

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

Preaching Today	Emma Mitchell, <i>Pastoral Associate</i>
Liturgist	Moana Bentin, <i>Moderator</i>
Assisting in Worship	Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Director of Communications & Christian Formation</i>
	Lee Prouty, <i>Facilities Manager</i>
	Mike Solberg, <i>Interim Senior Minister</i>
	Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck, <i>First Church member</i>

Opening Voutary

Pastorale, J.S. Bach

Opening Hymn 86

The Lone, Wild Bird

Anthem

Lead Me, Lord

S.L. Wesley

Peace Hymn C-24

Enfolding, O Most Manifest

Readings

Song of Songs 2:8-13

James 1:17-27

Sermon Hymn C-27

Now in Love We Come Together

Offertory

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

Virgil Thomson

Closing Hymn 335 (insert)

Dona Nobis Pacem

Today's Programs and Events

- 10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments on the Lawn (or Margaret Jewett Hall, if weather dictates)
- 12:15 p.m. Art on Display: Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise*, church lawn

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.

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 in
 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.

PEACE HYMN

C-24 Enfolding, O Most Manifest

1. En - fold - ing, O most man - i - fest, most hid - den -
 2. Calm - in Thine un - di - vi - ded light waits our sal -

treas - ure; qui - et as light, Thou love - li - est, Thou sweet - est -
 va - tion; gath - er - ing joy be - yond our sight and ex - pec -

pleas - ure: O Ra - di - ance! Si - lence be - fore whom falls
 ta - tion. Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - ry to Thee, al - le -

si - lence; bound - less, pur - est and ho - li - est peace be - yond meas - ure.
 lu - ia, our ev - er - last - ing hope, de - light, and con - sum - ma - tion.

WORDS: Kate Layzer

MUSIC: Peter Sykes

SERMON HYMN

Now in Love We Come Together C-27

1. Now in love we come to - geth - er, where the
 2. Lord of Lords, re - ceive and fill us with your
 3. On - ly at your ta - ble, Sav - ior, could such
 4. Sim-ple gifts, but what great glo - ry lies with -

ta - ble has been spread: In the house of joy Christ's peo - ple wait to
 con - se - crat - ing peace: Grant our crav - ing your com - plete - ness, who gave
 pro - mise, could such grace be ful - filled in hu - man weak - ness, shin - ing
 in this cup, this crust; love tri - um - phant, love e - ter - nal ris - es

1, 2, 3 4
 share the wine and bread.
 all for our re - lease.
 forth in hu - man face.
 from our mor - tal dust!

WORDS: Kate Layzer
 MUSIC: Peter Sykes

For Minnie Taylor,
 Deacon of First Church in Cambridge,
 in gratitude for many years of sacristy service.

CLOSING HYMN

Dona Nobis Pacem

335

May be sung as a round

①
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem. Do - na

②
no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

③
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, Do - na

no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

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.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for our congregation during this time of transition.
- We pray for Perry Neubauer, who is recovering at home after a recent fall.
- We pray for George Williams as he continues treatment for a traumatic brain injury.
- 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: Bob Spaulding, Beth Spaulding's father; 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; and Abby Shuman's uncle Barry.
- We pray for the many people seeking emergency shelter in overflow sites across the state, who now face limited stays as they seek permanent housing, employment, and opportunities to live with security in the US.
- As the war in Gaza and Israel continues, our hearts cry out in prayer. With the death of 1,400 Israelis and over 40,000 Palestinians, we pray for an end to the war and immediate de-escalation of tensions in the region, as well as redoubled efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.
- We pray for our nation during this election season that takes place during a time of political polarization. We pray especially for peaceful, non-violent engagement in the political processes of our democracy.
- We continue to pray for all who are recovering from natural and climate-related disasters. We pray for our rapidly warming planet and for 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, in Sudan, and in Haiti.
- 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.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



Pastoral Care Cards This Summer and Beyond

Many thanks to all who supported our Pastoral Care ministry by writing a simple note to First Church members who are on our weekly prayer list. Would you like to join one of our Pastoral Care Teams to write cards, visit members, or deliver meals September through June? Contact Care Team Coordinator Susie Neubauer to learn more: susieneubauer@gmail.com.

