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Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service  
December 24, 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

[www.firstchurchcambridge.org](http://www.firstchurchcambridge.org)

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

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming, Just-Peace church, committed to inclusivity and non-violence. We love the teachings of Jesus with our minds as well as our hearts! We believe and question, question and grow. We're an old church with forward-looking ways. We have plenty of passion, theological opinions, good music, food, and fellowship.

We offer a variety of programs, events, and activities for adults, children, and families. Please explore our [website](#) and visit us on a Sunday. If you are looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one! We pray that you will always be showered with the Love that came to Earth at Christmas. It never ends. It is yours forever.

[www.sneucc.org](http://www.sneucc.org)

Website of the Southern New England Conference  
of the United Church of Christ

[www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

The national website of our denomination - the  
United Church of Christ - see what we stand for!

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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 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.

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

**VOLUNTARY**

Jesu Bambino

Pietro Yon

**\*PROCESSIONAL CAROL 132**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

**\*GREETING**

Emma Mitchell

L: O Come, all you faithful and all you skeptics, too.  
Tonight, on this night of nights, open your hearts to wonder and love.

**C: Enter into the beauty and power of Christmas**

L: when worlds are made new,

**C: when the poor and humble take heart,**

L: when shepherds rise up and wise ones bow down,

**C: when angels are hovering around us even now, saying:**

L: Behold! Fear not! We have good news...for a change!

**C: For tonight, Love is born!**

L: Justice and Joy, Grace and Glory are born anew!

**C: Tonight, Christ is born! So come, let us adore him!**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Kate Layzer

**ANTHEM**

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

arr. P. Sykes

**READING**

Isaiah 9:2-11

Mike Solberg

**\*CAROL 131**

Creator of the Stars of Night

**READING**

Luke 1:26-38

**\*CAROL 135**

Angels We Have Heard on High

**READING**

Luke 2:1-7

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

L: The light of Christ!

**C: Thanks be to God!**

*\*You are invited to stand.*

**CAROL 150**

Away in the Manger  
*Please remain seated.*

**READING**

Luke 2:8-20

Sarah Higginbotham

**A TIME WITH CHILDREN**

Glory to the Mountain

*The children are invited to the chancel to participate in a singing game.*

**And we'll all sing glory to the mountain,  
the mountain is so high, it reaches to the sky,  
and it's one, two, three, follow me...**

**And we'll all bow to the mountain!**

**\*CAROL 160**

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

**HOMILY**

Mike Solberg

**\*CAROL 149**

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

**PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD & THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Please pray this prayer and address God 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 THE LIGHT**

**ANTHEM**

In the Bleak Midwinter  
*Beth Spaulding, soprano*

Harold Darke

**THE PROCLAMATION**

John 1:1-5, 12, 14

**CAROL 142**

Silent Night, Holy Night  
*Please remain seated.*

## RESPONSIVE PROCLAMATION

L: Friends, Christ is born this night!

**C: Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

L: Hope and peace are born this night.

**C: Love and light are born this night.**

L: Then let us rise, proclaim, and sing it together! Joy to the world!

**\*All: Joy to the world. The Lord is come!**

**\*CAROL 134**

Joy to the World!

**\*BLESSING AND PEACE**

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### Leading Worship

Sarah Higginbotham, *Director of Communications & Christian Formation*

Kate Layzer, *Minister of Street Outreach*

Emma Mitchell, *Pastoral Associate*

Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*

Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*

Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

### Bulletin Cover Image

Perry Neubauer, *from the First Church archives*

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In light of the Christmas theme of welcome to those who seek shelter and refuge in difficult times, tonight's offering will support the First Church Shelter and the Friday Café specifically, and First Church generally (1/3 of the offering going to each). Please give generously and joyfully as you leave the service tonight. There are offering baskets located at each of our doors, or you may use the QR code to the left. Thank you for your generous support!

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

132

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,  
 2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 3. Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,  
 4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,  
 (1.) A - des - te fi - de - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes;

O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!  
 we would em - brace thee with love and awe;  
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;  
 ve - ni - te, ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem.

come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;  
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;  
 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?  
 Word of the E - ter - nal, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;  
 Na - tum vi - de - te Re - gem an - ge - lo - rum.

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,  
 Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!  
 ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, Do - mi - num.

WORDS: Latin: John Francis Wade, 1743; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others, alt.  
 MUSIC: John Francis Wade's *Cantus Diversi*, c. 1743

ADESTE FIDELES  
 Irr. w. refrain

131

Creator of the Stars of Night

1. Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's  
 2. To you the deep tra - vail was known that made the  
 3. When this old world drew on toward night, you came, but  
 4. At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must

ev - er - last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er  
 whole cre - a - tion groan. You came, O Sav - ior,  
 not in splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch,  
 bend, all hearts must bow; all things on earth with

of us all, we pray you, hear us when we call.  
 to set free your own in glo - rious lib - er - ty.  
 but the child of Mar - y, blame - less moth - er mild.  
 one ac - cord, like those in heav'n shall call you Lord.

