



Regathering Season
September 29, 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
1636 – 2024

September 29, 2024

Liturgist	Jenny Stuart, <i>Community Minister</i>
Preaching Today	Kate Layzer, <i>Minister of Street Outreach</i>
Leading Worship	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

- 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, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in MJH
- 12:45 p.m. Gather to walk to *Bounty* film screening at First Parish, MJH
- 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

All Creatures of our God and King

James Woodman

*HYMN 249

Open Now Your Gates of Beauty

*GREETING

Jenny Stuart

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

The Eyes of All Wait Upon Thee

Charles Wood

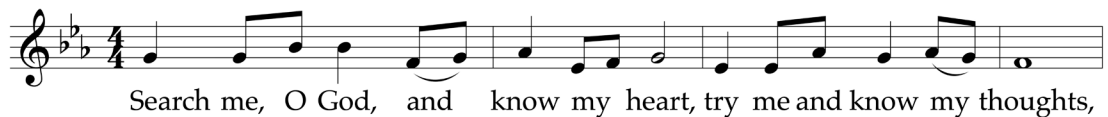
CONFESSING

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 for a Creative Arts Workshop in Margaret Jewett Hall. Caregivers can find the children in Margaret Jewett Hall after worship.

*HYMN 401

Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Jeremiah 31:7-9

READING

Mark 10:46-52

SERMON

Kate Layzer

*HYMN 424

We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

My God, My Portion, and My Love

arr. James Hopkins

*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 403

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

*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

Alleluia

James Woodman

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.

Open Now Your Gates of Beauty

249



1. O - pen now your gates of beau-ty, Zi - on, let me en - ter there,
 2. Gra - cious God, I come be - fore you; may I stand on ho - ly ground;
 3. God, my faith in - crease and quick - en, let me keep your gift di - vine;
 4. Speak, O God, and I will hear you, let your will be done, in - deed;



where my soul in joy - ful du - ty, waits for God who an - swers prayer.
 where I find you and a - dore you, there my heaven on earth is found.
 e - ven when temp - ta - tions thick - en, may your word still o'er me shine,
 may I un - dis - turbed draw near you, may your Word my long - ings feed:



O how bless - ed is this place, filled with sol - ace, light, and grace!
 To my heart O free - ly come, let this tem - ple be your home.
 as my pole - star through my life, as my com - fort in my strife.
 here, with life, your foun - tain flows, here is balm for all my woes.



Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound 401

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

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

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

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

NEW BRITAIN
 CM

424 We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight

1. We walk by faith and not by sight;
 2. We may not touch Christ's hands and side,
 3. Help then, O Christ, our un - be - lief;
 4. That, when our life of faith is done,

no gra-cious words we hear from Christ who spoke as
 nor fol - low where Christ trod; but in con - fess - ing
 and may our faith a - bound to call on you when
 in realms of clear - er light we may be - hold you

none e'er spoke, who still we know is near.
 we re - jice: our Sav - ior and our God!
 you are near and seek where you are found:
 as you are, with full and end - less sight.

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

403

1. Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart, in my heart;
 2. Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart, in my heart;
 3. Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart, in my heart;
 4. Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart, in my heart;

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

In my heart, in my heart, in my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.
 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

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 Ellen Frith, who is living with a serious chronic illness.
- 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 war in the Middle East expands and intensifies, our hearts cry out in prayer. We pray for all the families who have lost loved ones in Gaza, Lebanon, and Israel, and all those who are enduring hunger, displacement, and the terror of war. We pray especially this week for the people of southern Lebanon as they endure deadly airstrikes from the Israeli military that have taken over 550 lives, injured almost 2,000, and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. We pray in thanksgiving for all the peacemakers, and we pray that we might take wise and compassionate action for an end to the war and immediate de-escalation of tensions in the region, as well as redoubled efforts to address the humanitarian crises resulting from these wars.
- 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

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

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.
- 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.



Bounty Film Screening and Discussion

Sunday, September 29 at 1:00 p.m.

**First Parish in Cambridge. 3 Church Street, Cambridge
(accessible entrance: 1 Church Street)**

This 9-minute documentary features Penobscot parents and children commemorating their survival by reading and reacting

to the [Phips Proclamation](#), one of 80 government-issued laws that motivated colonial settlers to hunt, capture, kill, and scalp Indigenous people in exchange for cash and land. Lieutenant Governor Spencer Phips, who signed the 1755 law featured in the film, was a respected and engaged member of the congregations today known as First Parish in Cambridge (UUA) and First Church in Cambridge (UCC). First Church has held two screenings of the film; we encourage those who missed it to consider joining our siblings at First Parish for this occasion.

Meet up at Coffee Hour in MJH and walk over to First Parish together! The screening will be followed by a discussion facilitated by Mishy Lesser, learning director of Upstander Project, and Penobscot Nation Tribal Ambassador Maulian Bryant, co-creator of Bounty and participant in the film. Light refreshments will be served after the discussion. A Zoom option will be shared with all registrants just prior to the event. RSVP here: <https://tinyurl.com/4yktzec>

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 Amy Matias and 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



Men's Breakfast

Saturday, October 5, 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

Friday Café Book Drive

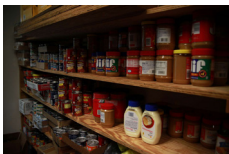
Our free community bookshelves in the Library are looking empty! If you would like to pass along a few titles from your collection, we will gladly accept books in the following categories:

- Fiction
- Non-fiction (general interest)
- Classic literature
- Spiritual and religious
- Recovery
- Sports
- Poetry
- Graphic literature (non-explicit)

Donations may be placed in the basket by the Sexton's office in Hastings Common.



REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



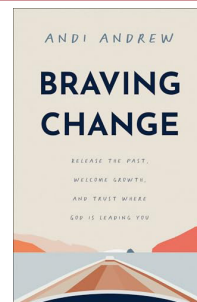
Food Pantry Donations on Communion Sundays

First Church continues to provide contributions to the Many Helping Hands Food Pantry. The volunteer-run, donation-driven pantry offers a grocery shopping experience on the second Saturday of each month. You are invited to donate healthy snacks, hygiene products, spices, and (when possible) items bought in bulk/case, as this supports customers having a similar shopping experience. ***First Church donations can be left in the large baskets in the Narthex on the first Sunday of each month, which is next Sunday, October 6.***

Adult Formation: *Braving Change*

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

In this season of new beginnings, Susan Reynolds and Beth Spaulding will lead the second of 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 will explore 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, (even if you didn't attend the first session on September 22), and no preparation or book purchase is required.



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](#).

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.



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, September 30

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

Tuesday, October 1

7:00 p.m. Executive Council, via Zoom

Wednesday, October 2

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

7:00 p.m. Christian Formation Committee, via Zoom

Friday, October 4

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

Saturday, October 5

8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast, Harter Room

Sunday, October 6

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: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library

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

12:15 p.m. All-Church Art Show, MJH

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

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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