



Eastertide
May 12, 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

May 12, 2024

Preaching Today
Liturgist
Leading Worship

Carla Arevalo, *Pastoral Associate*
Lisa McCarty, *Deacon*
Sarah Higginbotham, *Creative Worship & Arts Director*
Anne Holtzworth, *for the Refugee Ministry Team*
Kate Layzer, *Minister of Street Outreach*
Amy Matias & Alex Steinert-Evoy, *for the Leavetaking Team*
Lee Prouty, *tech support*
Dan Smith, *Senior Minister*
Peter Sykes, *Music Director*
Bulletin Cover Image Freddie Funck, *First Church member*

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m. Reparations Discussion, 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 in Margaret Jewett Hall
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

Psalm 36

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

*HYMN (insert)

Let There Be Life in This House

*GREETING

Lisa McCarty

L: Siblings in the Spirit, grace and peace to you from God!

C: From God the Life Giver, peace to you!

L: Let us praise our God in the presence of Love —

C: Love divine, stronger than death!

L: Let us praise God in the companionship of the Risen Christ —

C: the Risen Christ, source of truth, who abides with us now!

L: Together, let us proclaim God's justice and love for all creation!

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Psalm 23 (Dedicated to his Mother)

Bobby McFerrin

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

**C: God of Justice, when we settle for the way things are
instead of the way you would have them be, forgive us.**

**When we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision,
increase our trust in you.**

**When we offer charity, but fail to work for justice,
show us what your love requires.**

**When we walk ahead or behind, instead of with our neighbor,
open our eyes to their humanity.**

**When we tire of the struggle, and tomorrow feels overwhelming,
restore our hope and renew our courage,**

In the name of Jesus, our brother, Amen.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

**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.*

***GREETING OF PEACE**

***HYMN 86**

The Lone, Wild Bird

A BLESSING OF NAMES

INVITATION AND TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sarah Higginbotham

INTRODUCTION

Dan Smith

A LITANY OF BLESSING

Members of the Trans-Affirming Church Faith & Life Group

Congregational response (three times):

L: ... Loving God,

All: Speak their names with us!

Let them know your deep and abiding love

for who they are and who you created them to be.

Final congregational response (fourth time):

L: ... Loving God,

All: Speak to each of us our truest names,

and remind us every day that we are yours, that we belong,

and that we are always, always beloved in your sight. Amen!

SPRINKLING

SONG

Let There Be Life in This House, verse 3

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

READING

Psalm 1

SERMON

Carla Arevalo

***HYMN 423**

Faith, While Trees Are Still in Blossom

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENTS

Refugee Ministry Team
Leavetaking Team

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Kate Layzer

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

Psalm 139

Denise Karuth, alt./Scottish Psalter

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**O Jesus, risen now to bless,
do thou thyself our hearts possess;
that we may give thee all our days
the willing tribute of our praise!**

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 330

You Are Called to Tell the Story

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Psalm 36

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

OPENING HYMN

Let there be life in this house

for First Church in Cambridge on its tenth anniversary of declaring itself an Open and Affirming Church

Peter Sykes

Kate Layzer

Let there be life in this house Poured from the riches of
Let there be life in this house Ten - der and truth - ful and
Let there be life in this house Life of the Spi - rit and
Let there be life in this house Life of the Bod - y di -

God Treas - ure in so man - y ves - sels of clay Giv - en for shar - ing, not
real Life of be - long - ing, res - pect - ed and free Hon - ored for all God de -
fire Sib - lings and kin - dred new - born from a - bove Dar - ing to love be - cause
vine Kind - ly and pas - sion - ate, ear - thy and odd We are the Church, be -

hid - ing a - way, Let there be life in this house!
clares us to be, Let there be life in this house!
we have been loved, Let there be life in this house!
lov - ed of God, Let there be life in this house!

