



FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Congregational 1633-1636
United Church of Christ
Garden and Mason Streets
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**and mend the harm we have done
to ourselves, our neighbor, and our world.
Help us to live knee-deep in grace,
our hearts alive to our truest names—
beloved daughters, cherished sons,
siblings in the spirit!**

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

*HYMN C-23

Come All You Thirsty

SHARING IN BAPTISM

INVITATION

THE BAPTISMAL VOWS

THE CONGREGATION'S PROMISES

- L: Jesus Christ welcomes everyone
who desires new life
into the faith and family of Christ.
Do you who witness this sacrament
promise this child your love, support and care?
- C: We do!**
- L: Will you help her grow in faith
and witness with her to the love and mercy of Christ?
- C: We will, with the help of God!**
- L: Do you renew your own promises
to live in the freedom of Christ, and resist the power of evil?
- C: We do, with the help of God!**

BLESSING OF THE WATER

THE BAPTISM

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*FINAL BLESSING

L: Sisters and brothers, let us ask God for a blessing!

**All: Holy God, Creator of us all,
give to this child strength for life's journey,
courage in the time of trial,
the joy of faith, the freedom of love,
and the comfort of everlasting life.
And may the grace of Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all forevermore. Amen.**

PRESENTATION

All children from Preschool to 7th grade are now invited to leave for church school. Teachers will meet children at the side door or in the narthex to accompany them to their classrooms. Parents can meet their children in Lindsay Chapel (through Margaret Jewett Hall and to the left) after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Isaiah 43:1-7

RESPONSIVE PSALM 29

L: Ascribe to God, O heavenly beings, ascribe to God glory and strength.
Ascribe to God the glory of the Holy One's name; worship God in holy splendor.

**C: The voice of God is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters.**

L: The voice of God is powerful; the voice of God is full of majesty.

**C: The voice of God breaks the cedars; God breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

L: The voice of God flashes forth flames of fire.

The voice of God shakes the wilderness;
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

**C: The voice of God causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare;
and in temple all say, "Glory!"**

L: God sits enthroned over the flood; God sits enthroned to reign forever.

**C: May God give strength to the people!
May the God bless the people with peace!**

READING

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

SERMON

Dan Smith

*HYMN 228

O Holy Dove of God Descending

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Higginbotham

PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

Taj Smith

L: God be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

L: Let us pray....(*silence, intercessions and the Lord's Prayer*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Please pray this prayer and address God in words most meaningful to your heart.)

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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

OFFERTORY

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Traditional Carol

DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

To God, all glorious heav'nly light,

To Christ revealed in earthly night,

To God, the Spirit, now we raise

Our joyful songs of thankful praise! Amen.

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 414

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Benediction

Beverly Taylor

The Word is flesh and dwells among us! Glory to God in the highest!

VOLUNTARY

Canzona

Dieterich Buxtehude

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, we are thankful that you are with us today, and we hope that you will stay for a bit after worship for refreshments and conversation. First Church is an open and affirming, just peace congregation of the United Church of Christ. If you'd like to know more about us, please introduce yourself to one of the ministers after church and explore our website at www.firstchurchcambridge.org.

Large print bulletins and assistive listening devices are available.

Please ask a greeter for assistance.

Children of all ages are welcome in our worship. Picture books, children's Bibles, and activity packets can be found in the Children's Book Corner located by the door to the parish building (to the right of the chancel). Children may visit the Book Corner at any point during worship. Nursery care for infants and toddlers is located through that door and down the hallway (up four stairs to the door on the right). Fussy babies and their caregivers are invited to the Hastings Room, just across the hall from that same door, where the service is broadcast through speakers.

PREACHING TODAY is Dan Smith, Senior Minister. Assisting with worship are Taj Smith, Ministerial Intern and Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship & Arts. First Church Deacon Lindsay Miller is assisting with the baptism. Peter Sykes, Director of Music, is playing the organ and directing the choir. Our liturgist today is Sara Hendren.

