

Advent November 27, 2022

# 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 **386 YEARS** ON THE WAY 1636-2022

## **November 27, 2022**

**Preaching Today Leading Worship**  Lexi Boudreaux, Transitional Minister

Dan Smith, Senior Minister

Kate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach

Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship & Arts

Peter Sykes, Music Director Mark Destler, liturgist

Laurie Williams, Mark and Griffin Destler, Advent candle-lighting

Chris Reynolds, First Church clerk

Lee Prouty, tech support

Bulletin Cover Image Carina Nebula, photographed by the James Webb telescope this image and many more may be found at: webb.nasa.gov

### **Today's Programs and Events**

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

10:15 a.m. Coffee and Conversation, Hastings Common

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

Church School: Creative Arts Workshop, Library 11:20 a.m.

Coffee Hour, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH) and via Zoom 12:15 p.m.

12:15 p.m. Advent Workshop, MJH

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

## **New to First Church?**

Have you just begun joining us for worship? Consider filling out a visitor card found on the small clipboard in the pews or this "virtual visitor card" so that we might reach out and connect with you about our community.

## Give to First Church

You can give online: www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give or by texting "\$ " to: 1-844-996-0982.

## 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

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** Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland Anton Heiller

THE WORD OF GOD Isaiah 7:10-15 Sarah Higginbotham

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN O Come, O Come Emmanuel (see page 4)

alt. Kate Layzer

\*GREETING Mark Destler

L: Siblings in Christ, Behold! For God is doing a new thing!

C: Let us open our hearts to watch for awe in the ordinary, for peace in our distress, and for hope in our despair,

L: for joy in our lives, and for Love to lead the way.

C: We gather now, in this season of wonder and waiting, finding strength in beholding the sacred in all that is here.

L: Prepare the way for God's presence in the world!

All: Let it be revealed in Christ and in us!

#### WORDS OF WELCOME

#### ADVENT CANDLE-LIGHTING

Laurie Williams, Mark and Griffin Destler

L: God, we light this first candle of Advent.

We kindle it with hope.

C: May hope sustain us in this time, and guide us in our work for compassion and justice.

#### **SONG**



The Choir will sing through once to teach us. The congregation is invited to join on the second and third times through.

<sup>\*</sup>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.

#### CONFESSING

#### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

#### SILENCE

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

C: God, when we turn away from gifts of your presence everyday help us open our hearts to wonder.

When we get ignore the sacred in each other's humanity, forgive us.

When we grow weary and turn to distractions, guide us.

Help us to attend to creating a world rooted in your justice and joy.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

#### DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

#### GREETING OF PEACE

We invite you to greet each other with a hug or handshake. If you prefer to maintain social distance, please put your hands together or fold your arms to share the peace.

## \*HYMN 129 Of Eternal Love Begotten

Children up through 6th grade are now invited to Church School: Creative Arts Workshop in Margaret Jewett Hall. Caregivers can find the children in Margaret Jewett Hall after worship.

#### **OPENING THE WORD**

Kate Layzer

ANTHEM Comfort Ye Katherine K. Davis

**READING** Luke 3:1-6

**SERMON** Lexi Boudreaux

#### SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
-2Chris Reynolds

#### PRAYERS FOR CHURCH AND WORLD

Dan 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 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** The Angel Gabriel Trad., arr. Edgar Pettman

\*ADVENT 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 116 People, Look East

\*BENEDICTION

**VOLUNTARY** Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland Anton Heiller



## **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 <u>here</u> or by scanning the QR code to the left.

#### **OPENING HYMN**

## O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Alt. Kate Layzer. Dec. 2016



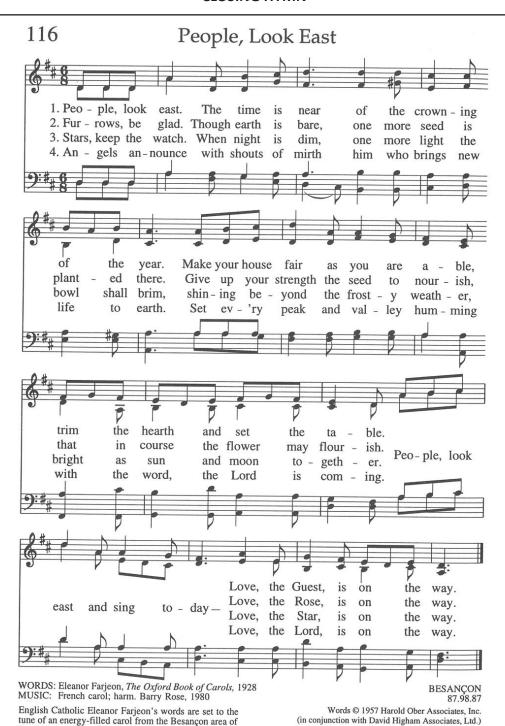
#### 129 Of Eternal Love Begotten



WORDS: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (4th century); sts. 1,3, tr. John Mason Neale, 1854, DIVINUM MYSTERIUM and Henry W. Baker, 1859, alt.; st. 2, tr. R. F. Davis, 1906, alt.
MUSIC: Plainsong, Mode V (13th century); harm. C. Winfred Douglas, *The Hymnal*, 1940 87.87.877

Prudentius was a Spanish lawyer and magistrate who became a Christian at age fifty-seven, withdrawing to a monastery for a life of meditation and writing.

