

SEASON OF EPIPHANY

FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Congregational 1633-1636 United Church of Christ Garden and Mason Streets Cambridge, Massachusetts FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL 384 YEARS ON THE WAY 1 6 3 6 - 2 0 2 0

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE... Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

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.

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, up the ramp, and through the fire door. Fussy babies and their caregivers are invited to use Hastings Common, through the same door.

Large-print bulletins and assistive listening devices are available.

WORSHIP LEADERS
February 16, 2020

Preaching TodayKate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach

Leading Worship Lexi Boudreaux, Pastoral Associate Carlyle Stewart, Pastoral Associate

LiturgistBrent Coffin

Playing the Organ and Directing the Choir Peter Sykes, Music Director

The photograph on the bulletin cover is by Gaylen Morgan.

FIRST	CHURCH	I IN CAP	MBRIDGE	

February 16, 2020

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY *Christe, qui lux es et dies*

Samuel Scheidt

*HYMN 3 God of Abraham and Sarah

*GREETING Brent Coffin

L: Siblings in the Spirit, come into this place of mercy and rest!

C: Come, you who thirst for a deeper life and a fairer world.

L: Come, you who hunger for justice, and you who seek healing.

C: Here, God offers grace and peace to us and to the world!

L: Here, God offers light for a new horizon and hope for a new dawn!

C: Then let us sing the light together, pray the light together,

and do the works of light together for the world God loves. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM King of Glory, King of Peace

Roland Martin

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

All: Merciful God, you have given light to the world in Jesus Christ,

but we have preferred to live in darkness.

Your justice protects the weak and vulnerable,

yet we seek privilege and power.

Your righteousness redeems the poor and needy,

yet we seek wealth and possessions.

Your peace upholds the oppressed and defenseless,

yet we seek the security of weapons and walls.

Forgive us, and lead us to true repentance,

that we may trust you in all things;

through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

^{*}You are invited to stand. Hymns proceeded 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.

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

L: Friends, hear this good news:

God's love lights our way to a new dawn, and God's mercy is working in our hearts even now.

The light of Christ and the peace of God be with you always.

C: And also with you!

L: Let us share this good news and greet one another now with a sign of Christ's peace.

*GREETING OF PEACE

*HYMN 250

Here in This Place

The Church School (pre-K - 7th grade) is now invited to leave for a Creative Arts Project. Susie Longfield and parent volunteers will meet children at the side door to accompany them to Margaret Jewett Hall. Parents can meet their children in Margaret Jewett Hall after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 112

- L: Praise God! Happy are those who fear our God, who greatly delight in the commandments of the Most High.
- C: Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.
- L: Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.
- C: They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.
- L: It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

 For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.
- C: They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in God.
- L: Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.
- C: They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor.

READING Mark 5:1-20

SERMON Kate Layzer

HYMN 374

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS Carlyle Stewart

PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Lexi Boudreaux

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.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY A Shelter in the Time of Storm

V. Charlesworth & I. Saukey

*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 477 God of Grace and God of Glory

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE Benediction (in memoriam) Larry Hill/Peter Sykes

Glory to the Creator, who gives us life; glory to Christ, the servant of love, and glory to the Spirit, who empowers us forward.

VOLUNTARY Christe, qui lux es et dies Samuel Scheidt

YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED

- For the 14 men who are finding care and residence in our First Church Shelter and for the guests of the Friday Cafe. Through the winter season, may they know warmth, compassion, and companionship.
- For all those affected by the spread of the coronavirus in Wuhan, China, and around the world. We pray for healing and for strong, swift leadership in containment efforts.
- We pray for those who seek sanctuary in houses of worship around the country, including our partner University Lutheran Church in Harvard Square. We pray also for all who are working for a just and compassionate future for immigrants and asylum seekers.
- We offer up our sadness, fears, and grief, and pray for God's strength as we combat the realities of the climate crisis, including sea-level rise, coral reef destruction, storms, wildfires, and climate migration. May God awaken and empower us and our leaders to take bold steps, personally and politically, to care for God's creation and for the poor around the world who are most immediately affected by our inaction.

