesus' birth in a manger,
and his presence as God with us.
L: We remember his life and his love.
C: We remember his suffering and death.
L: We remember his rising and the promise of new life.
C: We remember he taught us that we are holy,
All: that every person and all creation
is holy and beloved in God's sight.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

*THANKSGIVING

L: Let us give thanks.
All: We thank you, gracious God,
for making yourself known to us
in the human life of Jesus.
Keep us always in the joy of Christmas Day,
like Mary and Joseph, like angels and shepherds –
servants of your love and bearers of your grace.
Glory be to you in the church and in all creation,
now and forever. Amen. Alleluia!

*CAROL 134 Joy to the World!

*BENEDICTION AND PEACE OF CHRIST

**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.



OPENING CAROL

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

"Piae Cantiones," 1582
Tr. Jane M. Joseph, c. 1894-1929

PERSONENT HODIE 6.6.6.6.6. with Refrain
"Piae Cantiones," 1582
Arr. by Gustav T. Holst, 1874-1934

1 On this day earth shall ring With the song
2 His the doom, ours the mirth; When he came
3 God's bright star, o'er his head, Wise men three
4 On this day an-gels sing; With their song

chil-dren sing To the Lord, Christ our King, Born on earth to
down to earth, Beth-le-hem saw his birth; Ox and ass be-
to him led, Kneel-ing low by his bed, Lay their gifts be-
earth shall ring, Prais-ing Christ, heav-en's King, Born on earth to

REFRAIN

save us; Him the Fa-ther gave us.
side him From the cold would hide him. Id-e-o-o-o-o,
fore him, Praise him and a-dore him.
save us. Peace and love he gave us.

R.H.
R.H. L.H.

BIRTH

Id-e-o-o-o-o, Id-e-o glo-ri-a in-ex-cel-sis De-o!

SECOND CAROL

Break forth, O beau-teous heaven-ly light, And ush - er in the

morn - ing; Ye shep - herds, shrink not with af - fright, But

hear the an-gel's warn - ing. This child, now weak in in - fan - cy, Our

con - fi - dence and joy shall be, The power of Sa - tan

SECOND CAROL, cont'd.



break - ing, Our peace e - ter - nal mak - ing.

*Our offering supports the many ministries of our church,
with 10% for missions in the community and beyond.
Please use our new [all-in-one link](#) for gifts for 2023 or
2024, from your bank account or by credit/debit card:*



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THIRD CAROL

135 Angels We Have Heard on High

1. An - gels we have heard on high sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2. Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see Christ whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
 Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav - en - ly song.
 come a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

WORDS: Traditional French carol, tr. *Crown of Jesus II*, 1862, alt.
 MUSIC: French carol melody
 Published in a French collection in 1855, this carol probably originated in the 18th century.

GLORIA
77.77 w. refrain

CLOSING CAROL

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come 134

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -
 2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: let earth her
 3. Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; let fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heaven and na - ture sing and
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 and won - ders of his love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of his love,

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.
 MUSIC: Attr. Georg Frederick Handel, 1741; arr. Lowell Mason, 1848

ANTIOCH
 CM w. repeat

This is Congregationalist Watts' paraphrase of Psalm 98.
 His free paraphrasing helped wean churchgoers from
 singing only literal renditions of the Psalms.