

Juneteenth Sunday June 15, 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

June 15, 2025

Liturgist Bold Black Ballerina (BBB)

Preaching Today Mike Solberg, Interim Senior Minister

Assisting in Worship Laurie Friedman, Clerk

Sarah Fujiwara, Poppy Milner, Paula Paris, and Gail Willett,

participating in the ritual of commemoration and recommitment

Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Communications & Christian Formation

Jean Dany Joachim, Poet in Residence

Lee Prouty, Facilities Manager

Susan Redlich and Peggy Stevens, offering a Ministry Moment

Peter Sykes, *Music Director* Laurie Williams, *soloist*

Bulletin Cover Image detail from First Church's Wade in the Water art

Today's Programs and Events

9:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

9:45 a.m.
10:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
12:15 p.m.
Young Adults: Breakfast Before Church, Felipe's in Harvard Square Parsonage Working Group Update, Harter Room and via Zoom Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream One-to-One Conversations at Coffee Hour, Margaret Jewett Hall

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 <u>online</u>, 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 <u>contact information</u> 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.

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY Adoration Florence Price

*HYMN Wade in the Water

Refrain: Wade in the water, wade in the water, children, Wade in the water, God's gonna trouble the water.

See that host all dressed in white God's gonna trouble the water They look like the ones who saw the light God's gonna trouble the water

Refrain

See that band all dressed in red...

Looks like the band that Moses led...

Look over yonder, what do you see?...
The Spirit coming for you and me

Refrain

If you don't believe I've been redeemed...
Just follow me down to the Jordan's stream...

Oh we've seen trouble, and we've seen woe,... But our God will bring us safely through...

Refrain (twice through)

*CALL TO WORSHIP Bold Black Ballerina

- L: Come, beloved of God, come, all who thirst for hope and healing!
- C: Come, all ancestors and descendants, all elders and children!
- L: From generation to generation, the Spirit sweeps across the oceans of creation and rests in the rivers of our baptisms.
- C: She troubles the waters of our complicity and leads us to streams of justice and joy.
- L: Come, beloved, on this day God has made, wade in the water, together!
- C: All thanks, glory, and praise be to her holy name! 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.

ANTHEM

Ella's Song

Bernice Johnson Reagon

(We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest)
Laurie Williams and Beth Spaulding, sopranos

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION AND SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

from "Black Liturgies" by Cole Arthur Riley

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

C: God of renewal, we confess that too often

we have desired justice without repair.

Liberation without healing.

We have purged our stories of nuance,

and exalted tragedy as the most important thing.

Other times we have demanded a rushed unity of the oppressed,

without fully contending with all the ways

the union is still to their demise.

We have not offered meaningful reparations,

choosing to retain wealth that never really belonged to us.

And, as for our own healing, we are terrified.

We confess that we sometimes forget

who we are when we aren't hurting.

We want more for ourselves,

but something keeps pulling us back to loveless places.

Have mercy on us in our resistance,

that we would pursue repair

and enter the healing we were meant for. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

from "Black Liturgies" by Cole Arthur Riley

*GREETING OF PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: And also with you!

*HYMN 235

Let It Breathe on Me

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

Sarah Higginbotham

All Different Now

written by Angela Johnson; illustrated by E.B. Lewis

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

All: Come Holy Spirit and speak to us now.

Open our minds to receive your wisdom; open our hearts to receive your truth; open our bodies to receive your hope;

transform our lives by your power and grace. Amen.

FAITH IN ART THROUGH THE SPOKEN WORD

Jean Dany Joachim

READING Luke 19:1-10

REFLECTION The Necessity, and Healing Power, of Reparations Mike Solberg

*HYMN 259 Awake, Awake to Love and Work

COMMEMORATING AND RECOMMITTING

INTRODUCTION AND BLESSING OF THE WATER

Sarah Fujiwara

READING OF NAMESSee the full list of names on pages 6-7.

Laurie Williams, Gail Willett, Poppy Milner, Jean Dany Joachim, and Paula Paris

PRAYER

L: Holding memory, we proclaim:

C: We will not be owned.