The Lone, Wild Bird

1. The lone, wild bird in loft - y flight is still with you, nor
 2. The ends of earth are in your hand, the sea's dark deep and
 3. Each se - cret thought is known to you, the path I walk my
 4. In se - cret depths you knit my frame, be - fore my birth you
 5. O search me, God, my heart re - veal, re - new my life, my

leaves your sight. And I am yours! I rest in
 far - off land. And I am yours! I rest in
 whole life through, my days, my deeds, my hopes, my
 spoke my name; with - in my soul, as close as
 spir - it heal; for I am yours, I rest in

you. Great Spir - it, come, rest in me, too.
 you. Great Spir - it, come, rest in me, too.
 fears, my deep - est joys, my si - lent tears.
 breath, so near to me, in life, in death.
 you. Great Spir - it, come, rest in me, too.

WORDS: Sts. 1, 2, Henry Richard McFadyen, 1925, alt.; sts. 3 - 5, Marty Haugen, 1991
 MUSIC: Walker's *Southern Harmony*, 1835; harm. David N. Johnson, 1968
 American Presbyterian Publishing Co., 1968

PROSPECT
 LM

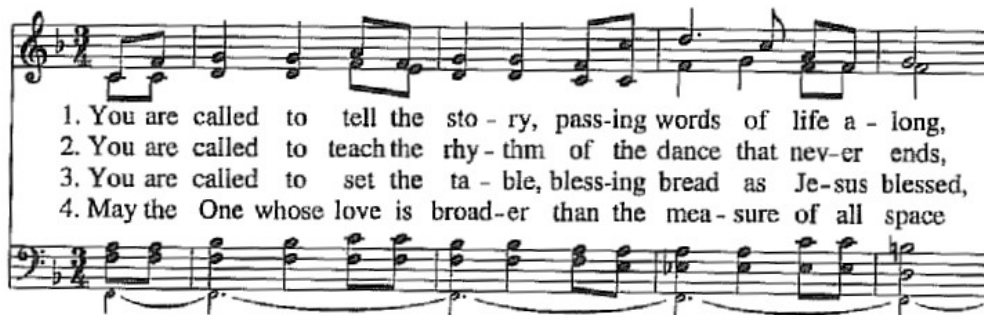
Faith, While Trees Are Still in Blossom 423

1. Faith, while trees are still in blos - som, plans the
 2. Long be - fore the dawn is break - ing, faith an -
 3. Faith, up - lift - ed, tamed the wa - ter of the
 4. Faith be - lieves that God is faith - ful: God will

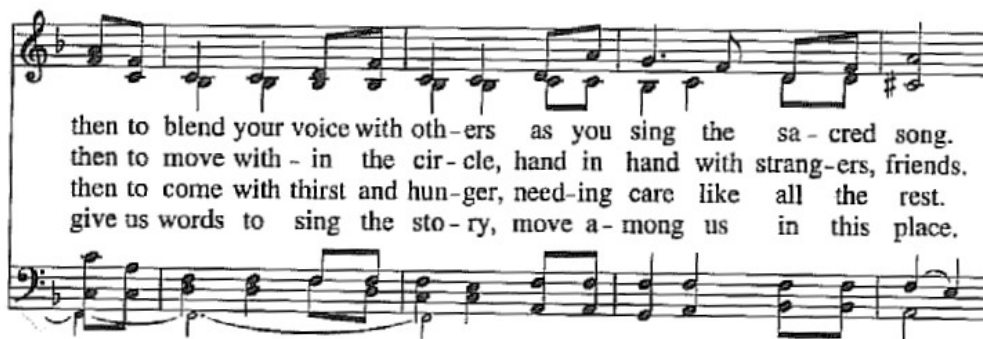
pick - ing of the fruit; faith can feel the thrill of
 ti - ci - pates the sun. Faith is ca - ger for the
 un - di - vid - ed sea, and the peo - ple of the
 be what God will be! Faith ac - cepts the call, re -

har - vest when the buds be - gin to sprout.
 day - light, for the work that must be done.
 He - brews found the path that made them free.
 spond - ing, "I am will - ing, God, send me."

330 You Are Called to Tell the Story



1. You are called to tell the sto - ry, pass - ing words of life a - long,
 2. You are called to teach the rhy - thm of the dance that nev - er ends,
 3. You are called to set the ta - ble, bless - ing bread as Je - sus blessed,
 4. May the One whose love is broad - er than the mea - sure of all space



then to blend your voice with oth - ers as you sing the sa - cred song.
 then to move with - in the cir - cle, hand in hand with strang - ers, friends.
 then to come with thirst and hun - ger, need - ing care like all the rest.
 give us words to sing the sto - ry, move a - mong us in this place.



