

Eastertide
May 18, 2025

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
389 YEARS
ON THE WAY
1636 – 2025

May 18, 2025

Liturgist

David Torrey

Preaching Today

Mike Solberg, *Interim Senior Minister*

Assisting in Worship

Karen McArthur, *Minister of Stewardship & Finance*

Lee Prouty, *Facilities Manager*

Peter Sykes, *Music Director*

Winnie Yip, *offering a Ministry Moment*

Bulletin Cover Image sunrise design by Perry Neubauer

Today's Programs and Events

- 9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Discovery Team Conversation, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH) and [via Zoom](#)
- 11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Godly Play and Bible 101 classes, Library & The Well
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in MJH
- 12:30 p.m. Parsonage Listening Session, Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)
- 12:45 p.m. Youth Group: Visit to Hannan Healthy Foods Farm, Lincoln, MA
- 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 **welcome card** found on small clipboards in the pews or [online](#), so that we might connect with you about our community.

Give to First Church

You can give electronically by using the QR code in the bulletin or explore more options for giving at: www.firstchurchcambridge.org/give

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

*"The more the strict monotheistic faith in the God of Israel is exalted,
the more visible becomes the thought of Jesus Christ.*

Let us never forget that the God of Jesus Christ was the God of Israel.

The Christian faith dissolves into mythology as soon as it no longer leans upon Judaism."
- André Trocmé

André Trocmé was a French pastor who led his congregation to shelter Jews from the Nazis. Trocmé and his wife Magda are designated "Righteous Among the Nations" by the official Israeli memorial to victims of the Holocaust.

VOLUNTARY

Allein Gott in die Höh sei Ehr'

J. S. Bach

*HYMN 2

The God of Abraham Praise

*CALL TO WORSHIP

David Torrey

L: Come friends, old and new, children of God,
experience the indwelling wholeness of God's steadfast love.

C: May we be open to that wholeness this day!

L: Gather in the light of the resurrection,
and bask in the presence of the Risen One.

C: May we bask in his light this day!

L: Open your hearts to the mystery of the Spirit,
who creates a community like no other.

**C: May we learn to be that community,
journeying together with joy in our hearts,
firmness in our values,
and openness to the beautiful diversity of human life.**

L: Our Triune God, our ancient and ever-present hope, is with us,
making all things new!

C: Amen!

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

A Wreath

Arlen Clarke (2013)
text by George Herbert (1633)

*A Wreathed garland of deserved praise,
Of praise deserved, unto thee I give,
I give to thee, who knowest all my wayes,
My crooked winding wayes, wherein I live,*

**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.*

*Wherein I die, not live: for life is straight,
Straight as a line, and ever tends to thee,
To thee, who art more farre above deceit,
Then deceit seems above simplicitie.
Give me simplicitie, that I may live,
So live and like, that I may know, thy wayes,
Know them and practise them: then shall I give
For this poore wreath, give thee a crown of praise.*

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SILENCE AND PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

**All: God of Justice, when we settle for the way things are
instead of the way you would have them be, forgive us.
When we are paralyzed by fear or limited in vision,
increase our trust in you.
When we offer charity, but fail to work for justice,
show us what your love requires.
When we walk ahead or behind, instead of with our neighbor,
open our eyes to their humanity.
When we tire of the struggle, and tomorrow feels overwhelming,
restore our hope and renew our courage,
In the name of Jesus, our brother, Amen.**

DECLARATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

*GREETING OF PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: And also with you!

*HYMN 257

This Is the Day

A MUTUAL BLESSING

Adults: God be with you there.

Children: And God be with you here.