CONGREGATIONAL SONG

I'm On My Way

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MOMENT

Susan Redlich and Peggy Stevens

CALL TO SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Laurie Friedman

PRAYERS FOR 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 <u>all-in-one link</u> for gifts from your bank account or by credit/debit card:



OFFERTORY Oh Freedom

Spiritual, arr. Jack Best

*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.

GOING FORTH

*HYMN 348

Lord, Make Me More Holy

*BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Thuma Mina

Hymn 344

Send me, Lord.

Send me, Jesus; send me, Jesus; send me, Jesus; send me, Lord!

Lead me, Lord.

Lead me, Jesus...

Fill me, Lord.

Fill me Jesus...

Thuma mina.

Thuma mina... somandla!

EXTENDING WORSHIP TO HOME

(for discussion and/or contemplation on your own schedule following the service)

- What has been your experience with reconciliation?
 Are you prone to rushing to resolution? Why or why not?
- How have you seen concepts of unity weaponized against the vulnerable?
- Where have you seen repair practiced well? What made it sincere?
- What does healing in relationship to the body look like for you?
- How can you heal your relationship with your body without demanding anything from it?



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.



259 Awake, Awake to Love and Work





un - til

un - til

ful.

we meet

we meet

a - gain.

a - gain.

Lord, make me more hum - ble,

Lord, make me more faith -

WODDS and Mileto, Action



REMEMBERING AND HONORING

From 1638-1830 more than one hundred persons either of African descent or native to this land are recorded in the records of First Church in Cambridge. They were baptized, married, and buried here; some joined as full or partial members. Between 1698 and 1776, when slavery was legal in Massachusetts, at least 36 people — 33 Africans and 3 people identified as Indians — were enslaved by members of First Church and became members of First Church, according to our records. Each accepted the church's covenant and was baptized. Twelve were "admitted to full communion." The rest had limited or no access. In addition, there were over 100 enslaved persons listed in our wider records. Enslaved members and Harvard students sat in the balcony — in separate sections. We do not know if they joined willingly or unwillingly. We honor and remember their names, their humanity, and their God-given dignity today.

- 1698 **Philip**, African man enslaved in service to Mr. Danforth
- 1705 Mingo, African man enslaved in service to Mr. Town
- 1705 **Charles**, African man enslaved in service to Mr. Town
- 1705 Jeffry, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Goff
- 1705 **Scipio**, an African man enslaved in service to William Brattle, fifth minister of First Church
- 1727 Joseph English, an Indigenous man, enslaved in service to William Russell
- 1728 **Pompey**, an African man enslaved in service to Nathaniel Appleton, sixth minister of First Church
- 1729 **Titus**, an indigenous man, enslaved in service to Benjamin Wadsworth, President of Harvard College
- 1729 Rose, an African woman enslaved in service to A. Bordman
- 1731 **Philicia**, an African woman enslaved in service to Major Brattle
- 1736 Hannibal, an African man enslaved in service to Dr. Wigglesworth
- 1736 Margaret, an African woman enslaved in service to the widow Oliver
- 1737 Roger, an African man enslaved in service to Henry Prentice
- 1737 Zillah, an African woman enslaved in service to Major Brattle
- 1740 Lucy, an indigenous woman enslaved in service to Mr. Bordman
- 1740 **Venus**, an African woman enslaved in service to Madam Wadsworth
- 1740 **Cuffy**, an African man enslaved in service to Lieutenant Governor Phipps
- 1740 **Toby**, an African man enslaved in service to Samuel Whitemore
- 1741 Jack, an African man enslaved in service to the widow Tufts

REMEMBERING AND HONORING

- 1741 **Cuffy**, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Judah Monis
- 1741 Flora, an African woman enslaved in service to Mr. Foxcroft
- 1742 **York**, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Trowbridge
- 1744 Harry, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Brandon
- 1745 Rose, an African woman enslaved in service to Lieutenant Governor Phipps
- 1745 **Cato**, an African man enslaved in service to Madam Brown
- 1749 **Leos**, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Foxcroft
- 1753 Jane, an African woman enslaved in service to Mr. Kent
- 1755 James, an African man enslaved in service to Lieutenant Governor Phipps
- 1760 Peter, an African man enslaved in service to Moses Bordman's widow
- 1761 **Cato**, an African man enslaved in service to Jonathan Hastings
- 1768 Jane, an African woman enslaved in service to Elizabeth Nutting
- 1768 Violet, an African woman enslaved in service to Mr. Faneuil
- 1769 **Philip**, an African man enslaved in service to Mr. Abraham Watson
- 1771 Jerusha, an African woman enslaved in service to Lieutenant John Dickson
- 1771 Anne, an African woman enslaved in service to Jonathan Hastings, Esq.
- 1776 **Dilla**. an African woman enslaved in service to Samuel White of Watertown

