

Lent
March 10, 2024

**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

388 YEARS
ON THE WAY

1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 4

March 10, 2024

Offering Reflections	Jean Dany Joachim, <i>Poet in Residence</i> Larissa Jeanniton and David McCann, <i>poets</i>
Liturgist	Ann McCann
Leading Worship	Ahmaad Edmund, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i> Dan Smith, <i>Senior Minister</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck, <i>First Church member</i>

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m.	Adult Formation: Courage That Inspires - Pauli Murray Harter Room and via Zoom
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 and After-Worship 1:1 Conversations, MJH
1:00 p.m.	Faith & Life Group: Nature as a Path to Connection, Fresh Pond
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: www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give

Contact a Pastor or Staff Member

Find [contact information](#) 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 [First Church Communications Request](#) form.

Have an edit or update for our website?
Complete the [FCC Website Changes](#) form

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Ricercar

Manuel Coelho

***HYMN 4**

Come, Living God, When Least Expected

***GREETING**

Ann McCann

L: Sisters, brothers, siblings, come, you who seek courage in community.

C: Come, you who long for healing and wholeness!

L: Beloved, come: you who yearn for a deeper life and a fairer world.

C: Come and find this courage through the Spirit's call

L: to truth that sets us free, to love as wide as the sea!

C: Come now, draw near to God with thanks and praise!

WORDS OF WELCOME

CONFESSING

ANTHEM

Kyrie Orbis Factor

Sarum chant

Maker of the world, King eternal, have mercy upon us.

O immense source of pity, have mercy upon us.

Drive off all our evils, have mercy upon us.

Christ who art the light of the world and giver of life, have mercy upon us.

Consider the wounds produced by the devil's art, have mercy upon us.

Keeping and confirming thy believers, have mercy upon us.

Thou and thy Creator, an equal light, have mercy upon us.

We know that God is one and three, have mercy upon us.

*Thou, merciful unto us, art present with the Holy Spirit
that we might live in thee, have mercy upon us.*

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

SUNG PRAYER

Lead Me, Lord

Hymn 271

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

***GREETING OF PEACE**

**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.*

***HYMN 470**

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

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

Dan Smith

READING

Psalm 19

READING

2 Timothy 1:2-7

REFLECTIONS

Jean Dany Joachim, David McCann, and Larissa Jeanniton

***COVENANT TESTIMONY**

**All: 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 through justice and equity for all people;
to engage in nonviolent 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 the love that overcomes fear and death.
This we testify, confessing always our reliance on God’s grace in Christ,
and on the power of the Holy Spirit.**

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Ahmaad Edmund

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 [all-in-one link](#) for gifts from your
bank account or by credit/debit card:*



OFFERTORY

When Jesus Wept

William Billings

*When Jesus wept, the falling tear in mercy flowed beyond all bound.
When Jesus groaned, a trembling fear seized all the guilty world around.*

*DOXOLOGY

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine
demands my soul, my life, my all! Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 401

Amazing Grace

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Canzona

Girolamo Frescobaldi

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.

OPENING HYMN

4 Come, Living God, When Least Expected

1. Come, liv - ing God, when least ex - spect - ed, when minds are
 2. Come now, as once you came to Mo - ses with - in the
 3. Then, through our gloom, your Son will meet us as viv - id

dull and hearts are cold, through sharp -'ning word and warm af - fec - tion
 bush a - live with flame; or to E - li - jah on the moun - tain,
 truth and liv - ing Lord, ex - plod - ing doubt and dis - il - lu - sion

re - veal - ing truth as yet un - told. Break from the tomb in which we
 by si - lence press - ing home your claim. So, let our minds be sharp to
 to scat - ter hope and joy a - broad. And we will share his ra - diant

hide you to speak a - gain in start - ling ways; break through the
 read you in sight or sound or print - ed page, and let us
 bright - ness, and, blaz - ing through the dread of night, il - lu - mi -

words in which we bind you to res - ur - rect our life - less praise.
 greet you in our neigh - bors, in ar - dent youth or mel - low age.
 nate by love and rea - son, for those in dark - ness, faith's de - light.