Children up through 6th grade are now invited to Church School classes. Godly Play (PreK-4th grade) and Bible 101 (5/6th grade) students can meet their teachers at the side door by the Children's Book Corner. Caregivers can find the children in the Chapel after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

All: God of resurrection love,
you meet us in unexpected places, even beyond the grave.
Feed us now by your Word and fill us with your Spirit,
so that we may follow Jesus into wondrous life, this day and always.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

READING

Acts 11:1-18

SERMON

The Strange Reality of Christian Anti-Semitism

Mike Solberg

*HYMN 372

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karen McArthur

MINISTRY MOMENT

Winnie Yip

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND WORLD

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

Our offering supports the many ministries of our church,
with 10% for missions in the community and beyond.
Please use our new [all-in-one link](#) for gifts from your
bank account or by credit/debit card:



OFFERTORY

Alleluia

Henry Purcell

*DOXOLOGY

O Jesus, risen now to bless,
do thou thyself our hearts possess;
that we may give thee all our days
the willing tribute of our praise! Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOING FORTH

*HYMN (insert)

Shalom Chaverim

see page 5

You are invited to sing the Hebrew words in a round, led by the Choir.

*BENEDICTION

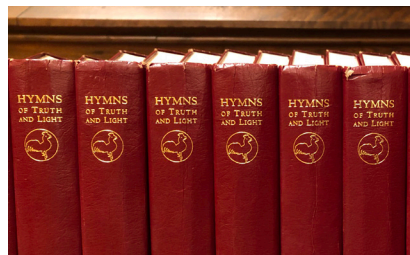
VOLUNTARY

Allein Gott in die Höh sei Ehr'

J. S. Bach

The hymn following the sermon today has lyrics by Ruth Duck, a former member of First Church, who died last December. Ruth gave tremendous gifts to the church through her work as a seminary professor and liturgical theologian, and through her poetry and hymn writing.

Thanks be to God for her life.



SCAN ME

First Church Land Acknowledgment

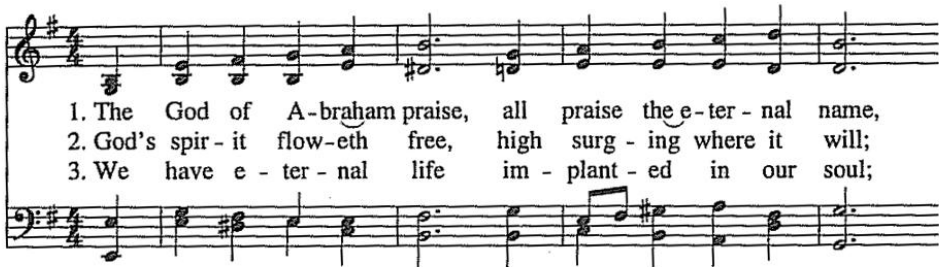
We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

