



Praise God, all you nations! Extol her, all you peoples! For great is her steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of God endures forever. Praise God!

- Psalm 117

Regathering Season
October 1, 2023

**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
387 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 3

October 1, 2023

Preaching Today	Karen McArthur, <i>Minister of Stewardship & Finance</i>
Liturgist	Emma Thomas, <i>Ministerial Intern</i>
Assisting in Worship	Ahmaad Edmund, <i>Pastoral Associate</i> Kate Layzer, <i>Minister of Street Outreach</i> Lee Prouty, <i>tech support</i> Peter Sykes, <i>Music Director</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	Psalm 117 collage by Audrey Bellinger <i>All Psalm collages can be viewed in a digital gallery on our website.</i>

Today's Programs and Events

10:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
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 Margaret Jewett Hall
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 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

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

Authority without wisdom is like a heavy axe without an edge: fitter to bruise than polish.

Meditations Divine and Morall, Anne Bradstreet, 1664

VOLUNTARY

Ruhig bewegt (Sonata III, 1940)

Paul Hindemith

*HYMN 39

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

*GREETING

Emma Thomas

L: Siblings in the Spirit, whether you are here for an hour or a lifetime,
welcome to this household of grace!

C: Here, where our lives are grounded in the hope and healing of God;

L: here, where we grow together in community and belonging;

C: here, where we act together in love for a better world.

L: Sisters, brothers, siblings in the Spirit, come to the table.

**C: With our neighbors through all the earth abroad,
with saints below and saints above,
may God bless the ties that bind us in love!**

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Le Aso Fiafia

Samoan Hymn

Le aso fiafia. Le Aso Sa lenei

Ia tatou tapuai. I lo tatou Alii

E tele lava aso. E tupu ai tiga

Ao lenei lava aso. Tatou te filemu

This is a happy day. Today is Sunday

Let us pray. To our Lord

Many days can be difficult

But today we are at peace

Le aso e paia. E le galue ai

Ae tau o aso ese. E galue ai.

E silisili lava. Lenei aso lelei

E tupu ai manatu. I mea I luga

Today is a holy day. We rest

Other days we work

Today is the best day

Of heavenly thoughts

Ia tatou fiafia. I ona itula

Pei o le amataga. O aso I luga

Iesu ia e alofa. A iu le ola nei

Ia ta mau ai ma oe. I lena nuu lelei

Let's be happy. This hour

is the beginning of heavenly days

Jesus please love us in this life

And your kingdom after

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

**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.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: God, we come to this day thirsty for your presence.
Yet we are reluctant to give voice to our struggles.
We are burdened by regret, quick to name our fears,
slow to find the joy of our celebrations.
Gentle God, however we risk sharing our most intimate selves with you,
speak to us words of transformation, words of hope, words of peace,
as you lead us toward new horizons.
Hear our prayers as we open our hearts to you in our silence together:

SILENCE

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

Please turn to your immediate neighbors and offer a handshake, or a hug! Or if you prefer to maintain social distance, fold your hands or arms in a sign of peace. We want everyone to be comfortable; today let there be no spiritual distance between us.

*HYMN 40

Halle - Halle - Halleluja

Children up through 7th grade are now invited to Church School: Pastoral Care Sunday in the Library. They will return to worship in time for Communion.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ahmaad Edmund

READING

Exodus 17:1-7

READING

Matthew 21:23-27

SERMON

By What Authority?

Karen McArthur

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kate Layzer

INVITATION TO OFFERING



Give Online



Give by Text



I've Given Already

***DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Praise God, the Source of life and birth,
Praise God, the Word, who came to earth,
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame,
All glory, honor, to God's name. Amen.

SHARING THE FEAST**INVITATION****WORDS OF INSTITUTION****PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT****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.**

***SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP**

We invite you to come forward to one of the stations, and then to gather (with your bulletin) in a circle, so that as we share our feast, we are connected with each other and with all who follow Christ, through the centuries, in many languages, and around the world.

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

L: Let us give thanks together!
**C: Thank you, God, for life in the Spirit of Jesus –
for gladness in this bread and cup,
for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give,
for joy in the company of friends, for the splendors of creation,
and for the mission of justice you have made our own.
Give us the gifts of this holy communion –
oneness of heart, love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies,
the will to serve you every day, and risen life that never ends.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

GOING FORTH

***HYMN 368 (insert)**

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

***BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

Thuma Mina

Hymn 344

1. (Send me, Lord.)
**Send me, Jesus, send me, Jesus,
send me, Jesus, send me, Lord.**
2. (Lead me, Lord.) **Lead me, Jesus...**

3. (Fill me, Lord.) **Fill me, Jesus...**
4. (Thuma mina.)
**Thuma mina, thuma mina,
thuma mina, somandla.**

In Memoriam

A memorial service for beloved First Church member John Hidlebidle will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 7, in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a reception to follow in Margaret Jewett Hall.