Christ be known in all our sing - ing, fill - ing all with songs of love.
 Christ be known in all our danc - ing, touch - ing all with hands of love.
 Christ be known in all our shar - ing, feed - ing all with signs of love.
 Christ be known in all our liv - ing, fill - ing all with gifts of love.

WORDS BY ...

A BLESSING OF NAMES

L: Loving God, bless the names of those who are here with us now.
Bless their deep self-knowledge and strength, their courage and their love!
We honor and celebrate the names and name changes of all those within
our First Church community. Loving God,

**All: Speak their names with us!
Let them know your deep and abiding love
for who they are and who you created them to be!**

L: God, bless the names of all who have embraced a new name and identity.
Bless their deep self-knowledge and strength, their courage and their love!
We honor and celebrate and call out their names now... Loving God,

**All: Speak their names with us!
Let them know your deep and abiding love
for who they are and who you created them to be!**

L: Holy One, bless all who are trans and non-binary,
all who are LGBTQIA+, all who are Two-Spirit!
Bless them and protect them from mis-gendering and mis-naming,
from all discrimination, hatred and violence.
Bless them and hold them close in your abiding love! Loving God,

**All: Speak their names with us!
Let them know your deep and abiding love
for who they are and who you created them to be!**

L: By the presence of these witnesses,
of all LGBTQIA+ persons, friends and families in our midst and beyond,
transform us all, God, to know ever more deeply
the gifts of freedom, joy and love! Loving God,

**All: Speak to each of us our truest names,
and remind us every day that we are yours,
that we belong, that we are always, always beloved in your sight. Amen!**

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We give thanks for mothers today, including all those who have mothered us in our lives. We pray for those whom this holiday is difficult, including those who struggle to become mothers and those who have lost or are estranged from their mothers.
- We pray for Sarah Fujiwara as she mourns the loss of her dear cousin Jean Rimmel Little, who died last week.
- We pray with grateful hearts for the arrival of Heather Stanford's granddaughter Maeve Patricia Olken, born on April 27.
- We pray for Marieke Van Damme, who is recovering at home from surgery after breaking her foot in two places.
- We pray for George Williams, who is recovering in the hospital following a fall and ongoing complications from a traumatic brain injury.
- We pray for Bill Hsaio, who is recovering from a broken shoulder after a fall.
- We celebrate with all our high school, college, and graduate students who are graduating in the coming weeks, including Peter Wilson-Braun, who is graduating next weekend from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- We pray for all who are living with significant health challenges and their families and caregivers: Poppy Coffin, who is experiencing Alzheimer's Disease; Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing ALS; and Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder. We also pray for those in treatment for cancer: Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan's mother; 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 also pray for migrant families living at the MA Safety Net Family Shelter in East Cambridge and with whom we are now working at our First Church Welcome Center.
- In the midst of increasing solidarity protests at colleges and universities, here and across the nation, we pray for the protection of free speech, for student and campus safety, for nonviolent action and responses, and for increased understanding and openness to dialogue across division.
- We continue to pray for all who are recovering from recent natural and climate related disasters, especially the tornadoes in the southeastern US. 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 those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, throughout the Middle East, in Ukraine, and in Sudan. We pray especially for the people of Haiti, given the heart-wrenching turmoil and gang-related violence leading to the near-collapse of the

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

government and human services sector.

- We pray for political and climate refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water. We pray for wisdom and justice to prevail as our court system tackles issues of immigration in its rulings.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Prayer for Israel and Palestine

As the war in Gaza and Israel continues, and as the threat of famine in Gaza looms, our hearts cry out in prayer. With the death of 1,400 Israelis and over 35,000 Palestinians so far, we pray for an end to the war and immediate de-escalation of tensions in the region that are threatening a wider and more lasting conflict. We decry the horrifically violent Hamas attacks against Israel on October 7, as well as the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli government and military.

