



Stewardship Season
November 10, 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

November 10, 2024

Liturgist Chris Reynolds
Preaching Today Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*
Leading Worship Mac Howland, *offering a testimony*
Emma Mitchell, *Pastoral Associate*
Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*
Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

Bulletin Cover Image detail of quilted table runner, inspired by Gaylen Morgan's photo, designed and quilted by Sarah Fujiwara & members of First Church

Today's Programs and Events

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: The Household of God in This Time of Change, Harter Room & [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
- 7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Exploring Our Faith as Adults through the Confirmation Curriculum, via Zoom
- 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

Prelude in G Major

Felix Mendelssohn

*HYMN 100

By Gracious Powers

*GREETING

Chris Reynolds

L: Siblings in the Spirit, whether you are here for an hour or a lifetime,
welcome to this household of grace!

C: Here, where our lives are grounded in the hope and healing of God;

L: here, where we grow together in community and belonging;

**C: here, where we pray and work together
for peace and justice in our world.**

L: Sisters, brothers, siblings in the Spirit, come gather in,

C: and let God renew our trust, faith, and love!

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Holy Jesus, Lord of Glory

Nicola Canzano

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION AND SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

C: Merciful God,

**we confess that we have strayed from your path
in thought, word, and deed,**

by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

**We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength;
and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

In your mercy, forgive what we have been,

help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be,

**so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name. 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**

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

***HYMN 340**

Peace Before Us

A MUTUAL BLESSING

Adults: **God be with you there.**

Children: **And 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.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Psalm 146

READING

1 Kings 17:8-16

SERMON

Emma Mitchell

COMMUNITY SONG

Circle Round

MaMuse

**There is a circle around me of people I love
There is a circle around me of care
There is a circle around me of people I love
So I can stand up in the face of fear**

One step in front of the other

One step back

One love, one for each other

Keeping the circle intact

Keeping the circle intact

***CANDLELIGHTING RITUAL**

During this time of silent prayer, all are invited to come to a table with candles to light a candle as a prayer and a sacred commitment in this season.

CLOSING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Mike Solberg

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.

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mike Solberg

CALL TO FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

TESTIMONY AND INVITATION TO OFFERING

Mac Howland

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

God Fashioned Love

Carol Muehlig

***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.**

GOING FORTH

***COMMUNITY SONG**

Circle Round

After we have sung it through again, please continue singing as you make your way forward to create a circle on the chancel, including the front pew for those requiring a seat.

***BENEDICTION**

First Church Land Acknowledgment

We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.



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

OPENING HYMN

100

By Gracious Powers

Unison

1. By gra-cious powers so won-der - ful - ly shel - tered,
 2. Yet is this heart by its old foe tor-ment - ed,
 3. And when this cup you give is filled to brim - ming
 4. Yet when a - gain in this same world you give us

and con - fi - dent - ly wait - ing, come what may,
 still e - vil days bring bur - dens hard to bear;
 with bit - ter suf - f'ring, hard to un - der - stand,
 the joy we had, the bright-ness of your sun,

we know that God is with us night and morn - ing,
 O give our fright - ened souls the sure sal - va - tion
 we take it thank - ful - ly and with-out trem - bling,
 we shall re - mem - ber all the days we lived through,

and nev - er fails to greet us each new day.
 for which, O God, you taught us to pre - pare.
 out of so good and so be-loved a hand.
 and our whole life shall then be yours a - lone.

WORDS: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1944; tr. Fred Pratt Green, 1972
 MUSIC: Herbert G. Hobbs, 1976; harm. Jan Helmut Wubbena, 1976

BONHOEFFER
 11 10.11 10

PEACE HYMN

340

Peace Before Us



1. Peace be - fore us, peace be - hind us, peace be - neath our feet.
2. Love be - fore us, love be - hind us, love be - neath our feet.
3. Light be - fore us, light be - hind us, light be - neath our feet.
4. Christ be - fore us, Christ be - hind us, Christ be - neath our feet.



Additional verses: joy, truth, hope.

WORDS: David Haas, (b.1957), alt., based on a Navaho prayer
MUSIC: David Haas, (b.1957); harm. FCC, 1997

PRAYER FOR PEACE
445.447

Words, music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc.
Harm. © 1998 FCC Houston TX



- Peace with - in us, peace a - bove us, let all a - round us be peace.
Love with - in us, love a - bove us, let all a - round us be love.
Light with - in us, light a - bove us, let all a - round us be light.
Christ with - in us, Christ a - bove us, let all a - round us be Christ.



