

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2023**

**Preaching Today** Carla Arevalo, *Pastoral Associate*  
**Liturgist** Peggy Bendroth, *Deacon*  
**Assisting in Worship** Sarah Higginbotham, *Creative Worship & Arts Director*  
Karen McArthur, *Minister of Stewardship & Finance*  
Lee Prouty, *tech support*  
Peter Sykes, *Music Director*  
**Bulletin Cover Image** Psalm 121 collage by Audrey Bellinger  
*All Psalm collages can be viewed in [a digital gallery](#) on our website.*

**Voluntary**

*Allegro* from Sonata No. 4  
Mendelssohn

**Opening Hymn 313**

I Come with Joy

**Anthem**

*Da nobis pacem*  
Mendelssohn

**Peace Hymn 311**

Let us Break Bread Together

**Reading**

Exodus 3:1-15

**Sermon Hymn 4**

Come, Living God, When Least Expected

**Offertory**

*Bread of the World*  
arr. Carlton Young

**Closing Hymn 325**

Now Let Us From This Table Rise

**Voluntary**

*Adagio* from Sonata No. 4  
Mendelssohn

**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 online: [www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give](http://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](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.



**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 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.

*-Bulletin Insert 1-*

OPENING HYMN

313

I Come with Joy

*Unison*

1. I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en,  
 2. I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as  
 3. As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di -  
 4. The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but  
 5. To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that

loved and free, the life of Je - sus to re - call, in  
 all are fed, the new com - mun - i - ty of love in  
 vi - sion ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
 ev - er near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
 God has done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the

love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.  
 Christ's com - mun - ion bread, in Christ's com - mun - ion bread.  
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.  
 live a - mong us here, a - live a - mong us here.  
 love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

WORDS: Brian Wren, 1968; rev. 1977, 1993  
 MUSIC: Walker's *Southern Harmony*, 1835; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1987

DOVE OF PEACE  
 CM

PEACE HYMN

311

Let Us Break Bread Together

1. Let us break bread to- geth-er on our knees; (on our knees)  
2. Let us drink wine to- geth-er on our knees;  
3. Let us praise God to- geth-er on our knees;

Let us break bread to- geth-er on our knees; (on our knees)  
Let us drink wine to- geth-er on our knees;  
Let us praise God to- geth-er on our knees;

*Refrain*

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris- ing sun,

O Lord, have mer- cy on me. (on me)

WORDS: African-American spiritual  
MUSIC: African-American spiritual, arr. Carlton R. Young, 1964, adapt.

LET US BREAK BREAD  
10 10 w. refrain

SERMON HYMN

4 Come, Living God, When Least Expected

1. Come, liv - ing God, when least ex - pect - ed, when minds are  
 2. Come now, as once you came to Mo - ses with - in the  
 3. Then, through our gloom, your Son will meet us as viv - id

dull and hearts are cold, through sharp - ning word and warm af - fec - tion  
 bush a - live with flame; or to E - li - jah on the moun - tain,  
 truth and liv - ing Lord, ex - plod - ing doubt and dis - il - lu - sion

re - veal - ing truth as yet un - told. Break from the tomb in which we  
 by si - lence press - ing home your claim. So, let our minds be sharp to  
 to scat - ter hope and joy a - broad. And we will share his ra - diant

hide you to speak a - gain in start - ling ways; break through the  
 read you in sight or sound or print - ed page, and let us  
 bright - ness, and, blaz - ing through the dread of night, il - lu - mi -

words in which we bind you to res - ur - rect our life - less praise.  
 greet you in our neigh - bors, in ar - dent youth or mel - low age.  
 nate by love and rea - son, for those in dark - ness, faith's de - light.

WORDS: Alan Gaunt, 1991

MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois, *Cinquante pseumes en francois*, 1543, rev. 1551

RENDEZ À DIEU  
 98.98 D

CLOSING HYMN

325

Now Let Us from This Table Rise

1. Now let us from this ta - ble rise, re - newed in  
 2. With minds a - lert, up - held by grace, to spread the  
 3. To fill each hu - man house with love, it is the  
 4. Then give us grace, Com - pan - ion - God, to choose a -

bod - y, mind and soul; with Christ we die and live a -  
 Word in speech and deed, we fol - low in the steps of  
 sac - ra - ment of care; the work that Christ be - gan to  
 gain the pil - grim way, and help us to ac - cept with

gain, his self - less love has made us whole.  
 Christ, at one with all in hope and need.  
 do we hum - bly pledge our - selves to share.  
 joy the chal - lenge of to - mor - row's day.