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED Please pray for our nation as we move forward from President Obama's executive order addressing gun violence. Please hold our nation in your prayers as we confront an epidemic of fear and violence against Muslims and persons of color. Pray for the peace of Israel and Palestine in the face of continued violence. Please pray for relief for migrants and refugees from Syria and other regions. Please keep in your prayers people struggling with grief, illness, addiction or mental health concerns, job related transitions, marital or relationship troubles, or loneliness.

Portions of the **YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED** section of the bulletin are omitted in the online version to protect the privacy of those mentioned. To find out who we are praying for this week, please contact the church offices at parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org or by calling 617-547-2724.

TODAY'S HAPPENINGS

RACE AT FIRST CHURCH, Today and Sunday, January 17 at 10 a.m., Hastings Room We make a strong statement with our “Black Lives Matter” sign, but has First Church always taken a principled stand on race and racism? Join us today at 10:00 a.m., when Dave Kidder will lead a discussion on where First Church stood on race in America during the first 250 years of its existence. Then, on January 17, Karen Anne Zee will lead an exploration of First Church’s more recent history on race. Also in the January 17 session Dan Smith, with Karen Anne and Dave, will facilitate a conversation guided by two questions: what does this history mean for us now, and where do we go from here? We look forward to a lively discussion. Please join us!

GUEST SPEAKER ALEXIS TOLIVER, OF BLACK LIVES MATTER Today at 12:30 p.m., Hastings Room Whether you’ve been deeply involved in the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, following it in the media, or are simply looking for a general introduction, join us today at 12:30 p.m. in the Hastings Room, where Alexis Toliver, of Black Lives Matter, Cambridge, will speak about how the movement is developing both locally and nationally. Come learn about BLM strategies and priorities. We hope this informative session will spur further conversation about how we might want to be involved as individuals and as a church community. Questions? Contact Dan Smith, dsmith@firstchurchcambridge.org, David Kidder, david.e.kidder@gmail.com, or Jean Bellow, jean_bellow@comcast.net.

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING FILM SCREENING Today, 5:00-8:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall Join Massachusetts Peace Action, Earth Stewardship at First Church Cambridge, and others for a screening and discussion of this new documentary, based on the Naomi Klein book of the same name, that weaves together threads of climate, racial and economic injustice and the movements already rising for a new, non-extractive economy. Today: 5:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. in Margaret Jewett Hall, starting with 5:00 p.m. potluck and conversation, 6:00 p.m. film screening, and 7:30 p.m. small group discussions, ending at 8:30. Cost is a donation. Please RSVP to help us plan numbers at <http://masspeaceaction.org/events/tce-jan10>. Snow Date: January 24. If in doubt, call 617-354-2169.

NIGHT SONG: SOLEMN MYSTICAL COMPLINE Tonight at 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary Join us for these contemplative and spiritually transporting candle-lit experiences of choral literature, ancient and contemporary chant, and instrumental music. There is no spoken word, no sermon—just the opportunity to experience the Divine through music, being still, and silent meditation. Tonight: Gregorian chant from the Liber Usualis, Tritone plainchant setting for compline by Daryl Bichel, Psalm 4 set by Patricia Van Ness Motets by Gesualdo, Marenzio, and Victoria Sung by Bebeficia lucis, the ensemble of men Andrew Sheranian, director with Ben Schwendener, piano, Neil Leonard, soprano saxophone and bass clarinet.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ON RACE? Sunday, January 17 at 12:30 p.m., Hastings Room In this last of our series of four sessions — the two 10:00 Hours and the two 12:30 events on January 10 and 17 — drawing on the insights from our Black Lives Matters discussions, members of First Church's Beloved Community will facilitate a conversation guided by two questions: what does this history mean for us now, and where do we go from here? We look forward to a lively discussion. Please join us!

