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Regathering Season  
September 15, 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.

**September 15, 2024**

FIRST CHURCH  
IN CAMBRIDGE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
**388 YEARS**  
ON THE WAY  
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 4

### Liturgist

Caitlin Anderson, *Fellowship Chair*

### Preaching Today

Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*

### Leading Worship

Karen McArthur, *Minister of Stewardship & Finance*

Susie Neubauer, *for the Pastoral Care Teams*

Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*

Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

### Bulletin Cover Image

Freddie Funck, *First Church member*

## Today's Programs and Events

- 9:30 a.m. Meet Mike Solberg, 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 and Bible 101 classes, Library and The Well
- 12:00 p.m. Youth Group leaves for TreeTop Adventures in Canton, MA
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
- 12:15 p.m. First Friends Organizing Meeting, Harter Room
- 12:30 p.m. Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders, The Well
- 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](http://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](mailto: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.

# GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Praeludium in G minor

Dietrich Buxtehude

\*HYMN C-9

Psalm 148

\*GREETING

Caitlin Anderson

- L: Beloved of God, come gather in!  
Be at home in this household of grace!
- C: Here there is room for all that we are:  
room for our stories, our hopes, our yearnings, our fears.**
- L: Here there is room to wonder and grow,
- C: room to pray and love and act together for a better world.**
- L: Siblings in the Spirit, God's heart is open,  
and God's invitation is deep and wide.
- C: Young and old, come into the warmth of that welcome,  
and together let us make room for joy!**

## WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Brother James' Air

arr. G. Jacob/text alt. D. Karuth

## CONFESSING

### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SUNG PRAYER

Search Me, O God

Kate Layzer/Peter Sykes

Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts,  
Search me for a - ny hurt - ful way, lead me in the way ev - er - last - ing.

SILENCE

## 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

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

## \*HYMN 426

I've Got Peace Like a River

*Children up through 6th grade are now invited to Church School classes. Godly Play (PreK-4th grade) and Bible 101 (5/6th 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

John 1:14-18

#### SERMON

Grace Upon Grace

Mike Solberg

## \*HYMN 404

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

## SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karen McArthur

### MINISTRY MOMENT

Susie Neubauer

### PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

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**

Jubilate Deo

Michael Praetorius

**\*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Praise God, the Source of life and birth,  
Praise God, the Word, who came to earth,  
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame,  
All glory, honor, to God's name. Amen.**

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**GOING FORTH**

**\*HYMN 352**

Go Forth for God

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*CHORAL RESPONSE**

Thuma Mina

Hymn 344

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. (Send me, Lord.)<br><b>Send me Jesus, send me, Jesus,<br/>send me Jesus, send me, Lord!</b> | 3. (Fill me, Lord.) <b>Fill me, Jesus...</b>                                 |
| 2. (Lead me, Lord.) <b>Lead me, Jesus...</b>   | 4. (Thuma mina.)<br><b>Thuma mina, thuma mina,<br/>thuma mina, somandla.</b> |

**VOLUNTARY**

Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist

Buxtehude

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**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.

OPENING HYMN

Psalm 148

C-9

1. O praise the Lord, praise God in all the heav'n - ly land.  
 2. All heav - ens praise the Lord, and all the cloud - filled sky.  
 3. Praise God from earth be - low; great fish and o - ceans deep.  
 4. All moun - tains, cat - tle too, wild game and birds that fly.  
 5. For God a - lone is great; great - er than earth and sky.

All an - gels praise our God, and all the sa - cred band.  
 O let them praise the Lord, for God has set them high.  
 Fire and hail, frost and snow, strong winds God makes to sweep.  
 All lead - ers of the earth, judg - es that rule on high.  
 God prais - es all the saints and strength - ens Is - rael's cry.

O give God praise; sun and moon bright, all stars of light, O give God praise!  
 God made all lands; through-out all time all things sub-lime dis-play God's hand!  
 O give God praise; all fruit-ful trees, all hills and ce-dars, Give God praise!  
 Sing-ing the same; all wom-en, chil-dren, men, and in-fants, Praise God's name!  
 With one ac-cord, let Is-ra-el and all God's peo-ple praise the Lord!

WORDS: New translation by Denise Karuth

MUSIC: New England Psalter, 1698

PROPER TUNE for PSALM 148



426

I've Got Peace Like a River

1. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a  
 2. I've got joy like a foun-tain, I've got joy like a  
 3. I've got love like an o - cean, I've got love like an  
 4. I've got faith like an an - chor, I've got faith like an

1.  
 riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er, in - a my  
 foun-tain, I've got joy like a foun-tain, in - a my  
 o - cean, I've got love like an o - cean, in - a my  
 an - chor, I've got faith like an an - chor, in - a my

2.  
 soul. I've got riv - er in - a my soul.  
 soul. I've got foun-tain in - a my soul.  
 soul. I've got o - cean in - a my soul.  
 soul. I've got an - chor in - a my soul.

WORDS and MUSIC: African-American spiritual

PEACE LIKE A RIVER  
77.10 D

Spirituals draw heavily from Old Testament imagery, including 'peace like a river' from Isaiah 48:18. The New Testament also provided imagery for this song in the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy and peace (Galatians 5:22).