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

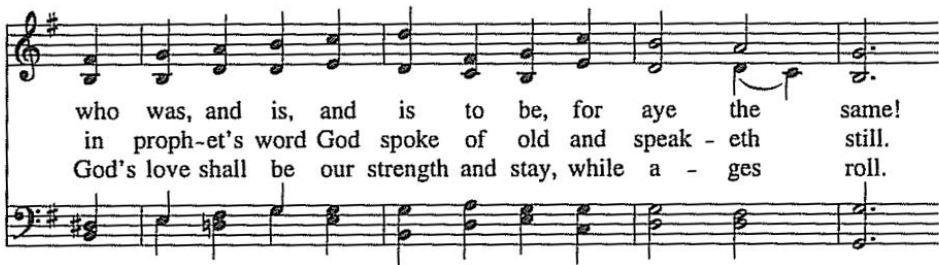
OPENING HYMN

2

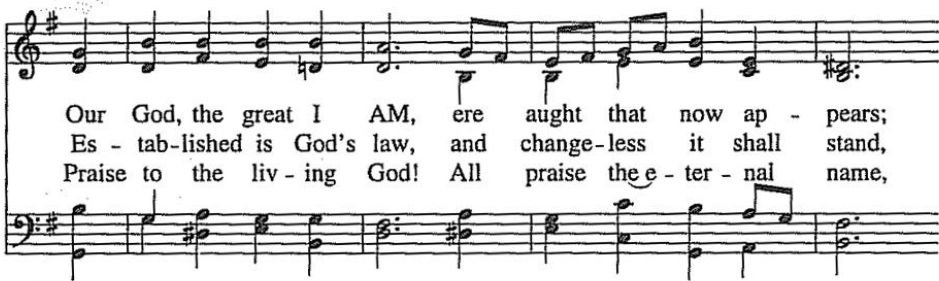
The God of Abraham Praise



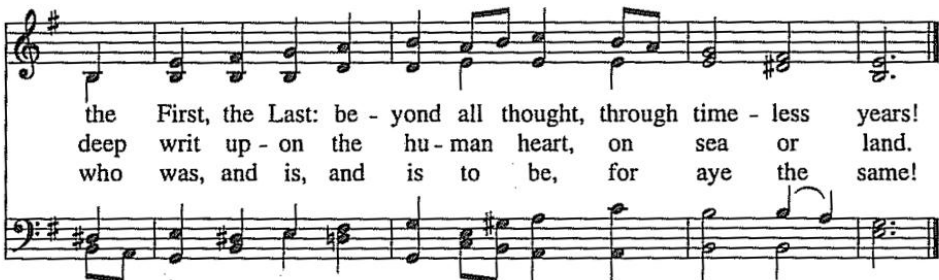
1. The God of A-braham praise, all praise the e-ter-nal name,
 2. God's spir-it flow-eth free, high surg-ing where it will;
 3. We have e-ter-nal life im-plant-ed in our soul;



who was, and is, and is to be, for aye the same!
 in proph-et's word God spoke of old and speak-eth still.
 God's love shall be our strength and stay, while a-ges roll.



Our God, the great I AM, ere aught that now ap-pears;
 Es-tab-lished is God's law, and change-less it shall stand,
 Praise to the liv-ing God! All praise the e-ter-nal name,



the First, the Last: be-yond all thought, through time-less years!
 deep writ up-on the hu-man heart, on sea or land.
 who was, and is, and is to be, for aye the same!

WORDS: Revised Version of the *Yigdal*, Daniel ben Judah, c. 1400;
 tr. Max Landsberg and Newton Mann, 1885, alt.

MUSIC: Traditional Hebrew melody; adapt. Meyer Lyon, 1770

LEONI
 66.84D

This melody is part of the great Jewish tradition, brought to Christian worship in 1772 when Wesleyan Methodist Thomas Olivers heard it sung in the Great Synagogue, Duke's Place, London.

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This Is the Day

Unison

1. This is the day, this is the day that our God has made, that our
 2. This is the day, this is the day Je - sus rose a - gain, Je - sus
 3. This is the day, this is the day when the Spir - it came, when the

God has made; we will re-joyce, we will re-joyce and be glad in it, and be
 rose a - gain; we will re-joyce, we will re-joyce and be glad in it, and be
 Spir - it came; we will re-joyce, we will re-joyce and be glad in it, and be

glad in it. This is the day that our God has made, we will re-joyce and be
 glad in it. This is the day Je - sus rose a - gain, we will re-joyce and be
 glad in it. This is the day when the Spir - it came, we will re-joyce and be

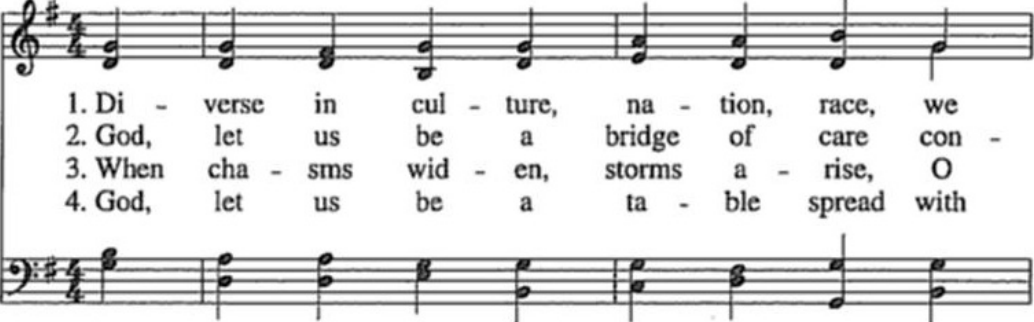
glad in it; this is the day, this is the day that our God has made.
 glad in it; this is the day, this is the day Je - sus rose a - gain.
 glad in it; this is the day, this is the day when the Spir - it came.