#### **CLOSING HYMN**



-Hymn Insert 2-

Harm. © 1980 Barry Rose

France (near Switzerland).

#### **COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

- We pray for Poppy & Brent Coffin as they continue loving & living with Alzheimer's.
- We pray for Facilities Manager Lee Prouty's partner Phil, who is recovering from recent surgery and awaiting next steps for treatment.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer: Anita Anger; Robin Williams, Kimel Williams's wife; Lyman Morrill, Ann Riker's brother; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones's mother; Penny Kilburn, Nancy Kilburn's mother; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet, and her sons-in-law, Denis Collet and Stewart Bailey; Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters; and friend of Homeless Ministries Brian O'Donovan.
- We pray for all those impacted by the shuttle bus accident at Brandeis University last weekend, including the family and friends of the student who lost her life. We also pray for those impacted by the car accident at the Apple store in Hingham, where one person died and many were injured.
- We pray for all affected by this week's mass shooting in a Walmart in Chesapeake, VA, where six people were killed and several others were injured. We pray for the LGBTQA+ community in Colorado Springs in the aftermath of a mass shooting in a queer nightclub on the eve of Transgender Day of Remembrance last weekend that claimed the lives of five people and injured many more. And we continue to pray for the community at the University of Virginia, where three people died and others were injured.
- We pray for the people of Indonesia after a 5.6 magnitude earthquake injured 326 people and killed 162 in the West Java province this past Monday.
- We pray for our Jewish siblings as antisemitic expression is on the rise in local communities, and as antisemitic rhetoric espoused by public figures continues to appear in social media.
- We pray for the people of Haiti, where water, food, and fuel shortages are leading to widespread protests, violence, and civil unrest.
- We pray for the people of Iran, especially women, as anti-government protests continue.
- We pray for those experiencing the loss of vital reproductive rights across the nation, and all those who care about them. We pray for our country in the lasting wake of changing reproductive rights: for all those struggling through the moral and political complexities of pregnancy and childbearing, and for the integrity of our legal and judicial institutions at a time of extreme political polarization.
- We pray for the people of Ukraine and stand in hope and solidarity as they continue to resist unjust and unlawful Russian invasions and retake occupied regions, even in the face of escalating violence. We pray for all soldiers and civilians in Ukraine, Russia and surrounding areas, and all global regions impacted by the violence of war.
- We pray for all who are affected by COVID-19.
- We pray for the 14 men who are finding sustenance and protection in our First Church Shelter, and we pray for the guests of the Friday Café, who are finding food and listening ears.

Join the First Church List to see and offer up more community prayer requests.

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#### **TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH**



Coffee Hour
Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom
Today at 12:00 p.m.

Join us in person or online for social connection and conversation.



Advent Workshop Returns to Margaret Jewett Hall! Today, 12:15 - 1:30 p.m.

After two years of remote crafting, First Church's beloved Advent Workshop returns to Margaret Jewett Hall! Plan to join us after worship for a variety of arts and craft activities to prepare for season. Bring your Advent candle ring to decorate with greens (new candle rings and candles will be available until we run out). Choose among a half dozen other crafts, including beeswax candle-dipping, ornament-making, and more. Enjoy a bagel-and-cider lunch as you take in the creative energy around you. All are welcome!

Behold, Take a "Divine Time Out," and Try Night Song This Advent!
Sundays, 7:30 - 8:15 p.m.
Sanctuary and via livestream

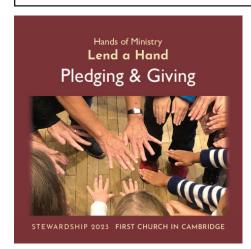
Have you beheld Night Song? Especially amidst this busy season, set aside some time from the demands of daily life, the season, and the troubling issues facing our country and our world. Claim a time to be still, to find clarity and purpose, and to center yourself for the coming week. Come and behold God's quiet presence in our candle-lit sanctuary. Enter into stillness; be transported and transformed by ancient and modern contemplative music.

Read more about Night Song.