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 AT FIRST CHURCH

NEW MEMBERS GATHERING Today, 12:30 p.m., Harter Room Newcomers, new members, and those who have joined First Church within the past few years are encouraged to participate in this session, where we will talk about the upcoming spiritual practices in Lent and how members can go about building and deepening relationships throughout the season. This will prepare us to begin our New Member Partnerships Program after Lent, a chance for newer friends to experience regular relationship-building and communication with partners about matters of Faith and Church life. Partners will also serve as guides and liaisons for new members as they acclimate to First Church.

NIGHT SONG Today, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary Cap your Sunday and start your week with this beautiful, contemplative, candle-lit musical service that includes choral music, ancient and contemporary chant, and instrumental music.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LENT Next Sunday, February 23, 10:00 a.m., Harter Room Join Lexi and Carlyle for a session of preparation on the Sunday before the season of Lent begins (February 26). We'll be offering a variety of opportunities to help our church gain a better understanding of our faith and the significance of this holy season, while strengthening our connections with one another. We will have the opportunity to deepen our relationships with each other through prayer partners and house churches. We will explore the theological significance of Jesus' ministry, and the events leading up to his crucifixion through weekly Bible study, starting with the Gospel of John; and in our 10 O'clock Hour sessions, we will read, discuss, and reflect on James Cone's *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, which will provide us with a new vision of the cross and how it relates to oppressed communities throughout the world. Come learn about these opportunities in advance of the season.

MARDI GRAS PANCAKE SUPPER Tuesday, February 25, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall All are invited to our annual all-church pancake supper on Mardi Gras, Tuesday, February 25, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Come celebrate with pancakes and maple syrup, a traditional sweet treat on the eve of the Lenten season. We'll decorate our "Alleluia" banner and bury it in the Sanctuary, where it will await its unveiling on Easter morning. 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.

If you would like us to include a prayer request in the bulletin, please contact Dan Smith by Tuesday morning, or fill out a prayer request card found in your pew.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS AT FIRST CHURCH

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP: FAITH ON TAP AND FRESH BREWED FAITH The Young Adults' group has another Faith on Tap night and another Fresh Brewed Faith morning: **February 24, 7:30 p.m.**, at The Burren in Somerville; and **February 27, 8:00 a.m.**, at S&S Deli in Inman Square. Questions? Contact Phil Jones: p.robbennolt.jones@gmail.com.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SUGGESTION BOX As part of its preparation for Earth Week (April 19-26), the Environmental Stewardship group has placed a suggestion box (complete with paper and pens) in Hastings Common. The group invites everyone to participate by offering written suggestions such as prayers, poems, thoughts, ideas, or reflections, expressing their views and feelings about nature, as well as possible threats posed by the climate crisis. Positive or negative, celebratory or questioning, we'd like to hear from you! Contributions may be either signed or anonymous. Keep in mind that they may play a role in the church's Earth Day services in April.

THURSDAYS AT FIRST CHURCH

PRAYING THE PSALMS: DAILY PRACTICE & WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY Thursday mornings, ongoing, 7:15 - 8:45 a.m., Library We invite you to read, pray, and reflect on one Psalm each day (we began with Psalm 1 on Dec. 1, and are reading Psalms 78 through 84 this week). For the weekly Bible study, we gather for coffee or tea at 7:15 a.m. most Thursdays, beginning with a time of soulful check-in promptly at 7:30. We then dive into some reflection about the Psalms of the week, sharing what we are learning about maintaining a daily spiritual practice, alone and together. Feel free to drop in when you can, or plan to make it a regular part of your week. Our weekly study will continue this week on **Thursday, February 20**, in the Library. Questions? E-mail Dan or Brent (brentbcoffin@gmail.com).