WORDS: Alan Gaunt, 1991

MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois, *Cinquante psaumes en françois*, 1543, rev. 1551

RENDEZ À DIEU
 98 98 17

Lead Me, Lord

271

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy right-eous-ness, make thy way

plain be - fore my face. For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord,

on - ly, that mak - est me dwell in safe - ty.

WORDS: Psalms 5:8, 4:8
MUSIC: Samuel S. Wesley, 1861

LEAD ME, LORD
378.548

PEACE HYMN

470

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

1. Pre-cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
 2. When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin-ger near,
 3. When the dark-ness ap-pears and the night draws near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
 when my life is al-most gone,
 and the day is past and gone,

through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:
 hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall:
 at the riv-er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

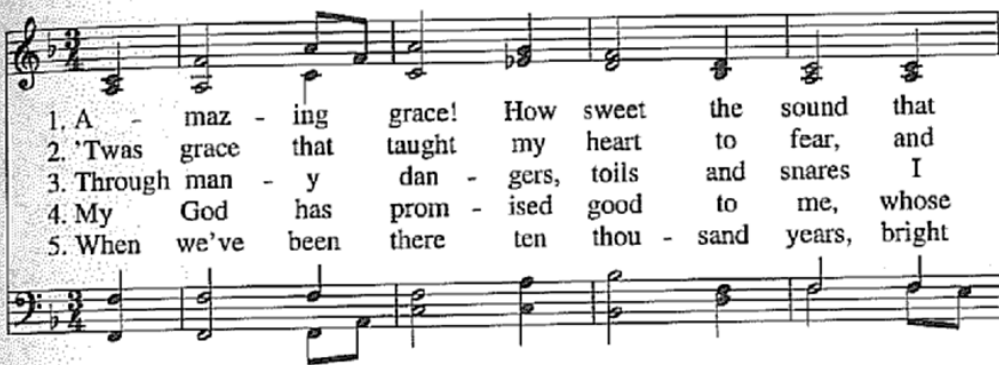
Take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

WORDS and MUSIC: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932

PRECIOUS LORD
66.9D

CLOSING HYMN

Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound 401



1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound that
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3. Through man - y dan - gers, toils and snares I
 4. My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved and set me free! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

WORDS: St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779, alt.; St. 5, *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790
 MUSIC: Shaw and Spilman's *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1829; harm. FCC, 1997

NEW BRITAIN
 CM

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Carla Arevalo, who is recovering from a tonsillectomy.
- We pray for Scott Yockel, who is recovering from a recent hospitalization for ulcerative colitis.
- We pray for George Williams and for Sue Reynolds, who are both recovering from surgery.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who continues to be hospitalized for ongoing health concerns.
- We pray for Robb Morgan, who is recovering from a ruptured eardrum.
- We pray for Mike Stevens, who will undergo aortic valve replacement surgery this week.
- We pray for Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder.
- We pray for Brent and Poppy Coffin as Poppy experiences a significant decline in her struggle with Alzheimer's.
- We pray for Jennifer Petrallia and all who are struggling with debilitating anxiety and depression.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing ALS; Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan's mother; Jim Rae, Ami Brenner's father; 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 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 soldiers and civilians involved in recent U.S. retaliatory strikes in Yemen, Syria and Iraq. We pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, throughout the Middle East and Ukraine, and also in Sudan and Haiti.
- We pray for political and climate refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water.
- 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.
- In the wake of the recent Alabama court ruling that has upended fertility care in the state, 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 [First Church List](#) to see and offer up more community prayer requests.

Statement of Prayer and Concern for Palestine and Israel From the Executive Leadership of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (SNEUCC), February 28, 2024

To all that is holy:

We the faith leaders of the Southern New England Conference lift your children in Palestine and Israel in prayer through the pain, suffering, and unnecessary violence and unfathomable loss of life since October 7, 2023.

We lift the families of those who are grieving to you, God, families broken apart by death, relocation, and continued hostage realities.

We lift the Palestinian rage and pain, the suffering and genocide.