404 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, joy of heaven, to earth come down.  
 2. Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery trou - bled breast;  
 3. Come, al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all thy life re - ceive;  
 4. Fin - ish, then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less let us be;

fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy faith - ful mer - cies crown;  
 let us all in thee in - her - it, let us find thy prom - ised rest;  
 sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er - more thy tem - ples leave.  
 let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect - ly re - stored in thee;

Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion, pure, un - bound - ed love thou art;  
 take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;  
 Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, serve thee as thy hosts a - bove,  
 changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, till in heaven we take our place,

vis - it us with thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.  
 end of faith, as its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 pray, and praise thee with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 till we cast our crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.  
 MUSIC: John Zundel, 1855

BEECHER  
 87.87D



Go Forth for God

352

1. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace; be of good  
 2. Go forth for God, go to the world in love; strength - en the  
 3. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength; hold fast the  
 4. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy, to serve God's

cour - age, armed with heaven-ly grace, in God's good Spir - it  
 faint, give cour - age to the weak; help the af - flict - ed;  
 good, be ur - gent for the right; ren - der to no one  
 peo - ple ev - ery day and hour, and serv - ing Christ, our

dai - ly to in - crease, till in the king - dom we be - hold God's  
 rich - ly from a - bove God's love sup - plies the grace and power we  
 e - vil; Christ at length shall o - ver - come all dark - ness with his  
 ev - 'ry gift em - ploy, re - joic - ing in the Ho - ly Spir - it's

face. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace;  
 seek. Go forth for God, go to the world in love;  
 light. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength;  
 power. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy,

WORDS: John Raphael Peacey, 1975  
 MUSIC: *Trente quatre Pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

OLD 124th  
 10.10.10.10

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for our congregation during this time of transition.
- We pray for Gaylen Morgan as she recovers from knee replacement surgery.
- We pray for Keith Manville, Director of Operations Kirsten Manville’s father, as he recovers in a rehab facility from a small stroke on Monday.
- We pray for the ongoing safety, security, and wellbeing of Amani, Amini, and Ephrem Matabaro as they travel to Bukavu, DR Congo, to relocate family members to safety, renew their visas, and return to Cambridge, where they are deeply missed. The Matabaro family worshiped with First Church over the past year when Amani was a Fellow and Human Rights Scholar at the Carr Center of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.
- 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, and for all who seek permanent housing.
- We pray for the community of Winder, GA, that is recovering after a school shooting at Apalachee High School. We pray for the families of those killed and for all who were injured. We continue to pray for our nation to embrace solutions to gun violence in all its forms.
- As the war in Gaza and Israel continues, our hearts cry out in prayer. We pray for those precious souls held hostage and for the families of those hostages who have been killed. We pray for the thousands in Gaza whose families and communities have been decimated and who are enduring hunger, homelessness, and acts of war. With the death of over 1,400 Israelis and over 40,000 Palestinians since October 7, 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, especially those who are affected by the 71 wildfires currently burning in the western and southern US, and for those in the path of Tropical Storm Francine. 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.

## TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

### Meet Mike Solberg

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

For our first Adult Christian Formation session of the season, we will gather with our new Interim Minister Mike Solberg. Mike will introduce himself to us, but would also love to respond to whatever questions you have for him. Come join the conversation!



### Young Adults: Brunch After Worship

Today, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., Cambridge Common Restaurant

First Church has an active Young Adults Group of 20- and 30-somethings, who meet up for fellowship a couple times a month. If you're in this age range, you're invited to brunch after church today at Cambridge Common

Restaurant! Can't make it, but still want to learn about Young Adults meet ups? Email [youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org) or talk to Casey Marsh or Phil Jones.

### Youth Group Kick-Off: TreeTop Adventures Trip

Today, 12:45 - 3:45 p.m.

First Church's high school teen Youth Group kicks off the year with a trip to a climbing and zipline park in Canton, MA. The teens and their leaders are leaving at noon for their afternoon adventure, returning to the church by 4:30 p.m. Questions about our Youth Group? Contact [Sarah Higginbotham](#).



### Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders

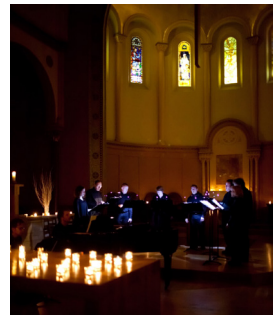
Today, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., The Well

7th and 8th graders from First Church and Old South Church meet for a session of their year-long sexuality education curriculum.

### Night Song

Today, 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. We all need time set aside from the demands of daily life and the issues facing our community and our world—a regular time to be still, to find clarity and purpose, and to center ourselves for the coming week. You'll leave breathing more deeply and recharged to engage with your world. [Learn more about Night Song](#).



## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

### **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.

## REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

### 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 of opportunities on our website.](#) Please contact Peggy Stevens (peggystevens1200@gmail.com) to express your interest and learn more.



### FAITH & LIFE GROUPS

Fall 2024



### 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 as we regather in September!

### Reparations Fund News

The Beloved Community group at First Church delights in announcing the results of our summer Reparations Fundraising initiative! During the summer months, \$35,685 was donated by 29 new donors to our Reparations Fund, exceeding the \$25,000 matching challenge issued by a First Church member. In addition, gifts from repeat donors and an allocation from the Missions & Social Justice Committee brought the summer total to \$63,742.



In 2021, First Church created the Reparations Fund to engage in a process of wealth redistribution and the spiritual practice of repair and restitution. In 2024, the Executive Council voted to disburse the Reparations Fund donations in three ways...

[Read the full announcement on our website.](#)





# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## Monday, September 16

4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom

## Tuesday, September 17

3:00 p.m. Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting, via Zoom

6:00 p.m. Women's Community Book Group, via Zoom

7:30 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, via Zoom

## Wednesday, September 18

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom

7:00 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

## Thursday, September 19

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

## Friday, September 20

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

## Sunday, September 22

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: *Braving Change*, 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 and Bible 101 classes

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common

12:30 p.m. GBIO Victory Lunch and Updates, MJH

12:30 p.m. Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7th/8th graders, Harter Room

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.

Have a church program or event to promote?

Complete the [First Church Communications Request form](#).



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