WORDS: Latin hymn (9th century); tr. *The Hymnal*, 1940, alt.  
 MUSIC: Sarum plainsong, Mode IV; harm. C. Winfred Douglas, *The Hymnal*, 1940

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM  
 LM



135 Angels We Have Heard on High

1. An - gels we have heard on high sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
 2. Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see Christ whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.  
 Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav - en - ly song.  
 come a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

*Refrain*

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

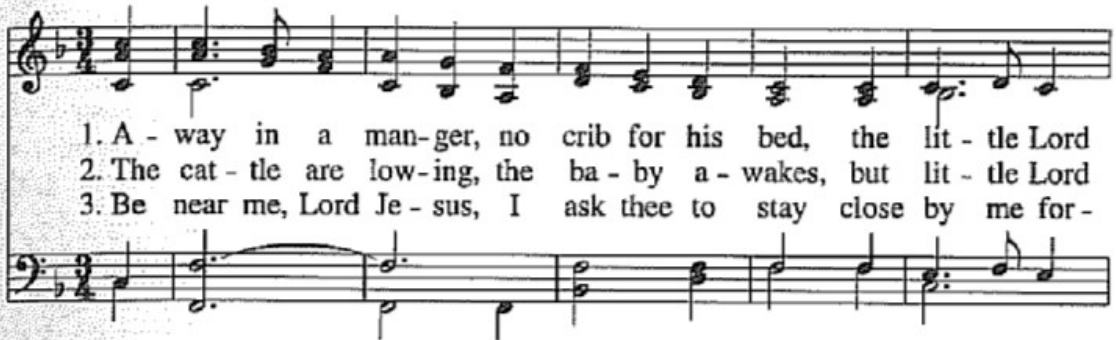
WORDS: Traditional French carol, tr. *Crown of Jesus II*, 1862, alt.  
 MUSIC: French carol melody

GLORIA  
 77.77 w. refrain

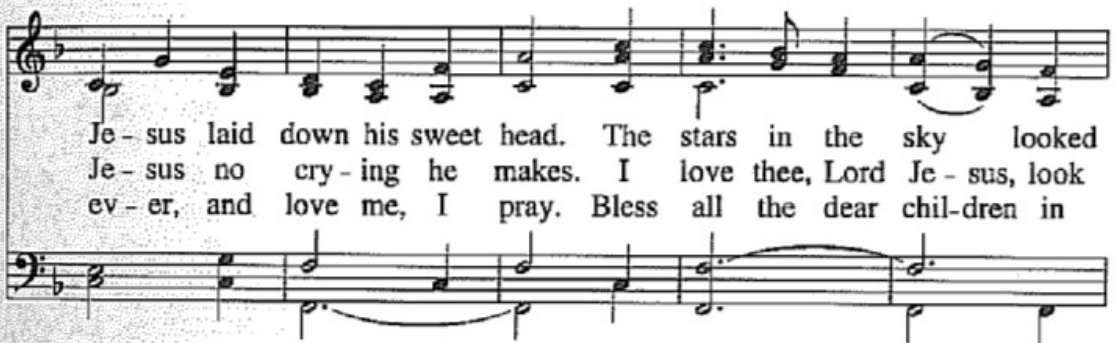


## Away in a Manger

150



1. A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord  
 2. The cat - tle are low-ing, the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
 3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask thee to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked  
 Je - sus no cry - ing he makes. I love thee, Lord Je - sus, look  
 ev - er, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil-dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.  
 down from the sky, and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.  
 thy ten - der care, and fit us for heav-en to live with thee there.

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

160

*Refrain*

Go, tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

go, tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born!

*Fine*

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si-lent flocks by night, be -  
 2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth rang  
 3. Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born, and

hold through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
 out the an-gel cho-rus that hailed our Sav-ior's birth.  
 God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

*to Refrain*

WORDS: Stanzas, John W. Work II, 1907; refrain, African - American spiritual  
 MUSIC: African-American spiritual, arr. John W. Work III, 1940

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN  
 76.76 w. refrain

CAROL

149 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1. It came up - on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
 2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace - ful wings un - furled,  
 3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf - fered long,  
 4. And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load whose forms are bend - ing low,  
 5. For lo, the days are hasten - ing on, by proph - et bards fore - told,

from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;  
 and still their heav - en - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;  
 be - neath the an - gel - strain have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way, with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years comes round the age of gold,

"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven great news we bring."  
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hover - ing wing,  
 and we, through bit - ter wars, hear not the love - song which they bring:  
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,

The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.  
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
 O hush the noise and end the strife, to hear the an - gels sing.  
 O rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing!  
 and the whole world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

## Silent Night, Holy Night

142

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright  
 2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
 (1.) Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft, ein - sam wacht

round you vir - gin moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild,  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia;  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,  
 nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar. Hol - der Kna - be im lock - i - gen Haar,

sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
 schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh!