First Church Land Acknowledgment

We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusetts people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusetts, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.



SCAN ME

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment [here](#) or by scanning the QR code.

39

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing



1. O for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise,
2. My gra-cious Sav-ior and my God, as-sist me to pro-claim,
3. Je-sus! the name that calms our fears, that bids our sor-rows cease,
4. Glo-ry to God, and praise and love be ev-er, ev-er given



the glo-ries of my God and King, the tri-umphs of God's grace!
 to spread through all the earth a-broad the hon-ors of your name.
 is mu-sic in the sin-ner's ears, is life, and health, and peace!
 by saints be-low and saints a-bove, the church in earth and heaven.



WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.

MUSIC: Carl Gotthelf Gläser, 1828; adapt. Lowell Mason, *Modern Psalmody*, 1839

AZMON
CM

40

Halle-Halle-Halleluja

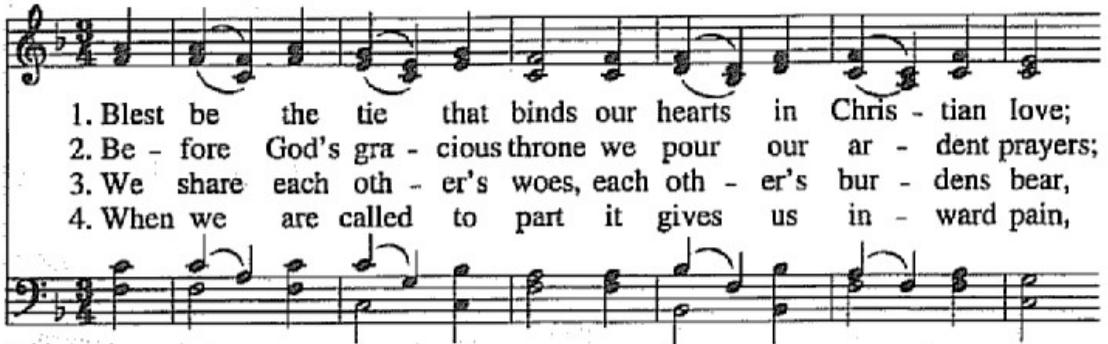
Hal - le - hal - le - hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - hal - le - hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja.

MUSIC: Caribbean

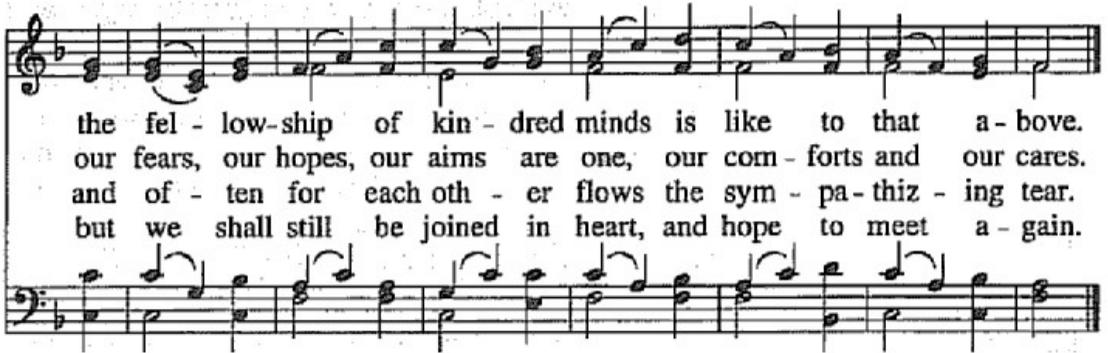
HALLELUJA
LM

368

Blest Be the Tie That Binds



1. Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;
 2. Be - fore God's gra - cious throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
 3. We share each oth - er's woes, each oth - er's bur - dens bear,
 4. When we are called to part it gives us in - ward pain,