NEWCOMERS LUNCH Sunday, January 17, McKenzie Library Interested in learning more about First Church? About our history? Or our community? Or our denomination? Or our ministries? Interested in meeting other folks who are new to First Church? Karin Case, Karen McArthur, and other church leaders will host a Newcomers Lunch following Morning Worship on Sunday, January 17. Please RSVP to Karen McArthur, karenmc@firstchurchcambridge.org, if you'd like to attend. Also if you are feeling ready to join First Church, mark your calendar: our **next Joining Sunday** is planned for **January 31** during Morning Worship.

CITY MISSION SOCIETY MLK DAY CHOIR Saturday, January 16 at 10 a.m., 12th Baptist Church As it has for the past few years, City Mission Society is organizing a choir from various congregations as one of the service options for the MLK Day of Service. If past experience holds, the choir will learn and sing one or two gospel pieces, under the direction of an experienced gospel music director. The performance last year was amazing -- a large, racially mixed choir that learned and skillfully performed some great gospel (from memory), after only a couple of hours of practice. If you would like to experiment with a different musical culture and be part of a joyous celebration of Dr. King's birthday, please let Dave Kidder know (david.e.kidder@gmail.com; 617-924-7236). Members of the choir will gather between 9:30 and 10:00 a.m. at 12th Baptist Church, on Warren Street in Roxbury, on Saturday, January 16. Practice will be from 10 to 12, followed by lunch. The choir will participate in the Celebration and Reflection, which brings together all the service participants from sites all over the city, from 1:30 to 2:30. Each participant in the choir is asked to contribute \$20. Names of participants are due by January 12. We can also plan for car pooling between now and the 16th. Questions: ask Dave. Hope to have an FCC representation on the 16th! (NOTE: the date in last week's Bulletin was incorrect; the correct date is January 16).

FAMILY NIGHT RESUMES Tuesday, January 19 at 5:30 p.m., Sage Hall Our schedule of Tuesday night family suppers will resume Tuesday, January 19. Pasta and sauce are provided; you are invited to bring a dish to share. Salads, veggies, meatballs, garlic bread, or desserts are most welcome. On **February 2** we'll mark **Candlemas** (40 days after Christmas) with a candle craft led by Nancy Cyr. On February 9 we'll host our annual Mardi Gras Pancake Supper (see Mardi Gras announcement in this *EVENT* for details). In accordance with the usual bi-weekly schedule, there will not be Family Nights on January 26 or February 16. Stayed tuned to the bulletin and check *EVENT* for information about Family Night during Lent.

FIRST CHURCH HISTORY 101, Sundays, January 24 and 31 Why does our church have two founding years — 1633-1636? And just what is our connection to that once very small college across Cambridge Common? What were the theological differences that led Cambridge and many

Three ways to celebrate Dr. King's Birthday with others from First Church

Saturday, January 16, 2016 gather at 8:15 AM in front of First Church to participate in the City Mission Society day of service and learning. Carpools will leave no later than 8:30. To register, call Alice Kidder at 617-276-6227. \$20 suggested donation to the City Mission Society. This cost can be waived if necessary. Need a ride? Can give a ride? Call Alice Kidder. Last year we helped out with cleanup at the Mather Elementary School in Dorchester.

Monday, January 18, 2016, carpools will leave First Church at 9:15 AM for the 25th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Brunch. Tickets cost \$15, and the proceeds of the brunch will be given for books to local students attending college. The brunch will feature talks by Rev. Howard McLendon of the Concord Baptist Church, and First Church member, Karlene Griffiths Sekou. The brunch takes place at Prince Hall, 24 Washington Street, Dorchester MA To let us know you're planning on coming, please notify Ann McCann at 617 924-1580.

Monday, January 18, 2016, join volunteers from Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries at the 6th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Interfaith Service. Levin Ballroom, Usdan Student Center, Brandies University, 415 South Street, Waltham MA 02453. 10 AM to 3:30 PM. To register, sign up with <http://2016mlkjr.eventbrite.com>. You will be assembling nutritious meal packages which will be given to local food pantries.

