



Morning Worship
February 16, 2025

**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
389 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 5

February 16, 2025

Liturgist

Jan Jeffers Lo

Preaching Today

Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*

Leading Worship

Karen McArthur, *Minister of Stewardship & Finance*

Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*

Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

Bulletin Cover Image chancel image by Perry Neubauer, *from the church archives*

Today's Programs and Events

- 9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Adult Formation: What Is Christian Nationalism?
Harter Room & [via Zoom](#)
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common
- 7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Four Centuries of First Church History, [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.

Have a church program or event to promote?
Complete the [First Church Communications Request](#) form.

Have an edit or update for our website?
Complete the [FCC Website Changes](#) form

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Plein Jeu, Fugue, et Trio

Pierre du Mage

***HYMN 12**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

***GREETING**

Jan Jeffers Lo

adapted from Psalm 1

L: Happy are those who delight in the way of the Holy One.
Meditate on God's word day and night.

**C: Our Sovereign God watches over the way of righteousness,
but the way of wickedness will perish.**

L: Happy are those who delight in the way of the Holy One.
Plant yourself like a tree and yield good fruit in due season.

**C: Our Sovereign God watches over the way of righteousness,
but the way of wickedness will perish.**

L: Happy are those who delight in the way of the Holy One.
Prosper in all that you do aligned with righteousness.

**C: Our Sovereign God watches over the way of righteousness,
but the way of wickedness will perish.**

L: Come, let us worship the Holy One together.

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Walk Together, Children

Spiritual

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray together:

**All: God of mercy, as we gather to celebrate your gift of love,
we recall with sorrow the times when we forget you
and are divided one from the other.**

**How often our thoughts, our words, and our actions,
have betrayed the goodness you have shown to us.**

**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.*

**Forgive us, merciful God.
Help us repair what we can, even while you mend what is broken.
Help us heal the wounded relationship
that separate us from you and one another;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

***GREETING OF PEACE**

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

***HYMN 271**

Lead Me, Lord

Children are invited to remain in worship for the entire service. If younger kids need a break, they are welcome to join the Nursery in Sage Hall.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

**All: Source of all truth and light,
fill our hearts and guide our steps
by the ancient and still living word we are about to hear.
In the message offered and received,
draw us into deeper faith and discipleship, now and always. Amen.**

READING

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

SERMON

What Is Eternal Life? (And Does It Exist?)

Mike Solberg

***HYMN 491**

Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karen McArthur

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

L: God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us pray... (*silence, intercessions, 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 Eyes for Beauty Pine

Herbert Howells

*DOXOLOGY

**To God, all glorious heavenly Light,
to Christ revealed in earthly night,
to God the Spirit now we raise
our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 352

Go Forth for God

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Grand Jeu

Pierre du Mage



SCAN ME

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.

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

OPENING HYMN

12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3. To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4. Thou reign - est in glo - ry, thou dwell - est in light,

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
 we blos - som and flour - ish as leaves on the tree,
 all praise we would ren - der; O help us to see

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee.

WORDS: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1867, alt.
 MUSIC: Welsh melody from John Roberts' *Caniadau y Cyssegr*, 1839

ST. DENIO
 11 11.11 11

Lead Me, Lord

271

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy right-ous-ness, make thy way
 plain be - fore my face. For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord,
 on - ly, that mak - est me dwell in safe - ty.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are placed below the vocal line. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, the second system covers the next two lines, and the third system covers the final line. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving bass lines.

WORDS: Psalms 5:8, 4:8
 MUSIC: Samuel S. Wesley, 1861

LEAD ME, LORD
 378.548

Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart

491

1. E - ter-nal light, shine in my heart, e - ter-nal
 2. E - ter-nal life, raise me from death, e - ter-nal
 3. Un-til by your most cost-ly grace, in-vit - ed

hope, lift up my eyes; e - ter-nal power, be my sup-
 bright-ness, help me see; e - ter-nal Spir - it, give me
 by your ho - ly word, at last I come be-fore your

port, e - ter-nal wis-dom, make me wise.
 breath, e - ter-nal Sav-iour, come to me:
 face to know you, my e - ter-nal God.

CLOSING HYMN

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 10.10

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Norm and Peggy Bendroth's daughter Anna, who gave birth to her third child Jozsef Xang Noi ("Yoshi") Sarosi a few weeks ago, and was then hospitalized for pneumonia following childbirth. Anna is now recovering at home, but awaiting next steps in her treatment.
- We pray for Phil Servello-Jones and his family as they mourn the loss of his grandmother Rev. Pat Robbennolt, who died peacefully on Monday night in Pleasant Hill, TN, at age 93. She served many UCC churches across the country for over 65 years.
- We pray for Renate Rose as she recovers at home after being struck by a car.
- 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; Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder; and Keith Manville, who has atypical Parkinsonism. 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; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray in celebration with former Senior Minister Dan Smith, who has been called by the Cotuit Federated Church to be their Associate Pastor and Community Minister. In addition to this half-time position, Dan continues to teach at Harvard Divinity School, serve as a Harvard Chaplain, and work on several grant-funded projects helping communities engage in the work of truth-telling, reckoning, and repair. May God be with him!
- We pray for all those impacted by the deadly and devastating wildfires in southern California, and we continue to pray for our earth and all creation in the face of the climate crisis.
- We pray for our nation. Most of all we pray that we, as Church, will see and embody the way of Jesus Christ in this time and place, even, if need be, at cost to ourselves. We pray for all whose lives are being upended by the policies of the presidential administration, both domestically and internationally, especially those whose wellbeing is again being sacrificed for the political power of the few.
- We pray for peace in Eastern Congo, the home of Amani and Amini Mataboro Tom, where Rwandan-backed rebels have taken control of the city of Goma. We pray for the friends and neighbors of the Tom family, and for the millions of people who are in dangerous circumstances. May they know God's presence and protection.
- We pray for Gaza, that the fragile ceasefire agreement continues to hold. We pray for all who will try to rebuild their lives in Gaza.
- We pray for our neighbors all over the world. Especially we pray for all whose lives are affected by political upheaval and war around the globe. We pray for the dead, for their loved ones, and for their broader communities.
- 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.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Adult Formation: What Is Christian Nationalism?

Sunday, February 16, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

Perhaps you have heard references to this ideology in the news lately, as it has become more clearly part of the self-understanding of many in the "MAGA movement." Pastor Mike will review the core meaning of Christian Nationalism, the nature of support for the ideology today, and lay out some ways in which he believes it goes against core aspects of Christian faith.



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.](#)

Invitation to Contribute to Coffee Hour

Please help us make worship as delicious as it is spiritually sustaining! For Coffee Hour each week we are looking for 2-4 households to bring 3 dozen cookies each, or the equivalent of snacks such as cheese & crackers or fruit. In general, the church has a No Nuts policy. If possible, please include a brief list of relevant ingredients for those with allergies. [Sign up here](#) or find the quick link to the signup form at: firstchurchcambridge.org/members



A flyer for the 'Grace: The History of Black Churches in Cambridge' opening reception. The flyer features a black and white illustration of a church building on the left. The text on the right reads: 'CAMBRIDGE MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE Invites you to join us for the community curated exhibit Grace: The History of Black Churches in Cambridge Opening Reception Music & Light Refreshments / Sunday February 16, 2025 / 2 pm - 4 pm The Kendall Public Lobby, 355-325 Main Street Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA, 02139, ADA Accessible www.cambridgehistorymuseum.com / (617) 349-4327'. At the bottom, it lists sponsors: Office of Mayor F. Denise Simmons, bxp, CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT, MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology, CAMBRIDGE ARTS, and a logo for the city of Cambridge.

Grace: The History of Black Churches in Cambridge

Opening Reception

TODAY, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Kendall Public Lobby

details: bit.ly/GraceReception

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH



Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, February 18, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., [via Zoom](#)

Please join us for a conversation about aging gracefully. Our focus in February will be Elder Activism. If you wish to receive information about the meeting and the Zoom invitation, please reach out to Linda Ziebell (lindaziebell@comcast.net) or Martha Mueller Cook (marthamuellercook@gmail.com).

American Jezebel:

The Story of Anne Hutchinson in Words and Music

A Special Virtual Panel Discussion

**Co-sponsored by the Harvard Choruses
and First Church in Cambridge**

Tuesday, February 18, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., via Zoom [[register here](#)]

First Church members are invited to a discussion on Anne Hutchinson, the Puritan spiritual leader whose defiance of religious and political authority led to one of early America's most infamous trials. Nearly 400 years ago, in 1637, Hutchinson was condemned in the first meetinghouse of what would become First Church in Cambridge. Her story is brought to life in *American Jezebel: The Trial of Anne Hutchinson*, a new opera by composer James Kallembach, commissioned by the Harvard Choruses, and premiering March 1 at Sanders Theatre.



This virtual conversation, moderated by First Church Member and Harvard's Director of Choral Activities Andy Clark, features composer James Kallembach, historian Eve LaPlante (author of *American Jezebel*), and Puritan scholar Francis J. Bremer (*One Small Candle, John Winthrop: America's Forgotten Founding Father*). Together, they'll explore Hutchinson's impact, the role of dissent in American history, and how music and theatre illuminate the past.

FAITH & LIFE GROUPS

Lent/Spring
2025



Faith & Life Groups: Spring 2025 - Call for Leaders!

Are you interested in leading a small group over Zoom or in person this Spring? Contact Beth Spaulding (bspaulding68@gmail.com) to discuss your idea for the next round of Faith & Life Groups, running in April/May, with registration happening in March.

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 by February 17!

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH



Pastoral Transition Work:

Summary of January Listening Sessions

Over the month of January, we began our pastoral transition work with a series of listening sessions. These gatherings focused on themes and hopes from our church life over the past few years. You can read a summary of these sessions on the transition page of our website:

firstchurchcambridge.org/transition

At our Annual Meeting, we announced the members of our Discovery Team: Moana Bentin, Andy Clark, Bill Hsiao, Martha Mueller Cook, Curt Nickish, Meredith Quinn, and Mike Solberg. The Discovery Team will continue to listen in various ways to the congregation and staff over the next several months to understand what is important to all of us moving forward. They will produce a report by early summer that will serve as guide for the Search Committee charged with finding our new Senior Minister.

Questions about the process?

Please contact Martha Mueller Cook: marthamuellercook@gmail.com

Discovery Team Conversations

Sundays, February 23, March 2, and April 6, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.

Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

One Sunday per month in February, March, and April, our newly-appointed Discovery Team will host conversations in which we “drill down” on some specific issues and themes that will affect our upcoming search for a new Senior Minister. **On February 23**, the focus will be how various levels of church size affect the life of a congregation (including ours!): personally, pastorally, organizationally, and financially. What are the implications of our current church size, and what do we hope for our size in the future? Please come and be part of these conversations held during the pre-worship Adult Formation Hour. Each person’s contributions to the conversation will be important in our discovery and discernment process. Child care will be provided.

In Memoriam

A memorial service for beloved First Church member **Carol Wilson-Braun** will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 15, in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a video presentation beginning at 10:00 a.m. and a light luncheon to follow. In order for the family to plan appropriately, please email Office Assistant Bruce Dillenbeck (bruce@firstchurchcambridge.org) to RSVP with numbers for the luncheon.



And a memorial service for longtime and well-loved member **Perry Neubauer** will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a reception to follow.

MORE UPCOMING



Young Adults: Breakfast at Felipe's Sunday, February 23, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Felipe's Taquería, Harvard Square

All Young Adults (20s and 30s), including newcomers, are invited to breakfast before church. It's a great way to meet new friends, and to ask questions about faith, life, and First Church. This casual fellowship group meets a few times a month on a rotating schedule. To learn about upcoming outings, email: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org

Leadership Retreat Saturday, March 1, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

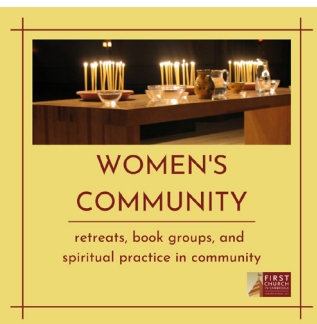
Mark your calendars for a First Church Leadership Retreat. The event will include both practical details about getting things done at First Church and broader leadership training in the church environment (hint: it's different in some ways than outside the church!). All are welcome, while all those who serve on a church committee or other task force, team, or issue-based group are particularly encouraged to attend. If you cannot attend the full event, please still come for as much time as you are able. Lunch will be provided, and child care can be arranged (contact Sarah Higginbotham to make a child care plan). So that we can efficiently plan lunch, [please RSVP here](#), no later than Tuesday, February 25. Please contact Moderator Phil Servello-Jones or Pastor Mike with any questions. See you there!



Save the Date: First Church Women's Retreat Saturday, May 3, 9:00 - 12:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

All who identify as women in the First Church community are invited to save the date of Saturday, May 3, for our annual Women's Retreat. This year, the focus will be on themes found in Robin Wall Kimmerer's new gem of a book [*The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*](#). While reading the book is neither required nor necessary, we would encourage reading the book, if you can. We have several copies of the book and will pass them around in the next few

months as needed/requested. Contact Alex (alex@steinert-evoy.com) or Sue (susanreynolds235@gmail.com) to learn more and borrow a book.



LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT

Mardi Gras Pancake Supper

Tuesday, March 4, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

All are warmly invited to our annual all-church pancake supper on Mardi Gras! Come celebrate with pancakes and maple syrup, a traditional sweet treat on the eve of the Lenten season. The children will decorate our “Alleluia” banner and bury it in the Sanctuary, where it will await its unveiling on Easter morning.

We’ll also hear a preview of our Lenten programs and formation opportunities. Pancakes will be provided; please bring fruit or breakfast meats (ready for heating or serving) to share. RSVP to [Sarah Higginbotham](#) so she can plan the pancake production.



Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, March 5, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Chapel and via livestream

On Ash Wednesday, we reflect on our origins in the dust, our brokenness, and our dependence on God. Through a liturgy of readings, song, and prayer, we gather together in the Spirit to acknowledge ashes as a sign of creation, mortality, repentance, and the Cross. Join us in person for our evening service with the imposition of ashes, or participate from home via our livestream.

Lent 2025: Wellsprings in the Wilderness

Each year the season of Lent begins with the story of Jesus spending 40 days in the wilderness, being tempted by “the Slanderer” (a.k.a. Satan) as Jesus begins his public teaching. “The wilderness” seems like a particularly poignant image for many of us these days, both in personal and public life. During this Lenten season, we will reflect on our experiences of wilderness and take hope that, even in the wilderness, there are wellsprings that sustain us. Because truth and truth tellers are one of those wellsprings, we’ll be blessed again by engaging with four powerful portraits from the [Americans](#)

[Who Tell the Truth](#) project. Come, and drink from wellsprings in the wilderness this Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday, March 5.





THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, February 17 - Church Office & Building Closed for Presidents Day Holiday

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

Tuesday, February 18

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

7:00 p.m. Beloved Community Meeting, via Zoom

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

7:30 p.m. *American Jezebel: The Story of Anne Hutchinson in Words and Music*, via Zoom

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

Wednesday, February 19

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

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

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

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

Thursday, February 20

6:30 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Hope for Peace & Justice in the Holy Land, via Zoom

Friday, February 21

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

Sunday, February 23

9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

9:30 a.m. Young Adults: Breakfast at Felipe's Taqueria, Harvard Square

10:00 a.m. Adult Formation: Discovery Team Conversation, Harter Room and via Zoom

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

11:20 a.m. Church School: Godly Play and Bible 101 classes, Library & The Well

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common

7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Four Centuries of First Church History, via Zoom

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

Have a church program or event to promote?

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



SCAN ME

scan for online bulletin

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

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

[@firstchurchcambridge](#) [/FirstChurchInCambridge](#) [/c/FirstChurchInCambridge](#)