We hold that every person is made in God's image and that every life is precious. We pray for the safe return of all hostages. We pray for redoubled diplomatic efforts to address the already devastating humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories. We continue to pray for a just peace in Palestine and Israel and throughout the region. We also pray for Jews and Muslims, nearby and around the world, who are facing increased threats and acts of anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim discrimination, hatred, and violence.

We continue to pray for ourselves, that we will be courageous, faithful, compassionate, and open to God's love and leading, and to all whom we encounter through these tension-filled times. Across whatever division or disagreement, may our words and deeds seek to honor the humanity and God-given dignity of every human being.

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.



SCAN ME

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

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Reparations Discussion

Today, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Beloved Community members Martha Cook and Linda Ziebell will lead a discussion on reparations with the goal of making the process of reparations more concrete and relational. We will review three thefts from African Americans that have been caused by White supremacy in our country: theft of truth, theft of power, and theft of money. We'll look at our participation in these thefts and use the framework of repair as presented by Maimonides, a leading Jewish philosopher who lived in the 12th century and whose thinking about healing and restoration are still influential today.



Confirmation Class for 8/9th Graders

Today, 9:30 - 10:45 a.m., Chapell

Our 8th and 9th grade Confirmands meet for their final session entitled "This I Believe." They prepare for the Rite of Confirmation next Sunday, May 19.

A Blessing of Names

Today at 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

Please join us for a trans- and nonbinary-affirming Blessing of Names liturgy and ritual. We invite members of our community to be re-welcomed into the church using the name that best reflects who they are. First Church members have been participating in a cohort of Southern New England UCC churches working towards becoming trans- and nonbinary-affirming churches. A Faith & Life Group has also been assembled on this topic. The Blessing of Names will be our first time bringing this work into the wider First Church community.



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.](#)

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.



EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH

Refugee Ministry Update: Meeting a New Need

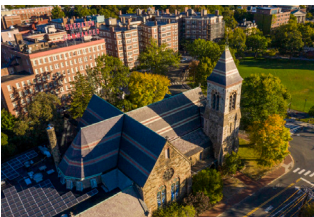
We are happy to share the great success of the three Welcome Centers we recently hosted for migrant families living in the East Cambridge emergency shelter. Thanks to the wonderful generosity and energy of our volunteers, we provided ESOL to an engaged and motivated group of 67 adults, safe and fun childcare to 26 children, and a delicious hot lunch to all!



The program is now in transition. We are pleased that First Church has built a strong relationship with partners at the state and local level. Because of this, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, along with Immigrant Family Services Institute (IFSI), its contracted case management agency, will be renting space at First Church Monday-Thursday from May 13 to June 20. IFSI will be providing state-mandated case management, ESOL, workforce development, and other services to residents of the East Cambridge Shelter, many of whom we have been working with over the last few Tuesdays.

While we will not be holding our own Welcome Center on Tuesdays for the moment, IFSI still wants our help! They would love volunteers who'd like to work directly with guests on the following: small-group ESOL classes, practicing English, building job skills, preparing resumes, and helping with preschool education.

Volunteers are needed each Monday-Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., May 13 - June 20. To establish partnered relationships with migrants, it is preferred that people commit to the same morning(s) each week as much as possible. If you cannot do that – let us know, we still welcome your help! Contact Martha Cook (marthamuellercook@gmail.com) to learn more and volunteer.



Debt Retirement Appeal: May 2024 Update

It is time to turn our attention once again to the effort to retire the debt from our Cornerstone loan that helped finance the renovations to the church house. Our goal with this appeal has been to pay off the loan as quickly as possible to remove the burden of ongoing loan payments on our operating budget, freeing up resources to support

First Church's ministry with a sustainable leadership and staffing model into the future...

[Read more in the Latest News section of our website.](#)

Young Adults: Faith on Tap

Monday, May 13, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Bow Market, Somerville

Come join other young adults (20s and 30s) from First Church for casual fellowship and happy hour drinks at Bow Market in Somerville! 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: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org.