WORDS: St. 1 para. Les Garrett, 1967, alt., sts. 2,3, traditional, alt.
 MUSIC: Les Garrett, 1967

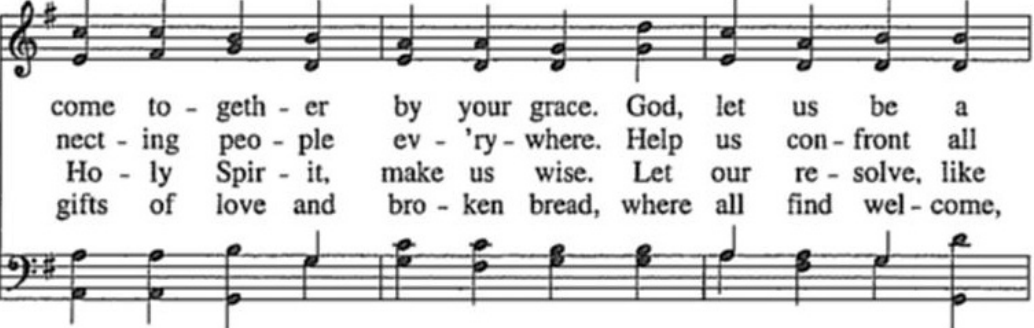
THIS IS THE DAY
 8 10.8 10.99.85

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

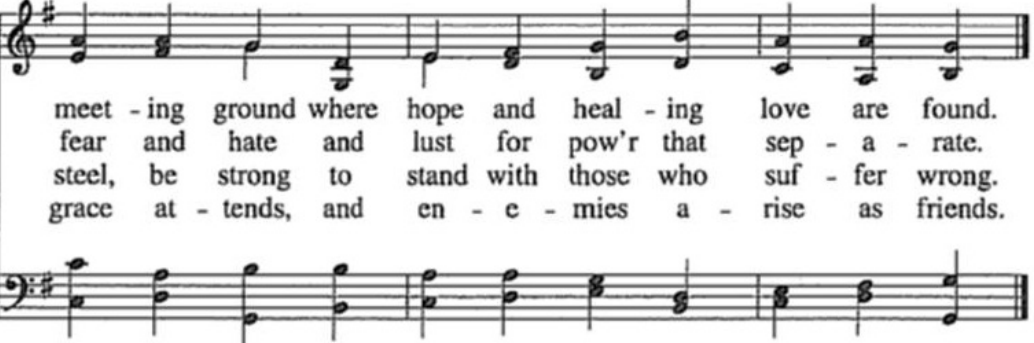
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1. Di - verse in cul - ture, na - tion, race, we
 2. God, let us be a bridge of care con -
 3. When cha - sms wid - en, storms a - rise, O
 4. God, let us be a ta - ble spread with



come to - geth - er by your grace. God, let us be a
 nect - ing peo - ple ev - 'ry - where. Help us con - front all
 Ho - ly Spir - it, make us wise. Let our re - solve, like
 gifts of love and bro - ken bread, where all find wel - come,



meet - ing ground where hope and heal - ing love are found.
 fear and hate and lust for pow'r that sep - a - rate.
 steel, be strong to stand with those who suf - fer wrong.
 grace at - tends, and en - c - mies a - rise as friends.

CLOSING HYMN

Go Now in Peace (Shalom Chaverim)

May be sung as a round



Sha - lom cha-ve-rim, sha - lom cha-ve-rim. Sha - lom, sha - lom.