COMMUNITY PRAYERS

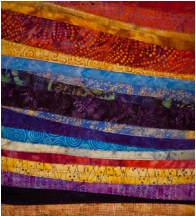
- We pray for Perry Neubauer, who is currently in the ICU, working through a lung illness, and for Susie and all their family and many friends.
- We pray for Beth Spaulding's father Bob, who is reaching the end of his life. We pray also for Beth and her aunt Barb as they navigate this time together.
- We pray for Dave Kidder and his family as they mourn the loss of his sister Lucinda, who died last Saturday.
- We pray for Marianne Jensen as she prepares for a heart procedure this coming Thursday.
- We pray for Gaylen Morgan's brother Jeff, who is experiencing a long and painful recovery from surgery.
- We pray for Kathy Williams's son Brett Williams and his husband George Goodrich, who have been displaced from their longtime home in Vermont by a fire.
- We pray for Keith Manville, Director of Operations Kirsten Manville's father, as he continues his recovery from a stroke at a rehab facility.
- We pray for all who are living with significant health challenges and their families and caregivers: Ellen Frith, who is living with a serious chronic illness; 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; and Abby Shuman's uncle Barry.
- We pray for our nation following the election and its outcomes. We pray for all those who fear policies and power that may threaten who they are, and what and who they love and value. We pray for all who are vulnerable, including our planet. We pray for ourselves, that we will remember who we are as followers of Christ, and what that means for our responsibilities in this place at this time.
- We pray for our neighbors all over the world, who will be dealing with the changes resulting from the U.S. elections. Especially we pray for all whose lives are affected by the wars and political upheaval in Gaza and Israel, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Haiti, Sudan, and so many other places. We pray for the dead, for their loved ones, and for their broader communities. We pray for changed hearts for all those inflicting violence upon others, and thus upon their own souls. We give thanks for the peacemakers. We pray that we, like they, may be free of the myth of redemptive violence, and take collective action, however small, to be people of true peace in this world. May we all see your way more clearly, O God.
- We continue to pray for all who are recovering from natural and climate-related disasters, including those impacted by fires in western and northeastern Massachusetts, due to the lack of rain this autumn. We pray for our rapidly warming planet and for efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray with thanksgiving that Amani, Amini, and Ephrem Matabaro will be returning to Boston and First Church from the Democratic Republic of the Congo! We continue to pray for

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

all people in the DRC, 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, in Haiti, and in far too many other places in our world.
- 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.



Adult Formation: The Household of God in This Time of Change
Today, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Join members of the Stewardship Committee for a creative and musical exploration of our motivation for giving.

Seraphim: *Eternal Voices and Sacred Landscapes*
Today at 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)

[Seraphim](#) performs choral works which illuminate critical topics, including homelessness, climate change, racial justice, and other social issues, and open a window on the Divine. Their concerts are designed to offer new perspectives, challenging audiences and sparking inspiration to make our community and our world better. [Visit their website](#) for more information.



seraphim



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.](#)

UPCOMING AT FIRST CHURCH



Poetry and Prayer with Emma & Aram Wednesdays, November 13, 20 & 27 5:30 - 6:15 p.m., via Zoom

As we integrate the unknowns in the aftermath of the election and seek to stay grounded in God together, join Pastoral Associate Emma Mitchell and her husband Aram, Pastor of Edgecomb (ME) Community Church, for a time of poetry and prayer together with members of both churches. We will gather online each Wednesday evening in November to ground our souls with a poem and to unburden our hearts with a time of shared prayer. By meeting at 5:30, we hope that those working during the day can join us. We plan to finish by 6:15, so that you can tend to the rest of your evening. If you are able to join on your computer with video, that is great! Bring a candle to light. If you are on the go or cooking supper, feel free to call in on the phone with headphones. All are welcome—the young and the seasoned, those full of faith, and those peppered with doubts. Please [register here](#); a Zoom link will be sent to you. Feel free to [email Emma](#) with any questions.

First Church's "Wade in the Water" quilt at Rising Star Quilt Show Saturday, November 16, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Sunday, November 17, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Arlington Town Hall, 730 Mass Ave., Arlington, MA

Catch a rare glimpse of over 100 unique hand-crafted quilts that will be on display at Arlington's Town Hall, including First Church's "Wade in the Water" project, to which many First Church folks contributed their embroidery, stamping, and sewing skills. The quilt show's challenge theme this year is "Freedom." There will be handmade items available for purchase in the boutique and a café selling beverages and baked goods.



Volunteers Needed for Fall Meeting Luncheon Sunday, November 17

Our Fall Congregational Meeting will take place over a meal of chicken or legume stews served with rice (meat and vegetarian), bean salad and green salad (vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free), and pasta with choice of sauce. We invite volunteers to:

- bring a sweet treat,
- help set up the hall,
- assemble and heat the meal, and/or
- clean up and figure out what to do with the leftovers.