WORDS: Fred Kaan, 1968

MUSIC: Melody, *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1609;  
 harm. George R. Woodward, 1910

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR  
 LM

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Rev. Lexi Boudreaux as she prepares to begin her new ministry at the First Congregational Church in Hopkinton, NH, and we pray for our First Church community in this time of transition.
- We pray for the family of longtime First Church member John Hildebidle, who died on Monday in Alexandria, VA. We pray especially for his children Nick and Susannah, who grew up at First Church, and for their families as they grieve.
- We pray for Nancy Kilburn and her family as they mourn the loss of her mother Penny, who died recently.
- We pray for Perry Neubauer, who has been recovering from shoulder surgery at a rehab hospital.
- We pray for Anita Anger as she negotiates rehab after a recent fall.
- We pray for Kate Layzer's mother Annie, as she navigates the challenges of dementia and a recent cross-country move.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing slow-progressing ALS; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones's mother; Jim Rae, Ami Brenner's father; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet, and her sons-in-law, Denis Collet and Stewart Bailey; Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters. We pray also for friend of Homeless Ministries Brian O'Donovan, who is receiving hospice care.
- We continue to pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, including in Ukraine, Sudan, and Haiti, and especially those displaced and seeking refuge in other countries.
- We pray for all refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water to escape poverty, political persecution, violence, and climate-related disaster.
- We pray for all affected by Hurricane Idalia and by heavy rainfall, flash flooding, deadly heat waves, and other extreme weather. We pray especially for the people of Maui, who are grieving losses. We continue to pray for our rapidly warming planet and for redoubled efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray for all whose lives are touched by our nation's raging epidemic of gun violence, and those most recently impacted by the racially motivated shooting in Jacksonville, FL. We pray for ongoing advocacy to create lasting change in our country's gun safety laws.
- We pray for the wellbeing and safety of our trans and gender non-conforming siblings as they face vitriolic public discourse and state laws that restrict and criminalize transgender health care, personal expression, and wider LGBTQ+ education.
- We pray for those most affected by changes in reproductive rights: for all those struggling with the moral and political complexities of pregnancy and childbearing, and for patients and healthcare providers who are unable to give and receive care in their own states.

## REGATHERING AT FIRST CHURCH



### **Blessing the Ties: Fall 2023 and Regathering Sunday September 10**

As we regather this fall in worship, in meetings, and on retreat, we look forward to blessing the ties that keep us connected—to one another, to land and lineage, and to our truest selves. As the old hymn goes, “blest be the ties that bind!”

The word Religion is rooted in the Latin word “ligare,” meaning to “bind.” Here at First Church, through our community and covenant we are bound to one another, which is a good thing! The joys and challenges of our lives and our world are too great to encounter alone. We need each other, and the world needs our kind of multigenerational and intergenerational community that draws from the deep and timeless wells of wisdom, resource, and grounding, shared by elders and children, ancestors and descendants.

Join us for the first time or again this **Regathering Sunday, September 10**, for **Hybrid Worship at 11:00 a.m.** and for a **Regathering Lunch in Margaret Jewett Hall at 12:15 p.m.**, as we join together and bless the ties that have kept this beloved community together “from generation to generation!” Staff and lay leaders will offer a brief orientation to our fall programs and offerings, as well as other important updates about our life together at First Church that you won’t want to miss!