Do you want to follow the hyperlinks, but you're holding a paper bulletin in your hand? Use your phone's camera to hover over the QR code to the right marked "scan me;" this will take you to the Members & Friends page of our website, where you'll find the bulletin online, as well as links to news, events, and more.



#### STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE NEWS



## **Stewardship Campaign Update**

Thank you to all who have made a financial pledge for 2023! As of last Sunday, we have received pledges of \$406,399, over halfway to our goal of \$705,000. Collectively, those who have pledged have increased 17% over their last year's pledge, bringing our goal of a balanced budget within reach.

If you haven't already, please <u>pledge online</u> or by sending in your pledge card. Thank you for your generosity!

## Fall Congregational Meeting and Lunch Next Sunday, December 4 at 12:30 p.m Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

Join us for a soup lunch in Margaret Jewett Hall (thanks again to Caitlin Anderson and our Friends of Fellowship), and stay for our fall meeting.

## **Call To Fall Congregational Meeting**

Notice is hereby given that a Special Meeting of First Church in Cambridge, Congregational,
United Church of Christ,
will be held in its 386th year at 12:30 p.m.,
Sunday, December 4, 2022,
in person in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom,
for the following purpose:



1. To review and vote on the proposed 2023 annual budget of the Congregation as recommended by Executive Council.

No other business may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of Executive Council, Christine Reynolds, *clerk* 

Go to the <u>Church Finances</u> page of our website to view the proposed 2023 budget.



Consider some of our most well-known and treasured Advent and Christmas scriptures:

Behold, a star...

Behold, you will conceive and give birth to a son...

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy...

**Behold** is a biblical way of arresting our attention, often with energetic and joyful anticipation! In essence, and often through the voices of divine messengers, it enthusiastically proclaims: "Look! "Watch!," or "Wait for it...!" Indeed, behold! This simple invitation is a gift in a world cast down with increasing anxiety and foreboding. When we open and give ourselves to wonder, amidst it all, we leave room for God to enter in—to surprise us, to blow our minds with breathtaking views of our galaxy, to melt our hearts with awe and delight at a newborn child. This season, let's embrace this invitation together. Let's take time to pause amidst the busyness, to look up and look in, and to behold!

Behold, for God is always doing a new thing! In worship and in community, let's look, watch, and wait for it together!

#### **Adult Formation**

Behold: Advent Reflection on the Psalms

Sundays, December 4, 11 & 18, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Harter Room and <u>via Zoom</u>

First Church artist Audrey Bellinger, Dan Smith and Lexi Boudreaux lead a time of quiet conversation and contemplation of themes and images inspired by the Psalms and Advent readings. Join us as we open our hearts to a spiritual practice of wondering about, waiting for, and perhaps even expecting glad tidings of the new things God has in store, this season and every day.

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## Benefit Concert for The Friday Café This Tuesday, November 29 at 7:30 p.m. The Burren, Davis Square, Somerville

Join host Brian O'Donovan for a musical variety show at the Burren in Somerville highlighting world-class performers David Coffin, Neave Trio, Bennett & Lorraine Hammond, and many more. Advance tickets are \$35, with proceeds supporting our own Friday Café. Doors open at 5:30; the concert begins at 7:30. Learn more and purchase tickets.





Young Adults: Faith on Tap Wednesday, December 7, 8:00 - 9:30 p.m. Bow Market, Union Square, Somerville

First Church 20- and 30-somethings are invited to get together for drop-in fellowship and conversation. In this cooler season, we'll catch up over warm drinks at outdoor fire pits! All young adults are welcome. Get in touch with Phil Jones (youngadults@firstchurchcambridge. org) if you want to RSVP and hear about other gatherings.

## Women's Community Advent Dinner Saturday, December 10, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. The Home of Alex Steinert-Evoy

The women of First Church will gather together for a time of reflection and fellowship during a simple meal to observe the Advent season. All women and non-binary folks who are comfortable with spaces that center the experiences of women are welcome to join! Come as you are to take time out of your busy week for rest, reflection, and deepening relationships as a community of faith in this season of wonder and expectation. A simple meal of soup and bread will be provided to supplement a



potluck of sides, drinks, and desserts. To let us know if you plan on coming and to indicate what you might bring to the potluck, please sign up here: <a href="https://forms.gle/gaB7Fsoqj8MfVpGE6">https://forms.gle/gaB7Fsoqj8MfVpGE6</a>

## The Alternative Christmas Fair Is Back! Sunday, December 11, 12:15 - 2:00 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

After two long years, First Church is excited to once again host the annual Alternative Christmas Fair! What makes it "alternative?" All proceeds raised by the vendors will go directly to benefit their charitable and social justice causes. Our growing list of vendors includes: Muddy River Herbals, Solutions at Work, Friday Café, and Sowing Opportunities. Come buy presents for your loved ones, and support worthy causes!