LOOKING AHEAD TO PENTECOST

Saying Farewell to Pastoral Associates

Ahmaad Edmund and Carla Arevalo

Sunday, May 19, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

Harter Room & [via Zoom](#)

We are preparing to celebrate and say farewell to our two wonderful Pastoral Associates, Ahmaad Edmund and Carla Arevalo. On May 19, Pentecost Sunday, we will have a formal leavetaking ritual! For our 9:30 hour, we will share in a time of celebration of their ministry and wishing them well for their future endeavors. Ahmaad is heading to Washington, DC for a fellowship with the Faith and Politics Institute. Carla (who will be with us for two more Sundays through June 2) is heading to North Carolina with her fiancé for a Ph.D program at the University of North Carolina.



*Saying Farewell
to our*

Pastoral Associates



Ahmaad Edmund & Carla Arevalo

Sunday, May 19

9:30 a.m. Farewell Gathering, Harter Room and via Zoom

11:00 a.m. Leavetaking Ritual in Morning Worship, Sanctuary



Pentecost Sunday Morning Worship

Sunday, May 19, 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

Join us for hybrid worship on Pentecost Sunday—a day where we celebrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us through movement and song, prayer and reflection. Pentecost will be a special celebration this year with baptisms and the Rite of Confirmation. Come honor the spiritual journeys of our nine

Confirmands and hear selections from their statements of faith! We will welcome adults as well, who have discerned they, too, are ready to join First Church and make us their spiritual home. The service will also include a Spirit-filled testimony from our Community Minister in Latin America, and a bittersweet Leavetaking Blessing for Ahmaad and Carla! Come wearing something red, if you'd like, and celebrate the Spirit's presence amidst all of our comings and goings!

Confirmation Sunday, May 19

On Pentecost, we celebrate the birthday of the church, and this year, we mark the day with the Rite of Confirmation and joining of new members. Nine young people in our community have been meeting throughout the year to learn about our tradition and consider their own understanding of their faith. Join us to celebrate their spiritual journeys, to witness a baptism, and to welcome many of them into membership by covenant. Then, head to Margaret Jewett Hall for a cake reception in their honor!



LOOKING AHEAD TO PENTECOST

Rev. Dr. Mónica Maher Pentecost Testimony & After-Worship Presentation Sunday, May 19, 12:30 - 1:15 p.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Community Minister in Latin America Rev. Dr. Mónica Maher will be with us to share a testimony during Morning Worship and a presentation about her current work after church in the Harter Room. Mónica is a Social Ethicist with decades of professional experience in Latin America. Since 2010, she has been a Visiting Professor in the graduate programs of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences. She is the Founder and Senior Minister of the United Church of Ecuador and Founding Director of the Ecuadorian Faith Network. From 2016-2021, she served as Coordinator of the Latin American Program of Friends Peace Teams, dedicated to trauma healing and peace-building in Central America, Colombia, and Ecuador. Based in Quito, Ecuador, Mónica travels frequently throughout Latin America and is a fierce advocate for LGBTQI+, indigenous, and women's rights. Join us during and after Morning Worship, as we continue to build this powerful connection with Mónica and her ministry!



Art Exhibit for Pentecost, Sunday, May 19, Margaret Jewett Hall

Pentecost announces "Ordinary Time." We Christians are sent forth to practice the Way of Jesus over warm months that summer us through autumn. First Church member and artist Henry Gates portrays our ordinary time in twenty paintings of psyche in society, concerning the sequence of Sundays that exist between the sacred seasons. The art provides a psychological look at the lives we live, sharing our community challenges.



Final Night Song of the 2023-24 Season, May 19

Night Song will end its program year on Pentecost. You are invited to come in person or online to hear all three ensembles of Night Song sing together. Night Song is a compline service, an ancient monastic liturgy which has gained in popularity in the US over the past 50 years. The music is ancient and modern chant, Renaissance polyphony, some contemporary anthems, and the psalm settings of First Church Staff Composer Patty Van Ness. All are welcome!