the fel - low-ship of kin - dred minds is like to that a - bove.
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
 and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
 but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet a - gain.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We celebrate with joy the birth of Wesley Dane Morgan, the first child of Claire and Robb Morgan, born on September 8.
- We pray for Ken Ziebell and his family as they mourn the loss of his daughter Joan, who died following a long illness.
- We pray for Ami Brenner’s father Jim Rae, who continues to recover at home after a cancer treatment and a related blood clot.
- We pray for Gaylen Morgan, who is recovering at home from vestibular surgery this past Tuesday.
- We pray for Karen Anne Zee, who is recovering from spinal surgery following a fall.
- We pray for Alice Kidder, who was hospitalized this week for weakness in her knees.
- We pray for Perry Neubauer as he continues with a lengthy recovery from shoulder surgery, for Norman Bendroth as he recovers from hip replacement surgery, and for Anne McClintock as she heals from foot surgery, that their healing and strength might proceed quickly, and their pain diminish quickly.
- We pray for all who are in treatment for cancer and other ongoing health challenges: Carol Wilson-Braun, who is managing slow-progressing ALS; Jim Rae, Ami Brenner’s father; Ellen Smith, Devin Hansen’s aunt; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones’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. We pray also for friend of Homeless Ministries Brian O’Donovan, who is receiving hospice care.
- We continue to pray for all impacted by and recovering from recent natural and climate related disasters – the earthquake in Morocco, wildfires in Maui, floods in Leominster and Libya. We continue to pray for our rapidly warming planet and for redoubled efforts to reduce fossil fuel emissions.
- We pray for all those impacted by the violence of war and political upheaval, including in Ukraine, Sudan, and Haiti. As we prepare to welcome two refugee through the WelcomeCorps, we pray for all political and climate refugees and migrants who make often life-threatening border crossings over land and open water.
- We pray for the wellbeing and safety of our trans and gender non-conforming siblings as they face the impact of vitriolic public discourse and of 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.
- 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

First Church on Retreat

Over 50 First Church folks of all ages are on our annual Fall All-Church Retreat this weekend at Craigville Retreat Center on Cape Cod!



Meet Ministerial Intern Emma Thomas

Emma is a third year Master of Divinity student at Harvard Divinity School who grew up just across the river in Jamaica Plain. She is an educator, facilitator, and doula with a passion for ancestral healing, transformative justice, rites of passage, and spiritual support for full-spectrum reproductive care. Her heart is most alive in groups of people building transformative and joyful relationships to deepen together, shift systems, and remember our interdependence with all of life. She loves to read poetry, dance and move with others, be outside, sing, play board games, and much of her free time is spent walking or adventuring with her goldendoodle puppy Ollie. The process of re-mem-bering guides her life in ministry: remembering our inherent beloved-ness, remembering our interdependence with all beings and with the Earth, and re-mem-bering in the embodied sense of belonging ourselves as the body of Christ in the world.

Parking at Lesley University Suspended During Construction

Lesley University is doing extensive construction to the property next door to the church. During this time, they are suspending Sunday morning parking in their lots and will ticket cars parked there, even if you display a yellow First Church parking pass. They are open to resuming this arrangement once construction is complete, but the time frame is unknown. In the meantime, parking is available on the street at no charge on Sunday mornings.



Night Song

Sunday evenings, 7:30 - 8:15p.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...

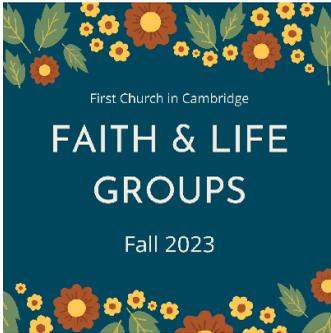
[Read more about Night Song.](#)

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 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.



REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



Register for Fall Faith & Life Groups

Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests. Faith & Life Groups involve making a short-term commitment (a single session to several weeks, depending on the group) to something that might be delightful, deep, or even transformational. If you are looking for a way to dip your toes into the life of our church and stay connected outside of Sunday Worship, this is for you!

[Read full descriptions and register here.](#)

- **Becoming a Trans- and Nonbinary-Affirming Church** with Lisa McCarty and Dan Smith
- **Living and Celebrating the Spirituality of the Seasons** with Lee Andrews
- **Creating a Spiritual Autobiography** with Stephen Opie
- **Holiday Art Workshop: Art for God** with Henry Gates

Are you active on Social Media?

Do you have a background in real estate, or in housing?

Do you enjoy training people on tech, or about budgeting and banking?

Then we especially need your help to welcome refugees! First Church & Friends' Welcome Corps effort is preparing to welcome two refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa in coming weeks. These newcomers will have Official Refugee Status and full access to government benefits. Our team will support them in a minimum 90-day resettlement effort. We are asking for volunteers with these specific backgrounds to support our refugee effort in these areas. ***We also need temporary housing for the refugees for 2- 3 months*** - so if you have any room in your home, or know of anyone else who does – please let us know! If you can join us in our effort with time or housing, [complete this form as a first step.](#) And reach out to your friends and community with this experience; people outside of First Church are very welcome to join the team! If you have any questions about being a volunteer, please email Martha Mueller Cook at: marthamuellercook@gmail.com.