Please remember to make this celebration a day "on," not just a day "off."

other towns to have a "First Church" and a "First Parish"? What did First Church look like before 1872, when our current "meetinghouse" was built? Join Dan Smith and some of our resident First Church historians for a "starter course" in First Church's long and robust past. Consider it preparation for our 380th Anniversary, February 1!

2016 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON Sunday, January 31 at 12:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall Come one and all to the 380th Annual Meeting of First Church on Sunday, January 31, following Morning Worship! A delicious luncheon will lead into our meeting. We will celebrate another very full year of ministry, honor and thank one another for gifts discerned and shared, celebrate our outgoing and incoming leaders, and share plans and visions. We will also pray and sing!

OUT OF MY MIND: A MULTIGENERATIONAL BOOK & BIBLE STUDY WITH THE MIDLERS, Sunday, February 7 Join the Middlers, our 5th-7th grade class, for a discussion of Sharon M. Draper's middle reader novel *Out of My Mind*. Explore the compelling story of 11-year-old Melody. She's the smartest girl in her class, but nobody knows it because of her inability to speak and control her body. Learn how the Middlers studied the novel side-by-side with stories of friendship from the Bible. Copies of the novel will be available for a donation of \$5 starting January 17.

THE FRIDAY CAFÉ HAS A NEW WEBSITE! Check it out: thefriday.cafe. Learn about our community ministry with and for homeless neighbors. Sign up to participate or to receive our weekly e-news, and find out how you can support this vital ministry.



Greater Boston
Interfaith Organization

A Day of Humility & Unity
Wednesday, January 20, 2016

GBIO invites Greater Boston to join in a day of fasting, prayer and humility. Fasting is an honored practice of our many faith traditions, with a notable place in the history of our American democracy. On two occasions, President Abraham Lincoln called the nation to a day of fasting and prayers to restore “a divided and suffering country.”

Participants are invited to break the fast together with a meal at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, 100 Malcolm X Blvd., on Wednesday evening, 5:45-8:00 pm. This will be a time for prayer, fellowship, good food and recommitment to work together in God’s call to justice.

Limited Space: To RSVP please email parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org

Conversation Series
Undivided: Rejecting the Rhetoric of Otherness

In the charged rhetoric of our times, the demonization of the other – from Mexican immigrants to Muslims to other marginalized minorities– has become commonplace. GBIO invites congregants from all of our faith traditions to four diverse houses of worship, to develop relationships, learn about each other’s traditions and affirm our shared values and common humanity.

1st Conversation at ISBCC – 1/20 from 5:45–8 pm

2nd Conversation at St. Katharine Drexel – 2/4 from 7–9 pm

3rd Conversation at Temple Israel – 2/11 from 7-9 pm

4th Conversation at Bethel AME – 3/15 from 7-9 pm

In case of any cancellations due to snow or otherwise, please hold alternative dates of 2/25 & 3/3 for conversations at a place to be determined, from 7-9 pm.

The Week Ahead

Sunday, January 10

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 9:45 a.m. Community Gathering Time, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
- 10:00 a.m. History of Race at First Church, Hastings Room
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Sacrament of Baptism, Dan Smith, preaching
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Classes (presch. - Grade 7)
- 12:30 p.m. Learning about Black Lives Matter, Hastings Room
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

Wednesday, January 13

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Dan Smith's office
- 7:00 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, Dan Smith's office

Thursday, January 14

- 7:45 p.m. Choir rehearsal, Hastings Room

Friday, January 15

- 1:00 p.m. Friday Café, MJH

Sunday, January 17

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 9:45 a.m. Community Gathering Time, MJH
- 10:00 a.m. History of Race at First Church, Hastings Room
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, MLK Celebration, Karin Case, preaching
- 12:30 p.m. Newcomers Lunch, McKenzie Library
- 12:30 p.m. Learning about Black Lives Matter, Hastings Room
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

Monday, January 18

- 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Class, Room 22

The Staff of First Church in Cambridge

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