THE SEASON OF PENTECOST



Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

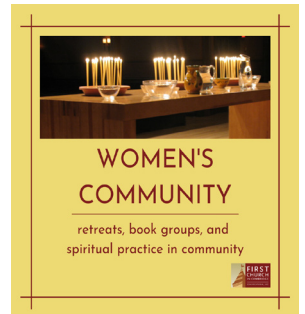
Tuesday, May 21, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., [via Zoom](#)

Join Ginny Harlan, Martha Mueller 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 questions. May 21 will be our last session until September, and we will be appreciating and bidding farewell to Dan. We are using Joan Chittister's book *The Gift of Years* as a starting point to conversation and reflection, and our reading for this month is "Possibility" (pp. 55-58). Please remember to think about a passage from the reading that is particularly compelling for you that you'd like to share. You are also welcome to join at any time; homework is not a requirement for participation!

Women's Community Book Group

Tuesday, May 21, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., [via Zoom](#)

We will join together to read Flannery O'Connor's novel [Wise Blood](#). Often known for her short stories, this is O'Connor's first novel that turned out to be quite successful. "This tale of redemption, retribution, false prophets, blindness, blindings, and wisdom gives us one of the most riveting characters in American fiction." Please come jump in with us, even if you haven't been with us this year.



Blessing Our Community Ministers

Sunday, May 26 at 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

As part of Morning Worship on Sunday, May 26, we will honor and give thanks for our [Community Ministers](#). First Church is blessed to be a spiritual home for at least 18 ordained clergy. Many share their gifts with us from week to week in ways large and small.

Some are retired, or semi-retired, while others are actively serving in chaplaincy and ministry settings outside of First Church. Join us as we celebrate them all, whether in person or in spirit, and give thanks for their ministries and presence in our midst!

Children's Sunday, June 2

On Children's Sunday, we are led in liturgy by younger voices, and we celebrate their contributions to our multigenerational faith community. This year, our 6th and 7th graders will present "A Gospel Play" as the culmination of their two-year Bible 101 class. We will also recognize our 4th graders with their own Bibles as they "graduate" from Godly Play, and we will lift up the volunteer teachers, who make our Church School run.



THE SEASON OF PENTECOST

Piano Music Giveaway

Sunday, June 2, 12:15-12:45 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Carol Wilson-Braun will be hosting another giveaway of a wide assortment of piano music (both sheet music and books) after worship on June 2. Selections include adult and child level music, duets, Christmas music, etc. Everyone is invited to take a look, especially children, adult piano players, and piano teachers. The music is free, but if you feel so moved, a contribution could be directed to First Church's Frobenius Organ Fund or to the music program of the church.



Support Cathy Patton in the MA Special Olympics!

First Church member Cathy Patton will be competing in a Track & Field walking event at the Massachusetts Special Olympics, taking place at Harvard Stadium on June 7-9. She warmly invites us to attend and cheer her on! For more information, please visit: www.specialolympicsma.org

Advocate for Overdose Prevention Centers in MA!

First Church Shelter Director Jim Stewart and others at First Church continue to support SIFMA Now in advocating for state action to make Overdose Prevention Centers (OPC) available in Massachusetts. Legislation that is awaiting action in both the Massachusetts House of Representatives (H1981) and the Massachusetts Senate (S1242) would help make it possible for communities to host OPCs.

OPCs around the world, most recently New York City, have proven effective in reducing overdose deaths, as well as injection related infections. They have also been shown to increase participation in treatment and to reduce the amount of injection related detritus (syringes etc) in the neighborhoods that host them. (Read the details here.) Advocates and providers in Cambridge and Worcester are prepared to help stand up and operate OPCs once state legislation is passed.

If you have not already done so, go to: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator> to send an email letting them know it is time to #savelivesnow; encourage them to vote in favor of making Overdose Prevention Centers legal in Massachusetts.



TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

Staffing Update

We have good news to share! Ministerial Intern **Emma Thomas** has agreed to be a Pastoral Associate for the coming year, working 25 hours a week. She will participate in worship at least 2 Sundays per month (as she currently does), preach, lead Christian formation, work with new members, and more. She will end her time as Ministerial Intern on Sunday, June 16, and take a break for the summer. She will begin as our Pastoral Associate on Sunday, September 1. Let's give a warm, heartfelt, and ongoing welcome to Emma and her extraordinary gifts!