Le - hit - ra - ot, le - hit - ra - ot, sha - lom, sha - lom.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We celebrate with Emma and Aram Mitchell, who welcomed Juniper Caroline Mitchell into the world on Wednesday, May 7. Emma, Aram, and “Juni” are all doing well!
- We pray for Hui-Hui Hu and her family as they grieve the loss of Hui-Hui’s father, who died in Taiwan on Tuesday, May 13.
- We pray for Martha Williams and her family as they mourn the loss of Martha’s mother Beverly Williams, who died recently.
- We pray for Holly Marple as she stays with family in VT during an extended housing transition.
- We pray for First Church friend Ted Hansen, who is recovering from skin graft surgery after being badly burned.
- We pray for all who are living with significant health challenges and their families and caregivers: Poppy Coffin, who is experiencing Alzheimer’s Disease; Carter West, who is experiencing a chronic neurological disorder; and Keith Manville, who has atypical Parkinsonism. We also pray for those in treatment for cancer: Betsy Opitz; Dana Hunt, Claire Morgan’s mother; Ellen Smith, Devin Hansen’s aunt; Judith Semmler, Alice Napoleon Jones’s mother; Karen Anne Zee’s daughter Becky Collet and her son-in-law Stewart Bailey; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann’s sisters.
- We pray for the thousands of people who have been detained and/or illegally removed from the US without due process. We pray for their families, and for all those who are living under the daily threat of detention. We pray for the future of our democracy, as we witness alarming abuses of power.
- We lift up our near neighbor, Harvard University, in the midst of a confrontation with the federal government over academic independence and freedom of speech. We pray that all institutions continue to find their courage in this moment to speak truth to power.
- We pray for all those who are experiencing economic uncertainty in these times of change and upheaval, including arts organizations that are learning of the loss of federal grant funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, which is in danger of being dismantled.
- We continue to celebrate the dignity and worth of our trans and gender non-conforming siblings who are experiencing an onslaught of prejudicial discrimination condoned by the current administration. We affirm that all of us are beloved in the eyes of God, just as we are.
- We pray for people around the world trapped in cycles of violence and war, especially in Gaza, Ukraine, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We pray especially for the people of Kashmir, where a ceasefire agreement was reached, but then shaken, after weeks of fighting that has killed dozens.
- We continue to pray for our earth and for all creation in the face of the climate crisis.
- 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



A Letter from the Moderator

Have you read [Phil's letter](#) that lays out the expected plan for next steps in our pastoral transition? One way you can be involved is by nominating someone for the Search Committee.

[Complete this form by May 22](#) to share your suggestions!

Discovery Team Conversation

Today, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

The Discovery Team invites you to join us for another time for reflection as we make our way along the journey of pastoral transition. We will share preliminary results from our Pastoral Search Congregational Survey, and then dive into some of the questions that the survey raises.



Parsonage Listening Session

Today, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Harter Room and [via Zoom](#)

We are now at a point where it is time to think about the future of the Parsonage, the house at 44 Garden Street that is owned by First Church to serve as a residence for the Senior Minister. This is an important aspect of our pastoral transition as we will need to have a clear plan for how to

provide housing support when we call a new Senior Minister. Join us for the last of three listening sessions this afternoon after worship. Share your insights and thoughts to help guide the development of some options for us to consider. If you are not able to attend a session or have other questions related to this process, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of the working group members (Jim Cairns, Laurie Burt, David Torrey, Chris Baker, and Audrey Bellinger) directly with your thoughts or concerns.

Youth Group: Visit to Hannan Healthy Foods Farm, Lincoln, MA

Today at 12:45 p.m., leaving from the church

Our teens and group leaders gather after worship to head out for an afternoon of learning and service at a local farm.



Night Song

Today, 7:30 - 8:15 p.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.

[Learn more about Night Song.](#)

EASTERTIDE AT FIRST CHURCH

Aging with Grace Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, May 27, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m., via Zoom

Join us to explore the blessings and challenges of aging. This will be our last conversation until September, and we look forward to looking back and looking forward with you all. For more information (including the Zoom link), please reach out to:

Linda Ziebell (lindaziebell@comcast.net) or Martha Cook (marthamuellercook@gmail.com).