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY Thursday evenings, 6:30 p.m., Harter Room Weekly Bible study sessions every Thursday have begun, with the reading of the first five chapters of the Gospel of John. We prayerfully engage with Scripture to understand the theological themes within this text. What is the theological significance of Jesus' presence and earthly ministry as the "Word became flesh," and how can we deepen our understanding of this mystery? We study not merely as an academic discipline, but with the desire to know God more intimately. These sessions throughout the month of February are preparing us to enter the Lenten season. Questions? Contact Carlyle Stewart.

MAKING A WAY OUT OF NO WAY — SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LENT

Worship. Gather. Study. Pray.

WORSHIP

Ash Wednesday Services, February 26, 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary Palm Sunday, April 5, 11:00 a.m., Multigenerational Morning Worship Maundy Thursday Evening Worship, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary Good Friday Evening Worship, April 10, 7:30 p.m., Chapel Easter, April 12, 11:00 a.m. Joyous, Multigenerational Morning Worship

GATHER

House Churches — Sign-up online! Soup and Bread at Church — Sundays, March 1 and 15, 12:30 p.m. Women's Retreat — Saturday, March 7, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Parsonage Soup Suppers — Wednesday, March 4, and Tuesday, March 31, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

STUDY

The Cross and the Lynching Tree Lenten Series — Sundays, March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 10:00 a.m. Weekly Bible Study — Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

PRAY

Prayer Partners for Lent — Sign-up online! Lenten Art Project — Sundays, March 1,8,15,22 and 29, Margaret Jewett Hall Praying with the Psalms — Thursdays, 7:30 a.m.

WORSHIP

ASH WEDNESDAY "ASHES TO GO" Wednesday, February 26, Morning Service, 7:30 - 8:00 a.m., and Evening Service, 7:30 p.m. On Ash Wednesday we will acknowledge our origins in the dust, our brokenness, and our dependence on God, and receive ashes as a sign of mortality. Join us for an evening Ash Wednesday service with the Imposition of Ashes at 7:30 p.m., in Lindsay Chapel. For those who cannot make the evening service, we will be holding a short morning service, 7:30 - 8:00 a.m., with the Imposition of Ashes at the back of the Sanctuary near the Narthex. Ashes to go will also be available, 8:00 - 8:30 a.m., in the same location.

MAKING A WAY OUT OF NO WAY — SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LENT

GATHER

HOUSE CHURCHES IN LENT The earliest Christian communities met in each other's homes to extend hospitality to one another, to pray, to tell stories, and to break bread. We are exploring this ancient way of gathering together as a community during the season of Lent. Groups will be encouraged to meet 2- 4 times and will be matched based on neighborhood and/or availability. Families with young children can be paired to allow for a group playdate at the gathering. If you have any questions or want more information, contact Lexi Boudreaux. Please sign up at this link to participate: https://forms.gle/HL3sMQMDpioymKDh7

WOMEN'S RETREAT IN LENT Saturday, March 7, 9:00-3:00 p.m., First Church in Cambridge Join us this year as we rest in some time for silence, explore creative expression, and enjoy a nourishing lunch, while making connections, old and new. Everyone is welcome! Whether you are new to First Church, have been here for decades, or somewhere in-between, this is a time for reflection, Lenten preparation, and being blessed by the gift of community. Come for all or part of the day. Your unique presence is cherished! Breakfast, lunch, and childcare will be provided (depending on expressed need). You are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and to bring a water bottle and something to write in! It's a retreat, after all! Questions? Please contact lexi@firstchurchcambridge.org or sign up at https://forms.gle/eZ3FYSqLkDR3JtrZ6

STUDY

EXPLORING THE CROSS AND THE LYNCHING TREE - A LENTEN STUDY Sundays in Lent, 10:00 a.m., Harter Room

The cross and the lynching tree are separated by nearly 2,000 years. One is the universal symbol of Christian faith; the other is the quintessential symbol of black oppression in America. Though both are symbols of death, one represents a message of hope and salvation, while the other signifies the negation of that message by white supremacy.