We lift the echoes of hurt caused by conflation of State, and people group, and commit to showing up against antisemitism in our local communities, and beyond.

We commit to a future where Palestinian people can live joyfully and freely in their faiths, and will work for that reality in our communities, and beyond.

We commit to a future where Jewish people can live joyfully and freely in their faith, and will work for that reality in our communities, and beyond.

We pray for pastoral leaders seeking to make sense of what is happening, and how to show up in their own settings for peace.

We pray for communities here, holding close the pain of what is happening abroad, and watching each newscast with fear and trembling for our collective future.

In times like these, witnessing the Holy Land in turmoil for siblings of all sister-faiths, we cling to our faith. We remember that you are a God of those who are oppressed, you are Just, and you have pointed one way to wholeness and healing of the world through your son Jesus Christ.

We refuse the binaries of “us” and “them,” of theological manifest destiny, of political division, and God we know that there are people of every faith, ethnicity, and nationality, in pain and trauma, carrying the weight of generational trauma, the truth of their own experience, and the understandings of narratives generally produced by systems of power.

God, we know it is not possible to speak for everyone, nor should we try. It is not possible to shy away from pain, though we can mitigate impact.

To all that is holy, hear our prayer, and keep our hearts open to your spirit teaching us the way of Love. God hear our prayer, and help us advocate for peace and justice, here and abroad.

Amen.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Lenten Formation Series: *Courage That Inspires* Today and Sunday, March 17, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Join First Church leaders, staff, and guests as they guide us through a time of prayerful meditation and learning from the remarkable lives and stories of various *Americans Who Tell the Truth*. The four portraits on loan to us this year will be rotated between the Harter Room and Hastings Common so that we may sit with the featured truth teller each week in the Harter Room.

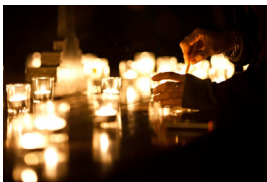
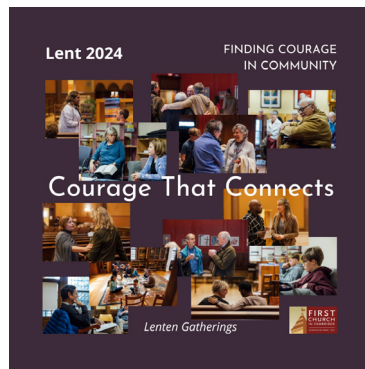


February 25: ***Courage that Inspires* - Rev. William Barber II**
March 3: ***Courage that Inspires* - James Baldwin**
TODAY: ***Courage that Inspires* - Pauli Murray**
March 17: ***Courage that Inspires* - Leah Penniman**

After-Worship 1:1 Conversations

Today and Sunday, March 17 at 12:15 p.m.

Looking for a simple spiritual practice to take on this Lent? What about a commitment to reaching out to another member of our faith community for 1:1 conversation? Consider sharing your faith journeys, and perhaps some struggles, with each other. We'll have conversation prompts and extra snacks available as you find a quiet spot in the building (or even outside on a walk) for conversation and connection.



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.](#)

A Word About our Covenant Testimony

The First Church Covenant Testimony was composed and adopted in 1990 as an expression of the ways we feel called to live into our faith today. It seeks to be more explicit about the commitment of our congregation to justice, reconciliation, peace, and the integrity of all creation. [Read more about our covenant and covenant testimony.](#)

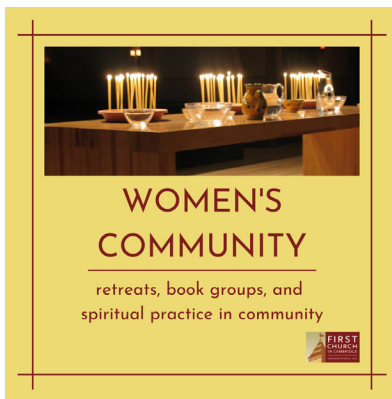
LENT AT FIRST CHURCH

Transition at First Church: Interim Search Congregational Survey

The Interim Search Team is seeking input from the congregation as it begins the process of looking for an interim pastor. They have created a brief survey that can be found [here](#). Please try to respond no later than Monday, March 11. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Jim Cairns at: pelton.cairns@gmail.com



Moderator Moana Bentin, Vice Moderator Phil Jones, Deacon Co-Chair Leslie Pelton-Cairns, and Deacon Co-Chair Casey Marsh welcome your questions and input as we walk this journey together. Visit the [Transition at First Church](#) page of our website for ongoing updates.