Art on Display: Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise*

Today on the Church Lawn

First Church member and artist Henry Gates displays ten paintings of Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise*, bronze door sculptures found in Florence, Italy. The ochre paints evoke the humanity of these Biblical scenes in Genesis through Kings. Henry provides titles which imply contemporary ethical questions to ponder. All are welcome to gaze and wonder together.



Reparations Fund Matching Grant Update: We're Very Close!

Honor Dan Smith and Alice Kidder, key advocates of the First Church Reparations Fund, by contributing this summer to the Fund. To inspire first-time contributors, your gift of any size will be doubled up to a total of \$25,000 if donated by Labor Day, September 2, 2024. We are so grateful for the generosity of our community, and we look forward to announcing our final total in September. [Read more and donate here.](#)

Planned Giving

As we begin a season of transition and change, we are seeking to do all that we can to establish a financially sustainable future for our church. We have been blessed with many gifts from those whose financial giving and bequests in the past have provided the abundant resources that have allowed us to do more together than we ever could do alone. Now, as our 400th anniversary appears on the horizon, it is our responsibility to do the same for those who follow us. We are excited to announce a new initiative to encourage members and friends to include the church in their estate planning:



A Foundation for our Fifth Century.... [Read more](#)

STAFFING UPDATES

Staff Transitions, New Faces, and Shifting Roles - Fall 2024

As we regather this fall, the theme of transition can hardly be missed, especially within our staff. Here's a quick summary of how roles are shifting to meet the needs of the church.

Mike Solberg joins us as our new **Interim Senior Minister**. He fills the full-time role of Head of Staff as he walks with us through a time of transition. Mike will be leading worship and preaching; partnering with committees and boards on new initiatives and ongoing ministries; and providing pastoral care and spiritual guidance as we look forward to what comes next.

Emma Mitchell (née Thomas) returns in the role of **Pastoral Associate** (and with a new shared family last name after her wedding this summer). She will work 25 hours per week, participating in worship at least 2 Sundays per month, preaching, leading Christian formation, working with new members, and more.

Sarah Higginbotham takes on a new job title of **Director of Communications & Christian Formation** as she increases her hours to full-time. Sarah will continue to lead First Church's Communications Team, as well as supervise and/or lead in our Nursery, Church School, and Youth programs. While she no longer has "creative worship & arts" in her title, she still plans to share her creative gifts with our multigenerational community.

Kirsten Manville continues to be our **Director of Operations**, but with some accommodations for her growing family. On August 30, Kirsten and her husband Tim were officially matched and placed with a pre-adoptive child by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families - a 10-year-old boy who will be in the 4th grade this year. Kirsten will be taking 4 full weeks of family leave this fall (September 16 - October 18) and then will work half-time through December 31. A sabbatical for Kirsten had already been planned and approved last spring, which is scheduled for January - March 2025. Stay tuned for more information about who will help cover her tasks while Kirsten is not as present with us during her family's time of transition.

Kevin Newell increases his hours to 35 per week as a **First Church Sexton**. He will be working most evening shifts, and he will also keep some hours at the First Church Shelter.

And after more than 35 years of faithful service to the First Church Shelter and the men who seek assistance from it, **Dennis Kaveney** has ended his full-time employment, but continues as a per diem **Shelter employee**. The Shelter Oversight Committee is planning an opportunity for the entire First Church community to celebrate and express gratitude for Dennis's contributions to the Shelter's mission to bring hope to our unhoused neighbors.