James Cone, a founder and leader of black liberation theology, introduces *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* with these provocative words. Join Lexi Boudreaux, Dan Smith and Carlyle Stewart for a 5-part series this Lent as we explore and respond to Cone's work and wonder together about what the meaning of the cross is for us. How does injustice in the world influence how we understand Jesus' death on the cross? Where do we find hope, and how is God calling us to make a way out of no way? Copies of the book will be available for purchase for a \$20 donation at church. Read the book if you have time, but come join the conversation regardless. You might also enjoy Dr. Cone discussing the book in an interview with Bill Moyers that can be found here: https://billmoyers.com/content/james-cone-on-the-cross-and-the-lynching-tree/

MAKING A WAY OUT OF NO WAY — SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LENT

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY continues through, led by Pastoral Associate Carlyle Stewart. See the description on page 6 under "Thursdays at First Church."

PRAY

PRAYER PARTNERS IN LENT Would you like to be assigned a prayer partner this Lenten season? Are you looking for a way to stay accountable to your Lenten commitments, but can't commit to coming to Cambridge more than you already do? Do you want to go deeper with members of our community, but aren't sure how? We are repeating a successful spiritual practice experiment from last year's Lenten season. We are offering to match interested individuals in our congregation to walk with each other as prayer partners during the Lenten season. More details are to come, but, in the meantime, if you have questions or would like to sign up, please be in touch with Lexi Boudreaux or go to this link: https://forms.gle/3dZo1p4wrv1t1M4t8

LENTEN ART PROJECT Sundays in Lent All are encouraged to participate in a multigenerational art project throughout the season of Lent. Beginning on March 1 in Margaret Jewett Hall, you will find a large piece of cloth with the outline of a road. Near the cloth will be a selection of fabric, scissors, yarn, and blunt fabric needles. As we explore our Lenten theme of "Making a Way Out of No Way," you are invited to sew a bit of fabric to the road. You may also want to add bits of fabric "sand" and "stones" alongside the road. Over the five Lenten Sundays in March, we will co-create our "way," incorporating the fabric pieces designed, placed, and sewn by members of our community. When you've added your pieces, you are welcome to take an actual stone from the bowl nearby, to keep as a tactile symbol of your participation in the project. The fabric art piece is designed to become a runner for our Communion table in the Sanctuary. We will "install" it on Palm Sunday, as we turn the corner into Holy Week, following Jesus' way into Jerusalem. We hope your experience of Lent will be enriched by this creative collaboration. Questions? Contact Lexi Boudreaux or Sarah Higginbotham.

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS continues through Lent, led by Brent Coffin and Dan Smith. See the description on page 6 under "Thursdays at First Church."

WIDER COMMUNITY EVENTS

SEEKING BEDROOM RENTAL IN HARVARD SQUARE A married couple connected to First Church is seeking to rent a bedroom with bathroom access Mondays-Fridays in the Harvard Square area, beginning March 23. If interested, please call 617-999-0308.

LICENSES FOR ALL - MAKE A CALL The Work and Family Mobility Act (H.3012) was voted favorably out of the state Joint Committee on Transportation on Thursday, February 6. This bill would enable all qualified state residents to apply for a standard Massachusetts driver's license, regardless of immigration status. Jobs With Justice is asking people to take action and call Speaker DeLeo's office (617-722-2500). Ask the Speaker to bring this bill to the floor! Massachusetts should be the next state to allow driver's licenses for all. It would join 15 other states, most recently New York and New Jersey, plus the District of Columbia that have passed similar legislation. Our immigrant neighbors need the freedom of mobility to work, to take care of their families, and to live their lives.

FUNDRAISER FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING Saturday, March 21, 7:00 p.m., Hibernian Hall, Watertown Dance all night to provide affordable housing! Clergy and Laity for Affordable Housing (CLAH) invites you to their spring dance, with the Magic of Motown performing. All proceeds will purchase construction materials, and fund the work of CLAH as they create new units and rebuild neighborhoods. Please see Alice Kidder for tickets, or email Phil Jones: p.robbennolt.jones@gmail.com

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN? You may submit notices of church-sponsored or community events to Sarah Higginbotham via email by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday in order to be considered for the following Sunday's bulletin.



Come to a GBIO In-District Meeting with your State Representative to advocate for Health Care Reform!