Women's Community Book Group

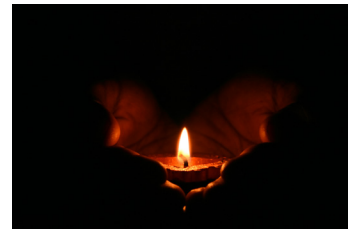
Tuesday, March 12, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Please join the women of FCC as we return to reading a novel. This month's read is [Our Missing Hearts](#) by Celeste Ng, the bestselling author of *Little Fires Everywhere*: "a deeply suspenseful and heartrending novel about the unbreakable love between a mother and child in a society consumed by fear." Join us and, as always, try to bring someone new!

Lenten Taizé Services

Tuesdays, March 12 & 19, 8:00 - 8:45, Harter Room

All are welcome to join us for a short evening service of candlelight, meditation, and singing in the Taizé tradition. Emma and Owen Duke will be leading this casual time to reflect and find calm in the season of Lent.



Choir Rehearses for Holy Week Services

Thursdays, March 14 and 21, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Harter Room

The First Church Choir will meet for two more evening rehearsals in preparation for Holy Week services. Come and join us in our preparations! For more information, contact Music Director Peter Sykes at: psykes@aol.com.

LENT AT FIRST CHURCH



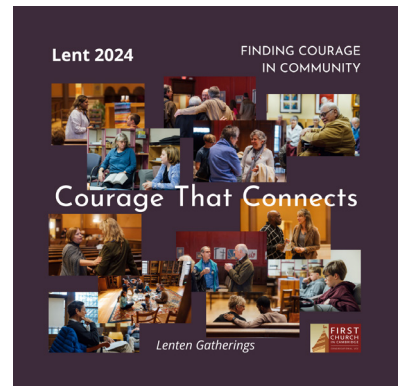
Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting **Tuesday, March 19, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m.** **Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)**

Join Ginny Harlan, Martha Cook, and Dan Smith for a monthly support group where we offer each other companionship and spiritual resources as we grow into our elderhood. In this special season of our lives, let's explore together some of those Big Questions as we let God's presence and this community hold us. We can become

elders together as we seek dignity, courage, grace, hope, peace, and wisdom in the ending phase of our lives. We will be reading an excerpt from Chapter 2 (pp.13-18) from [Practicing Our Faith](#), edited by Dorothy Bass. The chapter is entitled "Honoring the Body," and Martha Cook will be distributing a printed copy (along with Zoom information) to those who plan to attend. You are welcome to join at any time; homework is not a requirement for participation!

Lenten Gatherings: Courage That Connects - Soup Supper **Thursday, March 21, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.,** **The Parsonage (44 Garden St.)**

We have set some time aside to break bread and find courage and nourishment of body and soul through a series of informal gatherings that will be hosted at the Parsonage. After a meal and a gently guided conversation about where we are needing and finding courage, First Church Deacons will offer a simple ritual of Communion to close out the gathering. *If you plan to attend, please RSVP to [Dan Smith](#).*



Getting Off Gas: Solutions for a Just Transition **Wednesday, March 20, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

First Parish UU, 1446 Mass Ave., Harvard Square

Transitioning away from gas to heat our buildings is an important part of addressing climate change. But how do we do that? Come hear about local strategies, including key legislation and the exciting alternative of networked geothermal energy—and learn what you can do! Speakers include Audrey Schulman, co-founder and co-executive director of HEET; MA State Rep. Steven Owens, sponsor of the Future of Clean Heat bill; and Cambridge City Councillor Patricia Nolan. Child care will be available, and masking is encouraged. [RSVP HERE](#)

LENT AT FIRST CHURCH

Young Adults: Brunch at Zoe's Diner
Sunday, March 24, 12:15 - 2:00 p.m.
Zoe's Diner, Harvard Square

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for brunch and casual fellowship at Zoe's Diner in Harvard Square! We'll meet at coffee hour after church and walk over together. 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.