WELCOME CORPS



Young Adults: Faith on Tap

Tuesday, October 3, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Flatbread (Sacco's) in Davis Square

First Church has an active group of Young Adults that gathers a couple of times each month for food and fellowship. Our ongoing Faith on Tap series is a great way to meet others in their 20s to mid-30s. Come hang out, especially if you're new or feeling new! You can learn more about the group and get on the email list for future events by emailing: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org or talking to Phil Jones.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



2023 SNEUCC Justice Summit: Trans and Nonbinary Belonging in the Church Online Registration Extended to October 4

Saturday, October 7, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Old South Church in Boston

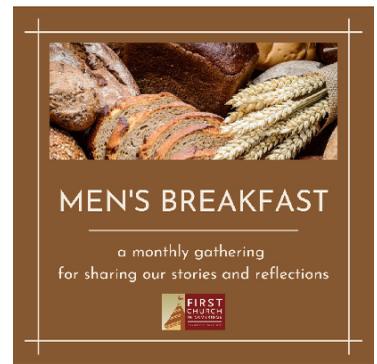
The Southern New England UCC's annual Justice Summit in 2023 will center on trans and nonbinary belonging in the church. This full-day event includes worship and preaching, workshops, relationship-building and connection. ***As part of a conference-wide initiative on Trans and Nonbinary Affirming Churches, First Church in Cambridge has eight spots reserved at the conference.*** Online registration has been extended to October 4. Using [this registration link](#), select the "scholarship" option and indicate your connection to First Church in Cambridge.

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, October 7, 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Harter Room

All who identify as men at First Church are invited to join us in person on Saturday morning for our monthly gathering, a time to reflect and rejoice. 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



Blessing of the Animals Service

Sunday, October 8 at 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

On this Sunday close to St. Francis's Day, we invite you and your beloved animal companions to join us for a special Blessing of the Animals as part of Morning Worship. This will be a moment of gratitude for all the gifts our pets give us and a celebration of all God's creatures and creation! All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small are welcome! Pets are welcome on leash or in crates; if it's easier on you and/or your pet, you may also bring a photo to be

blessed and ***send one to Bruce Dillenbeck by Wednesday, October 4***, at:

bruce@firstchurchcambridge.org for inclusion in our "All God's Critters" slideshow. We will also take a special moment to bless and give thanks for the cockerel that has topped our tower for over 150 years and that is coming down on Monday, October 9 (weather depending) to protect it from further damage.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

Listening Session on the First Church Cockerel Weathervane Sunday, October 8, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

The great gilded cockerel weathervane that has stood atop First Church in Cambridge for the last 150 years is coming down to protect it from further damage caused by extreme weather, pollution and its own venerable age. The decision to bring the much-loved cockerel down for its own safety was made in a unanimous vote by the First Church Executive Council and following extensive consultation with nationally recognized experts in the field of American Folk Art and historic weathervanes who strongly advised removal as soon as possible. Join us for this first listening session, when the First Church community will have a chance to reflect on, ask questions about and consider next steps following the decision to remove the cockerel, which was announced to the congregation on Sunday, September 10, 2023.



[Read more and find links to drone videos on our website.](#)



For a Deeper Dive: Reflective Conversational Gatherings with Duncan Holloman Sundays, October 15 & 22, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Harter Room and via Zoom

For those with a desire for more in-depth exploration of some of the key concepts and practices in our shared Christian life, Duncan Holloman hosts two reflective conversational gatherings in October. Together we'll reflect on such knotty questions as "What does a belief in God look like? Is it necessary to being a Christian?" "What is the role of forgiveness? How do we do it?" "What do we mean by sin? Is it part of our nature?" "What is an appropriate response to the notion that Jesus died for our sins?" Rather than analyze such questions in the abstract, our emphasis will be on sharing our personal experience and approach. [Read more](#)

Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon Sunday, October 15 at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

The Missions & Social Justice Committee supports various efforts and organizations for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel, including [Churches for Middle East Peace](#), a group that has been a stalwart witness in this area. We are so pleased to welcome as a guest preacher CMEP Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon, an ordained pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC). Rev. Dr. Cannon will share her perspectives on the ongoing crisis in Palestine and Israel.



[Read more about Rev. Dr. Cannon here.](#)



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, October 2

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

Tuesday, October 3

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

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

7:00 p.m. Young Adults: Faith on Tap, Flatbread (Sacco's) in Davis Square, Somerville

Wednesday, October 4

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

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

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

Thursday, October 5

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

7:00 p.m. Stewardship Committee, via Zoom

Friday, October 6

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

Saturday, October 7

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

10:00 a.m. SNEUCC 2023 Justice Summit, Old South Church in Boston

11:00 a.m. Memorial Service for John Hildebidle, Sanctuary and via livestream

Sunday, October 8

10:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Blessing of the Animals Service, Sanctuary and via livestream

12:15 p.m. Refreshments in MJH

12:30 p.m. Listening Session on First Church Cockerel Weathervane, MJH

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

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
11 Garden St. • Cambridge, MA 02138

617-547-2724 • info@firstchurchcambridge.org • www.firstchurchcambridge.org

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