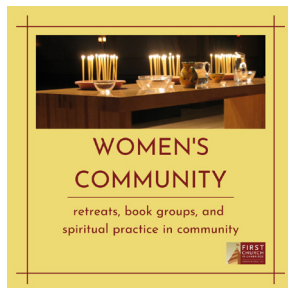
Weekly Biblical Justice Prayer Call

As part of our relationship with Pentecostal Tabernacle Church in Central Square, Cambridge, some of us gather with members of PT for a weekly online Biblical Justice prayer call. Typically, one person offers a reflection on the theme of Biblical Justice and then suggests a few prayer points. 2-3 people on the call volunteer to pray extemporaneously about the prayer points. It has deepened our prayer life and our sense of being part of a broader beloved community. If you are interested in joining the prayer call, please reach out to Alex (alex@steiner-evoy.org) or Meredith (meredithMquinn@gmail.com). The calls are Tuesdays from 1:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Adult Formation: Christian Nationalism Rising

Sunday, June 1, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Perhaps you have heard references to Christian Nationalism in the news lately, as it has become more clearly part of the self-understanding of many in the “MAGA movement.” Following up on his presentation in February, Pastor Mike will review the core meaning of Christian Nationalism, the increasing political and religious sources of the ideology today, and why there is little of Christ in “Christ”ian Nationalism.



Women's Community Book Group

Tuesday, June 3, 6:30 - 7:45 p.m., via Zoom

Please join us for our final book discussion of the year (until September!). We will be reading Tiya Miles's [*Night Flyer: Harriet Tubman and The Faith Dreams of a Free People*](#). According to one review, “Harriet Tubman traversed many boundaries, inner and outer. Now, thanks to Tiya Miles, she becomes an even clearer and sharper signal from the past, one that can help us to echolocate a more just

and sustainable path.” This is both an intense and wonderful way to end the year, and perhaps will give us all so much to think about over the summer. Contact Sue Reynolds (susanreynolds235@gmail.com) or Alex Steinert-Evoy (alex@steinert-evoy.org) to receive the Zoom invitation. All who identify as women are welcome!

LOOKING AHEAD



Children's Sunday on Pentecost **Sunday, June 8, 11:00 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.** **Sanctuary and via livestream**

On the second Sunday of June, it is our custom to celebrate the children's formation programs of the church in a Children's Sunday worship service. We are led in liturgy by younger voices, and we recognize our 4th graders with their own Bibles as they "graduate" from Godly Play. We lift up the volunteer teachers and helpers who make our Church School run, and we take time to ask wondering questions about the stories central to our faith and practice. This year, Children's Sunday coincides with our celebration of Pentecost, so join us to mark the birthday of the church in a joyful service for all ages, infused with the Spirit!

The First Church Musicale **Sunday, June 8, 12:15 - 1:45 p.m.** **Margaret Jewett Hall**

Do we think First Church has got talent? Of course we do! To prove it, we're bringing back an old favorite: The First Church Musicale! All ages are invited to gather in Margaret Jewett Hall for an indoor picnic luncheon, followed by a time of sharing our creative talents with one another.

[Sign up](#) to offer a (short) performance that showcases your skills in music, theater, dance, circus, poetry, stand-up comedy, or quirky tricks.

Questions? [Contact Sarah Higginbotham](#).

Now, go start rehearsing!



Special Congregational Meeting **Sunday, June 22, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.** **Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom**

All members, as you are able, are asked to attend a special congregational meeting at a key point in our pastoral transition. We'll receive the report of our Discovery Team about who we are and what we're heading for as a church. We'll also affirm the membership of our Pastoral Search Committee, receive important information about our finances, and hear proposals for the future of the Parsonage. Lunch will be served, and childcare will be



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, May 19

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Care for the Caregivers, via Zoom

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

Tuesday, May 20

- 6:00 p.m. Finance Committee, via Zoom
7:00 p.m. Beloved Community Group, via Zoom
7:30 p.m. Shelter Oversight Committee, via Zoom

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

Wednesday, May 21

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
7:00 p.m. Arts & Communications Committee, via Zoom
7:00 p.m. Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

Have a church program or event to promote? Complete the [First Church Communications Request](#) form.

Thursday, May 22

- 5:30 p.m. Parsonage Working Group, via Zoom

Friday, May 23

- 12:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
4:00 p.m. Discovery Team Meeting, Harter Room

Sunday, May 25

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
11:00 a.m. Hybrid Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
12:15 p.m. Refreshments in Margaret Jewett Hall
7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

Monday, May 26 - Church Office & Building Closed for Memorial Day



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First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
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