In addition, after Dan leaves and until the Interim Minister begins their term (hopefully, by late August), our Director of Operations **Kirsten Manville**, who is already full-time and oversees much of our current staff, will serve as Acting Head of Staff. While Kirsten won't take on pastoral duties, she is able to coordinate pastoral care coverage as the need arises. Dan is currently pre-planning the summer preaching and on-call pastoral care schedule with program staff and Community Ministers. Please take an opportunity to thank all of our current staff for their extra efforts during this transition time.



Pastoral Care During Our Transition

With Dan and our Pastoral Associates leaving soon, some of you may wonder who will be available for pastoral care in the coming months of leadership transition. As always, feel free to reach out to current program staff Kate Layzer, Karen McArthur, and Sarah Higginbotham, all of whom are available to offer support and/or direct you to someone who can. To reach a minister on-call, please dial **617-547-2724 ext. 222**. We are also grateful to these

Community Ministers, who have expressed their availability to provide periodic pastoral care conversations through the summer: Reverends Liz Williams, Krysia Burnham, Ingeborg Haug, Alex Steinert-Evoy, Jenny Stuart, and Beth Spaulding. You may reach out to any of them via email, which can be found in the Parish List on our website.

Schedule a Meeting with Dan

As I share in [this followup letter](#) to my February 4 farewell letter, my last Sunday in worship will be June 9. I hope to see many of you there, and before as well! Starting in late April, I'm clearing much of my weekday schedule for 1:1s and small group meetings with as many of you as possible. This is time for whatever you may need—a last pastoral check-in, a chance to wrap up a shared project, a time to laugh and/or cry together, a goodbye hug. Please visit [my Calendly site](#) to pick a time and place, via Zoom or in person!

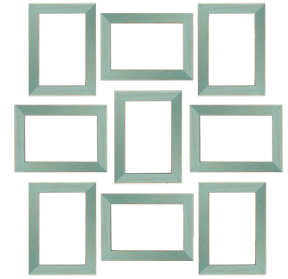


- Dan Smith

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

Requests from the Leavetaking/Farewell Team

The Leavetaking/Farewell Team is requesting items for two different projects to honor and celebrate Dan's ministry for and with us.



Scrapbook: Any physical items (photos, cards, artwork, etc.) can be left in the plastic bin in the church office. Please add a note with your contributions so the team knows who/when/where they are from. Any electronic submissions (photos, emails, etc.), can be sent to Beth Spaulding. Please submit your items by May 15!

Photos for a slideshow to run during the party on June 9: please email any photos to Beth Spaulding by May 15.

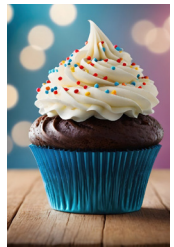


Dan Smith's Farewell Sunday, June 9

On Sunday, June 9, we will celebrate Dan's 20 years of ministry at First Church in Cambridge. Our Morning Worship will include special moments (and special guests) to lift up the journey we have walked together, to express our gratitude for the experiences we have shared, and to acknowledge the end of this pastoral relationship. Then, we'll gather for a Farewell Party, where we will share a light meal, toast Dan, and shower him with gifts and heartfelt gratitude for his presence among us these last two decades.

It takes a village to throw a party!

We are planning a special party for Dan, and we need your help! In addition to your contributions of messages, pictures, and remembrances to the Leavetaking Team's project, we welcome your helping hands to set up, run, and clean up our after-worship celebration. This includes an invitation to provide cupcakes for a scrumptious cupcake dessert buffet! Find all the details on [this signup form](#), and don't hesitate to email fellowship@firstchurchcambridge.org with any questions.





THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, May 13

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 6:30 p.m. Young Adults: Faith on Tap, Bow Market, Somerville
- 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

Tuesday, May 14

- 10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, The Landing and via Zoom

Wednesday, May 15

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 7:30 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

Thursday, May 16

- 6:00 p.m. Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom

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

Friday, May 17

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

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

Sunday, May 19

- 9:30 a.m. Saying Farewell to Our Pastoral Associates, 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 class
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments and Cake Reception in Margaret Jewett Hall
- 12:30 p.m. Conversation with Community Minister Rev. Dr. Mónica Maher, Harter Room
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

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