## Donate to City Mission Christmas Shop & Coat Boston Sunday, December 11

As is our tradition, First Church will collect gifts for City Mission's Christmas Shop and Coat Boston this Advent season. Find a list of requested gifts on the <u>City Mission website</u>. Coat Boston is asking for unused winter coats for all children, from toddlers to teens. If you would like to participate, but are not able to bring donations to our worship service on Sunday morning, December 11, please contact <u>Pastoral Associate Jaz Buchanan</u> to make a plan.



## The UnPageant Sunday, December 18 at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, we'll gather for our untraditional take on the Christmas pageant: the UnPageant! The UnPageant is First Church's unrehearsed, low-stress, multigenerational telling of the story of Jesus' birth. This year, Mary, Joseph, and the donkey will travel through our Sanctuary on their

way to Bethlehem. We'll behold them on their journey and encircle them with love and joy on the chancel as our community's youngest member appears in the starring role. Come hear the age-old texts and sing the cherished carols as we celebrate the wonder of God's love among us.

## Christmas Cookie Swap and Reception for Jaz Buchanan Sunday, December 18, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall

After the UnPageant, help us bring some pre-Christmas joy with a cookie swap and hot apple cider and cake reception in honor of our beloved Pastoral Associate, Jaz Buchanan! (You can read Jaz's farewell letter on our website.) There is much to celebrate, given all the gifts Jaz has shared with us, as well as her happy news of a baby on the way.



For the cookie swap, please bake or buy 6-10 dozen of your favorite holiday cookies, and then package them by the ½ dozen (6 cookies per bag). Label each bag with ingredients/allergy info before dropping them off in Margaret Jewett Hall before or just after Hybrid Worship. In your baking/buying plans, consider if you can provide gluten-free, dairy-free, or low-sugar options, and definitely label any baked goods that contain nuts. We'll organize them on tables and invite everyone to pick up treats during the reception. Help spread some Christmas joy on UnPageant



## Youth Group: Christmas Gift Swap Sunday, December 18, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Library

Join the Youth Group for our annual Christmas Gift Swap! We will be meeting to exchange gifts and to spend time with one another enjoying some festive snacks starting at 12:30 p.m. Gift limit to \$10.



The Missions & Social Justice Committee has had another eventful year of supporting the work of non-profits both near and far. As we approach the Advent season, we wanted to share with you a list of organizations with which First Church partners closely and who are seeking donations.

In the case that you and your family are in a position to support any of these organizations, we hope that you find the list helpful. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jaz Buchanan at jaz@firstchurchcambridge.org, staff liaison to the Missions & Social Justice Committee.

See the full list of organizations on our website.

## **Food Pantry Donations on Communion Sundays**

Let us continue as we did pre-Covid, by continuing to bring food pantry contributions to First Church EVERY first Sunday of each month, which is next Sunday!

The need is great and getting greater. Always welcome are: cereal, hearty soups, canned meats including Spam, canned fruits and veggies, cooking oil, condiments, baking supplies, diapers and feminine products. No fresh, frozen, opened or expired items, please! Be in Communion with needy neighbors who call at the St. James food pantry.

Contact Hilary Hopkins with questions at: hopkinsjh@verizon.net.





## Monday, November 28

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

## **Tuesday, November 29**

7:15 a.m. Reflective Conversations with Brent Coffin, via Zoom

10:30 a.m. Communications Team Meeting, Harter Room

1:30 p.m. Beloved Community, via Zoom

6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Encountering Faith and the Bible Anew, via Zoom

7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Faithfully (and Queerfully) Reading Scripture, via Zoom 7:30 p.m. Benefit Concert for the Friday Café, The Burren, Davis Square, Somerville

## Wednesday, November 30

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

7:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: The 1619 Project Discussion Group, via Zoom

## Thursday, December 1

6:00 p.m. Weekly Drop-In Bible Study, via Zoom

## Friday, December 2

12:00 p.m. Friday Café, MJH and Lawn

## Saturday, December 3

8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast, Kitchen and Harter Room



## Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. Adult Formation: Advent Reflection on the Psalms. Harter Room and via Zoom.

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Coffee and Conversation, Hastings Common 10:15 a.m. 11:00 a.m.

Hybrid Morning Worship, Dan Smith, preaching,

Sanctuary and via livestream

Church School: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library 11:20 a.m. Coffee Hour in Hastings Common and via Zoom 12:15 p.m.

Fall Congregational Meeting, MJH 12:30 p.m.

Our Whole Lives for 7/8th graders, Old South Church, Boston 1:30 p.m.

Confirmation Class for 9/10th graders, Harter Room 1:30 p.m.

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

See our **Events Calendar** for Zoom links and details.

Sign up here to receive our weekly e-newsletter.