For more details and optional sign up, [click here](#) or email:

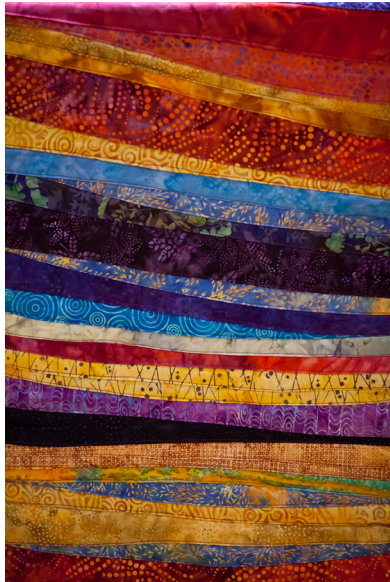
Fellowship@firstchurchcambridge.org - or just stop by!

UPCOMING AT FIRST CHURCH

Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, November 19, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., via Zoom

Please join Martha Mueller Cook and Linda Ziebell for our monthly conversation about navigating elderhood and end of life with grace and even joy. This month we will focus on pp. 49-59 of Connie Zweig's [*The Inner Work of Age: Shifting from Role to Soul*](#) and ask ourselves about practices for nurturing our souls.



Fall Congregational Meeting & Luncheon

Sunday, November 17, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

Enjoy a luncheon prepared by Caitlin Anderson and the Friends of Fellowship or join us virtually as we gather for a meeting of the congregation to review and vote on the proposed 2025 annual budget as recommended by the Executive Council. For the meeting agenda, see the Call to Meeting below.

Dedication of Pledges & Gifts

Sunday, November 24 at 11:00 a.m.

Sanctuary and via livestream

During our Morning Worship, we are all invited to bring forward our pledges, gifts, and estimates of our 2025 financial support for our 2025 ministry and mission.

Call to Fall Congregational Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Fall Congregational Meeting of First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, United Church of Christ, will be held in its 389th year

at 12:30 p.m., Sunday, November 17, 2024,

in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom, for the following purposes:

1. To review and vote on the proposed 2025 annual budget of the Congregation as recommended by the Executive Council.
2. To approve the allocation of the proceeds from the Stevenson Trusts.

No other business may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of Executive Council,
Laurie Friedman, Clerk



The Household of God in This Time of Change



As we face change and uncertainty in our personal lives, the church, the country, and the world, we feel anxious, stressed and even fearful, but our church remains a home of welcome, stability, and love.

As Rev. Mike Solberg said in his sermon on September 22:

“Change is inevitable. Let’s respond by being radical. Let’s work together to get ever closer to the heart of who we are and what we are about in the world today.”

Your contributions, financial and non-financial, make this household of God who we are. Our goals for this interim year are:

1. Collectively, a 3.5% increase over our 2024 Pledge & Gift goal.
2. Individually, for each member and friend to respond with their intentions by November 24.

This early indication of your giving plan for 2025 will be tremendously helpful for the church’s faithful financial planning. Our primary source of income is contributions from our members and friends.

You can find more information about pledging and why it matters at:
firstchurchcambridge.org/stewardship-2025/

When news is bad

Take seriously your grief.
It is love, stripped bare.
Let it flow through you.

Trust that you are held.
We all are held by the Beloved,
the Broken-Hearted One,
the One who Suffers most Deeply.

Know you are not alone.
Millions bear your sorrow.
Ancestors and even unborn generations
walk with you gratefully.

Seek others who are tenderhearted.
Receive all the grace you can.
In the flesh is best, but even in spirit,
know we are here.

Trust the Goodness.
God has not given up on us.
Through every disaster grace remains.
Refuse to despair.

Choose courage over selfishness,
trust over fear, love over anger.
You do not know the end of grace.

There is much you cannot change,
but bring healing where you can.
We are not promised to be given light,
but to shine with light.

Don't become an enemy of the world
and its brokenness. Stay tender.
Become a source of comfort and joy for others.
Let this purpose bear you through the darkness
and you yourself will become light.

Take courage; trust grace;
stay connected; practice love.



Steve Garnaas-Holmes
November 6, 2024
Unfolding Light
www.unfoldinglight.net



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, November 11 - Church Office & Building Closed for Veterans Day

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

Wednesday, November 13

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

3:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom

5:00 p.m. Poetry and Prayer with Emma & Aram, via Zoom

7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Tending Our Spirits in a Time of Transition, via Zoom

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

Thursday, November 14

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

Have a church program or event to promote?

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

Friday, November 15

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

Sunday, November 17

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 & Bible 101 classes, Library & The Well

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common

12:30 p.m. Fall Congregational Meeting and Luncheon, MJH

7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Exploring Our Faith as Adults through the Confirmation Curriculum, via Zoom

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

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



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

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

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