



Regathering Season
September 22, 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 22, 2024

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

Liturgist	Casey Marsh, <i>Deacon</i>
Preaching Today	Mike Solberg, <i>Interim Senior Minister</i>
Leading Worship	Kate Layzer, <i>Minister of Street Outreach</i> Lee Prouty, <i>Facilities Manager</i> Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Freddie Funck, <i>First Church member</i>

Today's Programs and Events

9:30 a.m.	Adult Formation: <i>Braving Change</i> , 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
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments in Hastings Common
12:30 p.m.	GBIO Victory Lunch & Updates, Margaret Jewett Hall
12:30 p.m.	Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 7/8th graders, Harter Room
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.

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Pastorale

César Franck

*HYMN 25

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

*GREETING

Casey Marsh

L: The spirit of Christ be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Beloved of God, come gather in!

Be at home in this household of grace!

Here there is room for all that we are:

C: 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, old, and everyone, come into the warmth of that welcome,
and together let us make room for joy!**

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Down to the River to Pray

arr. Robert Lee

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SUNG PRAYER

Search Me, O God

Kate Layzer/Peter Sykes



SILENCE

**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.*

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

Adults: God be with you there.

Children: God be with you here.

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.

*HYMN 450

May the Mind of Christ My Savior

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Isaiah 43:18-21

READING

Matthew 12:1-8

SERMON

Change

Mike Solberg

*HYMN 414

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kate Layzer

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

Jesu, Jesu

Tom Colvin

*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 238

The Church's One Foundation

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Thuma Mina

Hymn 344

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

VOLUNTARY

Non troppo lento ("L'Organiste")

Franck

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.

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above 25

1. Sing praise to God who reigns a - bove, the God of all cre - a - tion,
 2. What God's al - might - y power hath made, in gra - cious love God keep - eth;
 3. Our God is nev - er far a - way, but through all grief dis - tress - ing,
 4. Then all my glad - some way a - long, I sing a - loud thy prais - es,

the God of power, the God of love, the God of our sal - va - tion.
 by morn - ing glow or eve - ning shade God's watch - ful eye ne'er sleep - eth.
 an ev - er pre - sent help and stay, our peace and joy and bless - ing.
 that all may hear the grate - ful song my voice un - wea - ried rais - es.

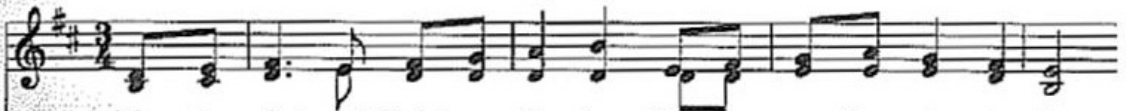
With heal - ing balm my soul is filled and ev - ery faith - less
 With - in the wis - dom of God's might, lo! all is just and
 As with a moth - er's ten - der hand, God gent - ly leads the
 Be joy - ful in the Lord, my heart, both soul and bod - y

mur - mur stilled: to God all praise and glo - ry.
 all is right: to God all praise and glo - ry.
 pil - grim band: to God all praise and glo - ry.
 bear your part: to God all praise and glo - ry.

WORDS: Johann J. Schütz, 1675; tr. Frances E. Cox, 1864, alt.
 MUSIC: Bohemian Brethren's *Kirchengesänge*, 1566

MIT FREUDEN ZART
 87.87.887

May the Mind of Christ My Savior 450



1. May the mind of Christ my Sav-ior live in me from day to day,
2. May the word of God dwell rich-ly in my heart from hour to hour,
3. May the love of Je - sus fill me, as the wa - ters fill the sea;
4. May I run the race be - fore me, strong and brave to face the foe,



by his love and pow - er guid - ing all I do or say.
 so that all may see I tri - umph through God's grac - ious power.
 Christ ex - alt - ing through my liv - ing, this is vic - to - ry.
 look - ing on - ly un - to Je - sus as I on - ward go.



This Is a Day of New Beginnings

414

1. This is a day of new be - gin - nings,
 2. For by the life and death of Je - sus,
 3. Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing,
 4. Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us


time to re - mem - ber and move on,
 love's might - y Spir - it, now as then,
 step from the past and leave be - hind
 to show and share what love can do.

time to be - lieve what love is bring - ing,
 can make for us a world of dif - f'rence
 our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt and griev - ing,
 This is a day of new be - gin - nings -


lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.
 as faith and hope are born a - gain.
 seek - ing new paths, and sure to find.
 our God is mak - ing all things new.

The Church's One Foundation


238




1. The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ, our Lord;
 2. E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3. 'Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of our war,
 4. Yet we on earth have un - ion with God, the Three - in - one,



we are his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word;
 our char - ter of sal - va - tion, one Lord, one faith, one birth,
 we wait the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for ev - er - more;
 and mys - tic sweet com - mun - ion with those whose rest is won.



from heaven he came and sought us, for us was cru - ci - fied;
 one ho - ly name pro - fess - ing, we share one ho - ly food,
 till with the vi - sion glo - rious, our long - ing eyes are blest,
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we



with his own blood he bought us, and for our life he died.
 and to one hope still press - ing, with ev - ery grace en - dued.
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
 like them, the meek and low - ly, on high may dwell with thee.