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## REGATHERING AT FIRST CHURCH

### Fall Pastoral and Building Staff Changes

This fall, we are thrilled to welcome back **Carla Arevalo Carbajal** and **Ahmaad Edmund** in their new roles as half-time Pastoral Associates! As they complete the third year of their Master of Divinity program at Harvard Divinity School, they will no longer be ministerial interns, but full members of our staff. Carla will be responsible for our Newcomers ministry, leading our Confirmation class, helping with First Church social media and digital ministry, and assisting with specific racial and social justice projects, including Earth Stewardship. Ahmaad will be working with our Stewardship team, leading our high-schoolers in monthly Cambridge Common Youth Group gatherings with other local congregations, assisting with adult formation and periodic racial and social justice efforts. Both will be leading worship regularly and preaching roughly once a month. In addition, we will soon welcome HDS third-year Master of Divinity student **Emma Thomas** as our new Ministerial Intern! We are blessed to have this wonderful team of welcome additions to our already talented, collaborative staff!



In case you missed it, in June, we said farewell to beloved Sexton **Kimel Williams**, who was ready for a change after many years. And, Labor Day is the last day for our newest Sexton **Jason Taggart**, who will be returning full-time to his career as master-brewer. We are grateful as ever to Facilities Manager **Lee Prouty** and Sexton **George Williams**, and also to **Steve Brown** and **Douglas Casey** (returning to our staff this fall) for helping us to staff and care for our busy building while we look for a new part-time sexton to fill out remaining, uncovered shifts.



### Register for Church School 2023-24

First Church's Church School offers a variety of opportunities for Christian formation for children and youth, including age-based classes, creative arts and pastoral care workshops, child care for little ones, and youth group activities for teens. All children from infants through high school seniors are welcome in the Church School! You can read all the details on the [Faith Formation for Children & Youth](#) page on our website.

Registering your children helps us to prepare for them, but drop-ins are always welcome. [Please complete this registration form](#) to let us know a bit about your children. Church School begins on Regathering Sunday, September 10.

## REGATHERING AT FIRST CHURCH

### All-Church Fall Retreat at Craigville Retreat Center Friday, September 29 – Sunday, October 1

Register now to join us on the Cape at Craigville Retreat Center for a weekend of community-building in fellowship, formation, and fun. All ages are invited to come together as a multigenerational community to talk, laugh, play, dance, eat, sing, worship, and connect!

Take advantage of scheduled large group gatherings, small group sessions, supervised play/crafting time for kids, worship, group games, and more. Or, opt for a quiet walk on the beach, bird-watching at the marsh, or whatever your soul needs. Arrive on Friday evening, September 29,

and stay through midday on Sunday, October 1, for the full event; or come for a portion of the weekend, for just one night, or even a daytrip on Saturday.

[Complete this registration form](#) and stay tuned for more details on this year's retreat theme. Questions? Contact [Sarah Higginbotham](#).



### Welcome Table

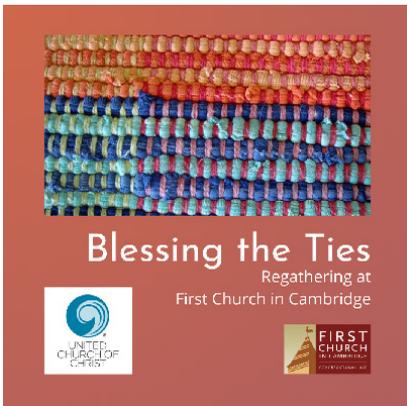
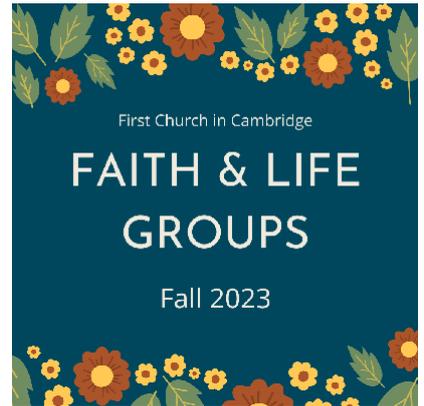
Starting next Sunday for our Regathering season, you may notice a Welcome Table as you enter the Sanctuary through the main door into the Narthex. The table is part of a new initiative called **"First Friends"** that is aimed at new people coming in our doors. Our goal is to connect newcomers with a First Friend within our congregation. For the next several Sundays, we will meet people at the Welcome Table just before worship and also at Coffee Hour. If you happen to meet anyone new, please point them to our table! When the calendar allows, we will be sharing more information during a Ministry Moment. Questions? Seek out Alex Steinert-Evoy, Martha Mueller Cook, or Ginny Harlan.