New Parish List On Its Way

First Church seeks to update our membership database with new information about YOU, including updated contact info like a new email address, phone number, or physical address. On Wednesday, February 21, all those in our directory database should have received an email from First Church providing you with the information we have for you on file. The message included instructions for accessing our online directory, where you can make changes to your profile and see your giving history to First Church. ***If you did not receive the email on February 21, please contact [Office Assistant Bruce Dillenbeck](#) to provide your info for our database.*** We sincerely appreciate your help in keeping our records in order, and we plan to have a new Parish List ready by Easter Sunday.

Easter Flowers

If you wish to donate memorial flowers for loved ones this Easter, please send the names of those to be remembered to Kirsten Manville in the First Church office by March 24. Contributions of \$20 to help defray the cost of flowers can be made [online](#) or by check in the offering basket (payable to First Church in Cambridge, with a memo line of "Easter Flowers"). ***Please send an email to Kirsten (operations@firstchurchcambridge.org) with the names, even if you pay by check through the offering basket or online; this way we can make sure no one is missed.*** On Easter Sunday, the congregation is invited to take a plant to a homebound parishioner to spread the joy of Easter.



HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

As we continue to find courage in community, walk with us through Holy Week to hear the gospel stories of what Jesus encounters and endures in his final days. During Holy Week, we come face to face with the human realities of injustice, persecution, suffering, and death. Together, we seek God's presence there and in the dawning promise and unending love of Easter.



Palm Sunday Breakfast

Sunday, March 24, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., MJH

Join us for our annual All-Church Palm Sunday Breakfast, where we enjoy conversation and connection over hot cross buns and other breakfast goodies. At the close of the breakfast, we hand out palms and make our way to the church lawn for our palm procession.

Palm Sunday Processional to Hybrid Morning Worship

Sunday, March 24, 10:55 a.m. on the church lawn

We remember Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem. We greet him with a "parade" of young and old, waving palms and singing traditional songs. Come join us as we make our way on the road with Jesus! You are also welcome to go directly to the Sanctuary in person or via livestream.

Maundy Thursday Service with Communion and Tenebrae

Thursday, March 28, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary & livestream

We recall the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples "to love one another as I have loved you." We remember this truth revealed to us during his last meal with his friends by celebrating Holy Communion. And in a candle-lit, then darkened, sanctuary, we call to mind Jesus' anguish and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. We depart in silence. *Parents are encouraged to use their judgment; this service is likely most suitable for children older than 10.*

Good Friday Service of Lamentation

Friday, March 29, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary and livestream

We gather to lament the world's pain and injustice and to remember Jesus' death on the cross. Join us for this solemn service of ritual, readings, and song that will help us hold the grief of our lives and world. *Parents are encouraged to use their judgment; this service is likely most suitable for children older than 10.*

Easter Sunday Hybrid Morning Worship

Sunday, March 31, 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., Sanctuary and livestream

Christ is Risen! We celebrate God's gift of new life and love stronger than death as we recall and sing out the story of the Risen One, who meets on the way!



GBIO Action Brings Together Over 1,700 in Support of Housing Justice!

Last Sunday, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization convened ALL of GBIO at ISBCC in Boston for an all-out housing justice assembly! Thank you to the 70+ First Church folks who came out to support GBIO's platform and send the message to legislators that reversing our housing crisis can't wait. Over 1,700 of us stood together! [Read all about it in the Boston Globe.](#)

As you heard at the action, the fight isn't over! Here's what you can do NOW to help us get over the finish line:

Join us for a Lobby Day at the State House!

Wednesday, April 17, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Meet us at the State House steps to remind our legislators of their commitments from our In-District Meeting (IDM) campaign, and show them we won't back down!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Call Senate President Spilka and House Speaker Mariano!