LOOKING AHEAD TO REGATHERING

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, September 7, 8:00 - 9:30 a.m., Harter Room

The Men's Breakfast is a forum for any and all who identify as men at First Church. We meet monthly to share breakfast and to share experiences. We prepare breakfast and participate with a rotating monthly leader. All are welcome! If you would like to be added to the Men's Breakfast email list to receive reminders of these gatherings, please contact Peter Byerly: p.byerly@comcast.net



ROOM FOR US ALL



Regathering Sunday, September 8

Join us as we begin our Regathering season with Morning Worship at 11:00 a.m., followed by an all-church luncheon at 12:30 p.m. A beloved First Church hymn reminds us that "the household of God has room for us all" as we make our way through a time of transition with the leadership of Interim Senior Minister Mike Solberg. On this journey that we walk together, there is room for your grief and your joy, your longings and your celebrations, your anxieties and your anticipation. Bring all that you are to this place where God assures us that there is room for it all, and for us all!

Register Now: All-Church Fall Retreat at Craigville Retreat Center

Friday, September 27 - Sunday, September 29

Join Emma Mitchell, Sarah Higginbotham, and other church leaders on the Cape for a weekend of community-building in fellowship, formation, and fun. Take advantage of scheduled large group gatherings, small group sessions, supervised play/crafting time for kids, worship, group games, and more. Or, opt for a quiet walk on the beach, bird-watching at the marsh, or whatever your soul needs. Arrive on Friday evening, September 27, and stay through midday on Sunday, September 29, for the full event; or come for a portion of the weekend, for just one night, or even a daytrip on Saturday. Complete [this registration form](#) and stay tuned for more details!



SNEUCC Justice Summit 2024: Politics as an Act of Faith

Saturday, September 14, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

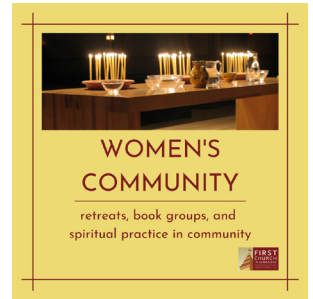
Register now for our Conference's 3rd annual Justice Summit. With a timely focus this year on the intersection of faith and politics, this day-long program will equip local church leaders, both lay and clergy, to engage with politics as people of faith. [Register to participate online.](#)

LOOKING AHEAD TO REGATHERING

Women's Community Book Group

Tuesday, September 17, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., via Zoom

Welcome back, FCC Women Readers! For our first meeting of the program year, we will read and discuss Annie Dillard's Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. Some of you may recall that Dan Smith mentioned this book in his final sermon in June, as well as in several others over his 20 years with us, so we decided it would be a great place to start the next chapter of our journey. All those who identify as women, please join us as we begin a new year of good discussions and community!



GBIO Victory Lunch and Updates

Sunday, September 22 at 12:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

This season, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) is all about celebrating our Housing Justice wins, connecting with each other in new ways across faiths and regions, and powering up for what comes next! Whether you would like to learn more about GBIO or are already an expert, join us after worship for a light lunch and updates as we start a new season. For more info, get in touch with: Phil Jones (probbennoltjones@gmail.com), Will Erikson (wericks2002@gmail.com) or Casey Marsh (kc.marsh103@gmail.com)

Beloved Community Project Teams

The Beloved Community Group extends an invitation to all to get involved in one of our "project teams" running from October 2024 through April 2025. Even if you have not engaged actively in First Church's work of anti-racism before, there are opportunities, large and small, for you to participate! [See the full list on our website](#). Please contact Peggy Stevens (peggystevens1200@gmail.com) to express your interest and learn more.



Faith & Life Groups: Fall 2024 - Call for Leaders!

Are you interested in leading a small group over Zoom or in person this Fall? Contact Beth Spaulding (bspaulding68@gmail.com) to discuss your idea for the next round of Faith & Life Groups, running in October/November, with registration happening in September. Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests, whether exploring a spiritual practice, opening our eyes to the beauty around us, delving into a challenging social issue, or attending to significant life stages (parenting, aging, job transitions, etc.). Faith & Life Groups involve making a short-term commitment (a single session to several weeks, depending on the group). Pitch your idea for a Faith & Life Group to Beth before we regather in September!



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.

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
11 Garden St. • Cambridge, MA 02138

617-547-2724 • info@firstchurchcambridge.org • www.firstchurchcambridge.org

 [/firstchurchcambridge](https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchcambridge)  [/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchInCambridge)  [/c/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstChurchInCambridge)