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Installation & Ordination  
of Deacons  
February 23, 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  
1636 – 2025

### February 23, 2025

#### Liturgist

Rose Whaley

#### Preaching Today

Rev. Katie Omberg, *Bridge Area Conference Minister, NE Region, SNEUCC*

#### Leading Worship

Emma Mitchell, *Pastoral Associate*

Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*

Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*

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
- 9:30 a.m. Young Adults: Breakfast at Felipe's, Harvard Square
- 10:00 a.m. Adult Formation: Discovery Team Conversation, Harter Room & [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, The Landing & The Well
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common, with Newcomers Gathering
- 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](http://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](mailto: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

Piece d'Orgue

J. S. Bach

\*HYMN 26

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

\*GREETING

Rose Whaley

L: We gather to worship together,

**C: different people, different lives, different histories,**

L: yet all children of the same Parent,

**C: created lovingly by the Source of all life!**

L: We gather to reconnect with one another,

**C: different people, different lives, different histories,**

L: yet all disciples of one Teacher:

**C: Jesus, the Word made flesh, dwelling among us.**

L: We gather with different joys and sorrows, different hopes and fears,

**C: different people, different lives, different histories,**

L: yet one people with one God, one faith, one baptism.

**C: Let us open ourselves to the presence of God at work in us, among us,  
and through us, as we worship God together today.**

## WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Know That God Loves You

Carson Cooman

## CONFESSING

### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

### SILENCE

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray together:

**All: God of grace, in a few moments we will again hear  
some of the most surprising and challenging words of Jesus:**

**“Love your enemies; do well by those who hate you.”**

**We confess that we have rarely mustered the faithfulness  
to follow this teaching.**

**We are not even very good at knowing**

*\*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.*

who our enemies are, no less how to love them.  
Give us the grace, O God, to be open  
to just how odd this teaching is,  
so odd that it may well make us odd in this world.  
Trusting in our loving teacher, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

## DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

### \*GREETING OF PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you!  
C: **And also with you!**

### \*HYMN 27

Now Thank We All Our God

### 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.*

## ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF DEACONS

### INVITATION

Emma Mitchell

### CANDIDATES' PROMISES

Mike Solberg

### \*CONGREGATION'S PROMISES

L: Do you affirm these Deacons' gifts of care and leadership?  
**All: We do.**  
L: Will you receive, respect, and respond to their ministry among you?  
**All: We will.**  
L: Will you uphold and enfold them and all the Deacons of this church with your prayer and gratitude?  
**All: We will.**

### THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

*The laying on of hands is an ancient practice by which, through human touch, the Holy Spirit consecrates ("sets apart") and confirms persons called to particular ministries in a community. It is also a sign that these leaders stand in a long and living line of servants who have been called from within their communities for this same ministry.*

## ORDINATION PRAYER AND DECLARATION

### INSTALLATION PRAYER

L: Let us pray:

**All: We welcome you in this ministry with hope,  
and we install you in joy!  
Trust God, seek the Spirit's consolation,  
love this congregation with all your hearts,  
serve, forbear, witness, and lead,  
in the name of the good and gracious God. Amen.**

### 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

Luke 6:27-38

#### SERMON

What Is Grace?

Katie Omberg

#### \*HYMN (insert)

Christ, Your Words of Love Confound Us

*see page 5*

### 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, 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

Down to the River to Pray

Gospel song, arr. R.Lee

## \*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 477

God of Grace and God of Glory

## \*BENEDICTION

## VOLUNTARY

Pedal-Exercitum

J. S. Bach



### 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 with the QR code.

OPENING HYMN

26

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

1. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the God of cre - a - tion!  
 2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous-ly reign - eth,  
 3. Praise to the Lord, who doth pros-per thy work and de-fend thee;  
 4. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the God of cre - a - tion!

Sing, my soul, prais-ing the source of thy health and sal - va - tion!  
 shel-ters thee un - der-neath wings, yea, so gen - tly sus-tain - eth!  
 sure-ly great good-ness and mer - cy here dai - ly at - tend thee.  
 All that hath life and breath, sing out thy heart's ju - bi - la - tion!

All ye who hear, now to God's tem - ple draw near;  
 Hast thou not seen how thy de - sires e'er have been  
 Pon - der a - new what the Al - might-y can do,  
 Let the A - men sound from God's peo - ple a - gain:

join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 grant - ed in what God or - dain - eth?  
 who with great love doth be - friend thee.  
 join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion.

WORDS: Joachim Neander, 1680; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.

MUSIC: *Erneuertem Gesangbuch*, Stralsund, 1665; harm. *The Chorale Book for England*, 1863

LOBE DEN HERREN

14 14.478

Now Thank We All Our God

1. Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voic - es,  
 2. O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,  
 3. All praise and thanks to God al - might - y now be giv - en;

who won-drous things hath done, in whom this world re - joic es,  
 with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,  
 to God, the three - in - one, who reigns in high - est heav - en,

who, from our moth - ers' arms, hath blessed us on our way  
 and keep us in all grace, and guide us when per - plexed,  
 the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heaven a - dore,

with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.  
 and free us from all ills in this world and the next.  
 for thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

WORDS: Martin Rinkart, 1636; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt.  
 MUSIC: Melody, Johann Crüger, 1647

NUN DANKET  
 67.67.66.66



SERMON HYMN

# Christ, Your Words Of Love Confound Us



1.Christ, your words of love con - found us, ev - en as we give you  
2.Make us mind - ful: love is ac - tion, not a feel - ing that up -  
3.Faced with those who seek to hurt\_\_ us, make us con - fi - dent and  
4.If we love just those who love\_\_ us, where's the giv - ing? Where's the



praise, for the les - sons that you teach us seem so far from this world's  
lifts. In each dai - ly sit - u - a - tion, love's the great - est of all  
free: you don't call us to be help - less, but to stand with dig - ni -  
grace? Ev - en sin - ners try to do\_\_ this; they have friends that they em -



ways. How can we love those who hate us? How can we love en - e -  
gifts. It's the wis - er, strong - er per - son who will break the chain of  
ty. Lord, when oth - ers are de - mand - ing, may we know they mat - ter  
brace. May we do, Lord, un - to oth - ers as we'd have them al - so



mies? What of peo - ple who ab - use\_\_ us? How can we love ev - en these?  
hate. Love can ush - er in re - demp - tion; love can make a peo - ple great.  
more than our mon - ey or pos - ses - sions. May we share, not keep - ing score.  
do. You have shown us: Love is ac - tion. May we love, and make things new.

Tune: BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D ("God Whose Giving Knows No Ending")  
The Sacred Harp, 1844; attributed to Benjamin Franklin White

Biblical Reference: Luke 6:27-38; Matthew 5:38-48; I Corinthians 13

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Email: [carolynshymns@gmail.com](mailto:carolynshymns@gmail.com) New Hymns: [www.carolynshymns.com](http://www.carolynshymns.com)

CLOSING HYMN

477

God of Grace and God of Glory

1. God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple  
 2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us scorn your Christ, as -  
 3. Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to  
 4. Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your power; now ful - fill your church - 's sto - ry; bring its bud to  
 sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us, free our hearts to  
 your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness, rich in things and  
 we de - plore; let the search for your sal - va - tion be our glo - ry

glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.  
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.  
 lest we miss your heav'n - ly goal, lest we miss your heav'n - ly goal.  
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

WORDS: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930, alt.  
 MUSIC: John Hughes, 1907

CWM RHONDDA  
 87.87.877

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Susan Ohman as she recovers from surgery to repair a broken knee.
- 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 and other complications following childbirth. Anna is now recovering at home after surgery.
- We pray for Phil Servello-Jones and his family as they mourn the loss of his grandmother Rev. Pat Robbennolt, who died peacefully last week in Pleasant Hill, TN, at age 93. She served many UCC churches across the country for over 65 years.
- 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 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



### **Young Adults: Breakfast at Felipe's**

**Today, 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](mailto:youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org)

### **Discovery Team Conversation: The Significance of Church Size**

**Today, 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. Today, 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.



### **Newcomers Gathering**

**Today at Coffee Hour, 12:15 p.m.**

### **Hastings Common**

Feeling new here at First Church? Come join us for a casual newcomers' meet-and-greet at Coffee Hour after worship. Come meet other folks who are new, connect with staff and a few members of the church, ask any

questions you might have, and enjoy coffee and snacks! We'll meet up in Hastings Common after the service.

### **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.](#)



## COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH

### Men's Breakfast

**Saturday, March 1, 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)



### 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 this Tuesday, February 25**. Please contact Moderator Phil Servello-Jones or Pastor Mike with any questions. See you there!

### Discovery Team Conversations

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

**Harter Room and via Zoom**

Join these monthly conversations with our Discovery Team as we prepare ourselves for our upcoming search for a new Senior Minister. On March 2 the focus will be worship. What is most important to you in worship? What qualities and priorities of a future pastor would be a good match for worship at First Church? The topic for April 6 is TBD. All are warmly invited to participate! Each person's contributions to the conversation will be important in our discovery and discernment process. Child care will be provided for each 10 o'clock hour.



## COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH



### **GBIO: 3 Ways to Put Our Faith in Action**

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) unites Boston congregations to work for the common good.

There are three ways, right now, that First Church can support our partners in this work:

- 1. Share testimony.** 20 years ago, GBIO was part of the creation of health reforms in Massachusetts that became the model of the Affordable Care Act. If you rely on MassHealth/Medicaid, your testimony can help protect it. You can submit a story [here](#).
- 2. Deepen relationships with other Cambridge congregations.** Come to a Cambridge/Somerville listening session on Tuesday, February 25, at Reservoir Church at 7:00 p.m.
- 3. Come to the March 3 GBIO Delegates Assembly** in Boston to learn about and commit to growing our collective power, by strengthening our congregations.

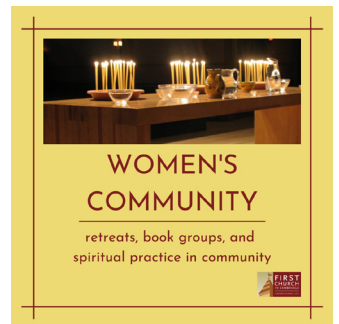
Part of GBIO's mission is leadership development. If you're wondering "what can I do when there's so much chaos?" GBIO is a great place to start.

Email: [gbio@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:gbio@firstchurchcambridge.org) or talk to Will Erickson, Phil Jones or Casey Marsh to learn more and RSVP for an event!

### **Women's Community Book Group**

**Tuesday, March 18, 6:30 - 7:45 p.m., via Zoom**

Please join us for our March book discussion as we share our thoughts about James McBride's [\*The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store\*](#). Set in a neighborhood of immigrant Jews and African-Americans in a Pennsylvania town, the novel is a fascinating whodunit that contemplates how two very different groups of people learn to value and love one another. We look forward to hearing your reflections.



### **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](mailto:alex@steinert-evoy.com)) or Sue ([susanreynolds235@gmail.com](mailto:susanreynolds235@gmail.com)) to learn more and borrow a book.



## FIRST CHURCH NEWS



### Deacons Offering Home Communion

In 2024 the Board of Deacons spent time focused on Communion, its theology, and its place in the life of the church. They developed a Service of Communion, similar to the one used monthly at First Church, and they now extend an offer to bring it into the homes of the members and friends of First Church. If you wish to receive such a visit, please contact: [deacons@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:deacons@firstchurchcambridge.org)

### Youth Greeters Wanted

The Deacons would like to offer an opportunity for more generations to participate in providing a warm welcome into our church home! We are asking for youth volunteers to help with greeting on Sundays. If your child (age 7 and up) would like to participate in greeting at the beginning of worship on a Sunday morning, please use this form to sign up. Questions? Contact: [deacons@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:deacons@firstchurchcambridge.org)



### Building Use at First Church

Our building is used by many music, dance, and non-profit groups mornings, afternoons, and evenings, seven days a week, but we have openings and would like to share it even more! Do you know of a person or group that might be interested in our space? We can house anything from conferences to birthday parties, small groups to big concerts, recurring or one time events. Our kitchen is also available! Please consider the church for a group you are connected to, or for your own use, and suggest us to others. More information can be found on our website at: [firstchurchcambridge.org/weddings-building-use/](https://firstchurchcambridge.org/weddings-building-use/)

### 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 here.](#)



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



#### 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.



## 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.



## WIDER COMMUNITY EVENT



### ***American Jezebel: The Trial of Anne Hutchinson***

**An original opera by James Kallembach**

**Saturday, March 1 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Sanders Theatre at Harvard University**

Politics, sex, religion, and power converge in the turbulent Massachusetts Bay Colony, culminating in the 1637 trial of Puritan Anne Hutchinson. In a gripping new opera by James Kallembach, this dramatic chapter of Boston's history comes to life, delving into the roots of America's unique political DNA. At its heart is the clash between midwife and spiritual leader Anne Hutchinson and Governor John Winthrop—a battle over public versus private, common good versus individual freedom, and law versus home.

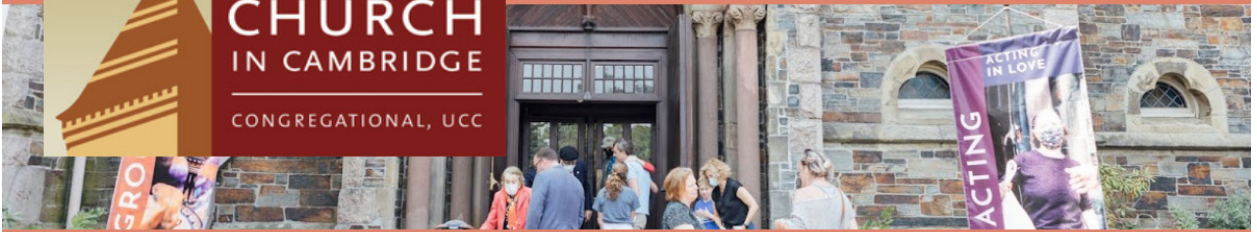
Commissioned by the Harvard Choruses, this world premiere will be conducted by Dr. Hana Cai in a semi-staged concert performance. Soprano Sarah Joyce Cooper stars as Anne Hutchinson, with baritone Sumner Thompson as John Winthrop, and a talented cast of performers bringing this powerful story to the stage.

Tickets are available through the [Harvard Box Office](#).



# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## Monday, February 24

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
- 6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Care Group for the Caregivers, via Zoom

## Tuesday, February 25

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

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

## Wednesday, February 26

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

## Friday, February 28

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

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

## Saturday, March 1

- 8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast, Harter Room
- 9:00 a.m. Leadership Retreat, MJH

## Sunday, March 2

- 9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 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: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Hastings Common
- 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](#).

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