CAROL

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come 134

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -  
 2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: let earth her  
 3. Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 songs em - ploy; let fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heaven and na - ture sing and  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -  
 and won - ders of his love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing.  
 peat the sound - ing joy,  
 won - ders of his love,

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.  
 MUSIC: Attr. Georg Frederick Handel, 1741; arr. Lowell Mason, 1848

ANTIOCH  
 CM w. repeat

## CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY SERVICES AT FIRST CHURCH



### **Christmas Day Service**

**Wednesday, December 25 at 11:00 a.m.**

**Lindsay Chapel & via livestream**

Join us on Christmas morning for a joy-filled and bright service in which we will fill our Chapel with the sounds of Christmas—readings, prayers of thanksgiving and praise, and a very special harpsichord meditation by Peter Sykes of William Byrd’s “The Bells.” We also celebrate Christmas Communion together.



### **Epiphany Potluck & Service**

**Monday, January 6, 2025**

**6:00 p.m. Potluck, Margaret Jewett Hall**

**7:10 p.m. Service, Chapel to Sanctuary**

Epiphany (“manifestation”) is a Christian feast so ancient that it predates Christmas. We will celebrate Epiphany on Monday, January 6, beginning at 6:00 p.m. with a potluck dinner in Margaret Jewett Hall. The meal will be potluck through and through: you are invited to bring either a main dish casserole (last names beginning with A-H), a salad or side dish (last names beginning with I-M), dessert (N-R), or drinks (S-Z). After our feast and a brief gathering ritual in the Chapel, we will set off together on a candlelight journey through the darkness until we arrive at the Sanctuary and circle it with light. Under the dome in the chancel, we will renew our baptismal promises, ending with a joyful “sprinkling” of all present. This event is for all ages, so gather up friends, neighbors, kids, and come share the light!



**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.



## LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY

### Men's Breakfast

**Saturday, January 4, 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](mailto:p.byerly@comcast.net)



### Young Adults: Faith on Tap

**Tuesday, January 7, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Grendel's Den, Harvard Square**

If you're in your 20s-30s, and looking for a new friend, a place to explore faith with peers, or just a new favorite restaurant, come to our next Faith on Tap! The Young Adults group meets a couple times each month for casual fellowship, and all in that age range are welcome. RSVP for our early January get-together and get on the mailing list for all Young Adults events by emailing: [youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org)

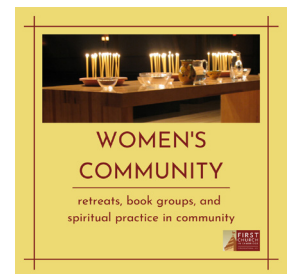


### Women's Community Book Group

**Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 - 7:45 p.m., via Zoom**

*(please note the new start time)*

Join us for a lively discussion of Lynda Rutledge's [West with Giraffes: A Novel](#). "Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming of age love story, this novel explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals." This will be a wonderful way to start the new year, and we hope all who identify as women in our church community will consider joining our gathering of friends and book lovers.



### Supporting Immigrants and Refugees: How to Respond

**Sunday, January 19, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom**

As we approach the transition to a new presidential administration, there are many unknowns about how immigrants and those seeking refuge in our country will be treated and welcomed. As Christians, what will be our response? Join us as we start the conversation by hearing how First Church folks have engaged in the work of immigrant justice and refugee resettlement in the recent past. Bring your questions, your concerns, and your open hearts as we consider how to support our neighbors in a new era of uncertainty.





# OUR COMMUNITY

a sampling of programs, events & activities from the last year

*a sampling of programs, events & activities from the last year...*

## **Sunday Worship & Special Services**

Sunday Morning Worship  
Sunday Evening Night Song

## **Christian Formation for Adults**

Faith and Life Groups  
Advent and Lenten Formation Series  
Racial Justice /  
Remembering Slavery's Living Legacy  
Weekly Contemplative Practice

## **Christian Formation for Children & Youth**

Church School Classes  
Creative Arts Workshops  
Our Whole Lives (sexuality education)  
Confirmation Class  
High School Youth Group

## **Ministries**

First Church Shelter  
Friday Café Street Ministry  
Trans/Non-Binary Affirming Ministry  
Greater Boston Interfaith Organization  
Earth Stewardship

## **Fellowship**

Young Adults Group  
Women's Community Events  
Monthly Men's Breakfasts  
All-Church Retreat on Cape Cod

## **Music & Arts**

First Church Choir  
Family Choir  
Poet-in-Residence  
Staff Composer

## **Building Use & Community Partnerships**

12-Step Meetings  
Weekly Dances  
Concerts and Lectures  
Newtowne School

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC  
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