They hold the most power to ensure the items we're advocating for get passed.

[Find President Spilka's information here.](#)

[Find Speaker Mariano's information here.](#)

Call YOUR local senator and representative

Tell them to reach out to President Spilka and Speaker Mariano and encourage them to support our platform!

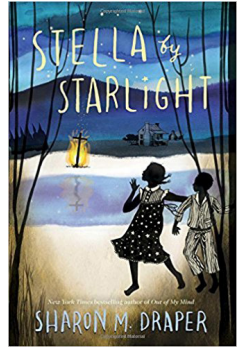
[Find your legislators' contact information here.](#)

LOOKING AHEAD

Middler Book & Bible Study

Sunday, April 7, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Join First Church's 5th graders to hear about their learning during this Church School year. Prepare by reading [*Stella By Starlight*](#), a middle reader novel set in rural North Carolina during the Jim Crow era that students have explored side-by-side with Biblical stories about Moses and his life experiences. Copies of the novel are available at church for a donation of \$7; you can also find it in your local library or download it to your e-reader. Set aside some time to read the engaging story before April 7.



Did you read *Stella By Starlight* with the Middler class of 2017-18? If you have a copy of the book already that you'd be willing to lend to another, please bring it with you to church any Sunday before April 7!



 **Critter Count**

Share a critter sighting
in Harvard Square!



Newtowne School Critter Count

The Newtowne School has started a "critter count" to learn about the other animals we share Harvard Square with. So far over 20 species have been seen! If you would like to share a sighting, email: ben@newtowneschool.org, or scan the QR code for more details.

LOOKING AHEAD

First Church Welcome Corps Team Update

Formed almost one year ago, the First Church and Friends Welcome Corps Team has been preparing and waiting for our matched Welcome Corps refugees, Nuro and Idle, to arrive. The team recently learned that they are delayed indefinitely for unknown reasons. While we have little insight into the continued stalled status of Nuro and Idle, the context here in Massachusetts has greatly changed since we first started this effort, and even more so since we started waiting for a match in September.



As you know, the Commonwealth is experiencing an extreme migrant crisis, and the Governor has not only declared a State of Emergency, but has recently called on churches to aid in the resettling of migrants. There has been extensive coverage by local news of the role of area churches, and we would like to join that effort. We do not feel comfortable simply sitting on the sidelines with a wealth of financial and volunteer resources that can be mobilized now to help struggling migrants already here.

Our Welcome Corps Team has decided to put our match status “on hold” so that we can explore how First Church can use its resources in a relevant and engaged way to support migrants already in our community. We are actively researching connections in this sphere, with some ideas including:

- Joining other area churches who are currently supporting newly-arrived migrant families living in shelters;
- Working with the Somali Development Center (with which we had already connected);
- Partnering with MIRA, IFSI, or other local refugee agencies;
- Exploring how we could support the emergency shelter opened in the old East Cambridge Registry of Deeds building that needs assistance to remain open more hours.

We greatly welcome connections, ideas, or resources that any of you may have in this sphere. We also want to reassure everyone that Nuro and Idle will not be held up due to our change, but will likely be reassigned to a local refugee agency who is already slated to resettle another family member.

We know this is a big change for all of us, but we are looking forward with enthusiasm to helping with the migrant crisis currently unfolding here at home.



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, March 11

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

Tuesday, March 12

- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team, the Landing and via Zoom
- 4:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Reading Mary Oliver, via Zoom
- 6:00 p.m. Women's Community Book Group, via Zoom
- 8:00 p.m. Lenten Taizé Service, Harter Room

Wednesday, March 13

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 3:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom
- 6:30 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Reparations Book Group, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Finance Team, via Zoom

Thursday, March 14

- 5:00 p.m. Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Harter Room

Friday, March 15

- 12:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)

Sunday, March 17

- 9:30 a.m. Lenten Adult Formation: Courage That Inspires, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 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 and After-Worship "1:1" Conversations, MJH
- 6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Now What?: Retirement's Inner Work, via Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

See our [Events Calendar](#) for Zoom links and details.

Sign up [here](#) to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

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