## REGATHERING AT FIRST CHURCH

### Call for Fall Faith & Life Group Leaders by September 17

Are you interested in leading a small group over Zoom or in person this Fall? Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests, whether exploring a spiritual practice, opening our eyes to the beauty around us, delving into a challenging social issue, or attending to significant life stages (parenting, aging, job transitions, etc.). Faith & Life Groups involve making a short-term commitment (a single session to several weeks, depending on the group). Pitch your idea for a Fall Faith & Life Group to Beth Spaulding (bspaulding69@gmail.com) or Dan Smith (dsmith@firstchurchcambridge.org).

**Deadline for proposals is Sunday, September 17.**



### Blessing the Ties & Honoring our Ancestors at First Church and Beyond Sunday, September 17 & 24, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

Join Dan Smith, Sue Reynolds, and Phil Jones for a two-part 9:30 Hour series aimed at honoring and better understanding our spiritual forebears! On September 17, we offer a brief introduction and discussion of First Church's long history (387 years as a continuing congregation) and also share a bit about our covenantal ties to our wider denomination, the United Church of Christ. Phil was a recent delegate to our

national UCC "Synod" gathering in June and can share about what the UCC is and what "we" are up to now! On September 24, we explore questions of how we can better honor our familial and spiritual ancestors (benevolent and otherwise), and how we might consider being "better ancestors" for those who are yet to come!

### Newcomers Meet and Greet

#### Sunday, September 17, 12:15 - 12:45 p.m., Hastings Common

Those feeling new to First Church are warmly invited to meet up directly after worship in Hastings Common (through the door by the large screens at the front of the Sanctuary). Some of what you can expect: friendly faces, new friends?, questions answered, snacks, and an informal atmosphere for conversation. Our first Joining Sunday of the season is tentatively scheduled for October 22. Questions? Please reach out to [Carla Arevalo](#).



## REGATHERING AT FIRST CHURCH



### Welcome Corps Info Session

Sunday, September 17, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Harter Room and via Zoom

“First Church & Friends” is an official sponsor group for [Welcome Corps](#), and two refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa are arriving to us soon! Do you want to learn more about what this will mean for our community and how you can help to welcome and resettle them? Please attend a special information session after worship on Sunday, September 17, led by special guest Ann O’Brien, Director of Sponsorship at IRIS (International Refugee and Immigrant Services). [IRIS](#) is a founding member of the recently launched Welcome Corps national program.

Based in New Haven while working across the nation, IRIS has welcomed over 8,000 refugees together with community sponsor groups such as ours. Ann will be joined by Dr. Simone Bamba, leader of [Mission Maranatha](#), a Welcome Corps sponsor group from West Roxbury similar to ours that recently welcomed a refugee from Somalia. Learn more about Welcome Corps refugee resettlement from those with recent experience, and bring all your questions!

### Confirmation Class Orientation

Sunday, September 17, 12:30 - 1:15 p.m., Library

This year’s Confirmation journey for 8th and 9th graders begins with an orientation meeting for students and parents after worship. Sarah Higginbotham will introduce the program alongside teachers Carla Arevalo and Phil Jones. Classes take place twice monthly on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m., leading up to Confirmation Sunday on Pentecost, May 19, 2024.



### Cambridge Common Youth Group

Sunday, September 17, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., First Church Lawn

In 2023-24, First Church youth will join up with teens from neighboring churches to form the Cambridge Common Youth Group. Teens from 8th to 12th grade (which includes our Confirmation Class) are invited to gather for monthly service opportunities and social events on third Sundays from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Stay tuned for more information. Questions? Please contact [Ahmaad Edmund](#).

# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## **Monday, September 4 - Church Office & Building Closed for Labor Day Holiday**

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

## **Tuesday, September 5**

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

## **Wednesday, September 6**

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

4:00 p.m. Gifts Discernment Committee, via Zoom

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

## **Thursday, September 7**

6:00 p.m. Bible Study, via Zoom

## **Friday, September 8**

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

## **Sunday, September 10 - Regathering Sunday**

10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

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

12:15 p.m. Regathering Luncheon and Fall Programming Orientation, MJH

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

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

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