The 40+ congregations that make up GBIO are in the midst of a state legislative campaign to improve three aspects of our health care system:

- 1. Limiting the cost of prescription drugs (particularly those for chronic conditions)
- 2. Stronger parity requirements for mental health and substance abuse disorder
- 3. Eliminating surprise out-of-network billing

The Senate and Governor have both advanced strong bills around these issues, but the House has not. To change that, we've organized meetings with State Reps to let them know how much these issues matter to us, and to give them stories to take back to their leadership.

If you can, please come to the meeting with your legislator. If you can't, consider coming to a different meeting instead to show your support! And if you've got a personal story around these issues, we'd love to hear it.

If you are planning to come, please email: Phil Jones (p.robbennolt.jones@gmail.com) or Will Erickson (wericks2002@gmail.com).

Remaining Meetings

Monday, February 24, 6:30 p.m.
First Church Boston in the Back Bay
with Reps Livingstone and Michiewitz

Monday, February 24, 7:00 p.m. Beth El Temple Center in Belmont with Reps Garballey, Rogers and Day

Tuesday, February 25, 7:00 p.m.
Hancock Church in Lexington
with Reps Ciccolo, Gordon and Stanley

To find your Legislator: https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator

To learn more: www.gbio.org/health-care



DAN SMITH AND CARLYLE STEWART AMONG LEADERS OF MONTGOMERY PILGRIMAGE

Carlyle and Dan will join City Mission Boston and Old South Church in Boston in leading a pilgrimage to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. The purpose of this journey is to acknowledge the living legacy of white supremacy in our country, learn the history of white racial violence from Reconstruction to Jim Crow, and begin to appreciate the importance of resisting modern day racism and system injustice in our lives and community.

PILGRIMAGE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- The Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice
- Tour of historical sites in Montgomery such as the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church; the Dexter Avenue Church Parsonage; Freedom Rides Museum; Rosa Park Library and Museum; National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African American Culture; and the Civil Rights Memorial.
- Daily Reflections and conversations with local historians and storytellers along the way.

REGISTRATION:

- \$250 per person (this is non-refundable).
- Travel and accommodations are on your own.
 (Helpful details/discounts can be found on the registration website.)
- The deadline to register is TODAY Sunday, February 16.
- The Pilgrimage is limited to 55 participants.

For more information and to register: https://citymissionboston.org/pilgrimage

Questions?: Contact Dan or Carlyle.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, February 16

10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary (No Adult Formation)

10:00 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal, Lindsay Chapel

11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Kate Layzer, preaching

11:20 a.m. Church School: Creative Arts Project, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)

12:15 p.m. Fellowship & Refreshments, MJH

12:30 p.m. New Members' Gathering, Harter Room

7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

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

Tuesday, February 18

7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room

7:00 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, The Landing (Sarah Higginbotham's office)

Wednesday, February 19

9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room

6:30 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, Dan Smith's office 7:00 p.m. Christian Formation Committee, home of Hilary Hopkins

Thursday, February 20

7:30 a.m. Praying the Psalms, Library 6:30 p.m. Bible Study, Harter Room 7:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Harter Room

Friday, February 21

1:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall

Sunday, February 23

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

9:45 a.m. Community Gathering Time, Hastings Common

10:00 a.m. Adult Formation: Spiritual Practices in Lent, Harter Room

10:00 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal, Chapel

11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Carlyle Stewart, preaching

11:20 a.m. Church School: Classes (preK - 7th grade) 12:15 p.m. Fellowship & Refreshments, MJH

2:00 p.m. Youth Group, Hastings Common 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Class, Harter Room

7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

Tuesday, February 25

5:30 p.m. Mardi Gras Pancake Supper, MJH

Wednesday, February 26

7:30 a.m. Ash Wednesday Morning Service with "Ashes-To-Go", back of Sanctuary

7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Evening Service, Lindsay Chapel

THE STAFF AT FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

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Would you like to give to First Church in Cambridge? Here are easy ways to do it:



Text \$ __ to 1-844-996-0982