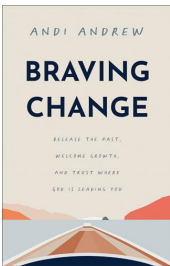
COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for our congregation during this time of transition.
- We pray for Keith Manville, Director of Operations Kirsten Manville's father, as he recovers at Lahey Hospital following a stroke.
- 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 Springfield, OH, as they endure bomb threats to their schools and town offices stemming from false, racist claims against Haitian immigrants living in the city.
- 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, amid intense political polarization.
- 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 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 pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval throughout the Middle East, in Ukraine, in Sudan, and in Haiti.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

- 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 especially for the families of two women in Georgia whose causes of death have been confirmed as preventable after hospitals denied them timely reproductive healthcare.
- 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.



Adult Formation: *Braving Change*

Today and Sunday, October 6, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Harter Rm & via Zoom

In this season of new beginnings, Susan Reynolds and Beth Spaulding are leading two 9:30 sessions on navigating change in our own lives and the life of our church community. Using Andi Andrew's [Braving Change](#) as a guide, we are exploring how to mourn, accept and thrive through change, always giving ourselves the grace and space to see where God is leading us. All are invited, and no preparation or book purchase is required.

GBIO Victory Lunch and Updates

Today 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).



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

Today, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m., Harter Room

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. [Learn more about Night Song.](#)



REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

Fall Faith & Life Groups: Register Now

Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests. Faith & Life Groups involve making a short-term commitment (a single session to several weeks, depending on the group) to something that might be delightful, deep, or even transformational. If you are looking for a way to dip your toes into the life of our church and stay connected outside of Sunday Worship, this is for you!

[Please see group descriptions & register by Friday, October 4, for a specific Faith & Life group here.](#)

After registering, you will be contacted by the leader. Questions? Please reach out to Beth Spaulding (bspaulding68@gmail.com) or the leader of the group directly.

- **Care Group for the Caregivers** with Leslie Pelton-Cairns, Amy Matias & Stefanie Haug
- **Exploring our Faith as Adults through the Confirmation Curriculum** with Meredith Quinn and Lindsey Baker
- **Exploring Hope for Peace and Justice in the Holy Land** with Adam Weiss
- **Tending our Spirits in a Time of Transition** with Rev. Liz Williams
- **First Church's History and Its Impact on Changes Ahead** with Henry Gates



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.

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.

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



REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



All-Church Art Show: A Call for Artists Sunday, October 6

12:30 -1:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Calling all artists at First Church! We know that creativity flows deep and wide within our community, and we'd like to showcase and celebrate your work. Whether you paint, draw, sculpt, write, or craft, please consider sharing a sample of your art with us after worship on Sunday, October 6. All ages are

welcome to contribute one, two, or even three works to display. As we make room for all, we are excited to create this intentional space to share our gifts with each other. Plan to bring your works to Margaret Jewett Hall between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., along with a label with your name and any information about the art. Questions can be directed to Henry Gates (hjgates@comcast.net) or [Sarah Higginbotham](#).

Bring Your Work Team to the Friday Café

Starting in November, the Friday Café will offer group volunteer experiences for up to 6 people on the first Friday of each month. Volunteers will don a white apron and join our meal service lineup from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Volunteering at the Café is fun and very rewarding – a great team-building opportunity. A donation of \$100 per person is optional but greatly appreciated. Talk to Kate Layzer if you'd like to learn more.



Beware of Phishing Scams

We are observing an uptick in phishing scams impersonating church staff via email. If you receive an email claiming to be from a First Church staff member that requests the password to the online church directory or asks for an email reply because they are in a meeting, please double-check the sending address. Please note that if the sender is using an email address other than an @firstchurchcambridge.org address, it is most likely a scam.

Please do not respond! Church staff would never ask for any kind of donations to be sent directly to them (or directly to others), and they would not ask for passwords. The scammers have been able to pull enough information from church websites to make the email sound legitimate. Scams have become more and more sophisticated! If you are still wondering, please be sure to speak directly with the staff member involved before responding.





THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, September 23

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

Wednesday, September 25

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

Thursday, September 26

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

7:00 p.m. Finance Committee, via Zoom

7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Harter Room

Friday, September 27

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

7:00 p.m. All-Church Retreat begins at Craigville Retreat Center

Saturday, September 28

All-Church Retreat continues at Craigville Retreat Center

Sunday, September 29

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream

11:20 a.m. Church School: Creative Arts Workshop, MJH

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall

1:00 p.m. All-Church Retreat ends at Craigville Retreat Center

7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream



SCAN ME

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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