In addition, we also honor **Tony and Cuba**, and their children **James, Dorrenda, Flora, Darby, Cyrus, and Catherine**, enslaved by the Royall and Vassal families, who had many connections to Cambridge and First Church. Our membership records indicate that Cuba was baptized, "by her own desire," on September 13, 1812, just three days before she died.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- In this tense moment in our country, we pray for all those standing up in their homes or on the streets to resist all abuses of power, especially those paying significant personal costs. We pray for all those who have been detained and/or illegally removed from the country without due process, and for all their loved ones. We pray for the grace to love our enemies, and the wisdom and courage to know who they are. We pray for our country, that the good may be nourished and grow, and that that which defies the will of God may weaken and wither, then be transformed and be given new and holy life.
- We lift up the Harvard University community, including people from our congregation, in the midst of a confrontation with the federal government over academic independence and freedom of speech.
- 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; Louise Higginbotham, Sarah's mother; 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 all those grieving the loss of life from a horrific plan crash on Thursday in Ahmedabad in the western Indian state of Gujarat.
- We pray for all those who are experiencing economic uncertainty in these times of change and upheaval, especially as federal budget negotiations reflect the real potential for devastating cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and the SNAP program, among other vital supports for those in need.
- During this Pride Month, 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, where people are starving; in Ukraine; in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and in the Kashmir region of India and Pakistan.
- 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 <u>First Church List</u> to see and offer up more community prayer requests.



In Memoriam

A celebration of the life of First Church member George Battit will take place on Friday, June 27, at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary and via livestream. You can read about George in his <u>online obituary</u>.

TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



Young Adults: Breakfast Before Church Today, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., Felipe's in Harvard Square

Join our active young adults group (20s and 30s) for a casual breakfast and conversation before we walk over for Sunday worship service. This event is open to anyone in the age group, whether you're just exploring First Church, or have been here a while and are looking to meet some new folks. To learn about

upcoming events, email: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org

Parsonage Working Group Update

Today, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Harter Room and via Zoom

Drawing on the work begun by the Assets Group three years ago, the Parsonage Working Group has spent several months exploring the best ways to utilize the asset of the 44 Garden Street property and ensure long-term



housing support for our lead minister. Based on the rich discussions in a series of listening sessions over the past month, the working group is finalizing options for what to do with the Parsonage that will be presented at the Special Congregational Meeting on June 22. This final session will provide an opportunity to discuss the options they will be recommending and to ask detailed questions even before the June 22 meeting. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!



Juneteenth Worship

Today, 11:00 a.m. - 12:10 p.m., Sanctuary and via livestream

Gather with us to honor Juneteenth. With leadership by our Beloved Community team, we will be remembering and honoring our ancestors who were enslaved by others at First Church, speaking the names of those who are known to us at this time. We will also be blessed by our *Wade in the Water* art installation, which honors by name these enslaved ancestors, and we will recommit to our God-given work of collective liberation. Join us for this important celebration of survival, resistance, and resilience.

One-to-One Conversations at Coffee Hour Today at 12:15, Margaret Jewett Hall

A congregation's power comes from its people! During this transition time, you're invited to spend some intentional, one-to-one time during Coffee Hour, getting to know someone at First Church. The practice of one-to-one relational meetings (taught in the Greater Boston Interfaith



Organization) has grounded almost every major social movement of the last 100 years, and in a time when many social institutions are threatened, deepening and growing our personal relationships with each other is one of the most powerful things we can do. We'll provide prompts, and coffee! You bring curiosity about what drives your fellow churchgoers.

FIRST CHURCH REPARATIONS FUND

Contribute to the Reparations Fund in 2025

The First Church Reparations Fund seeks to repay, in a small way, the debt owed to Black and Indigenous communities for centuries of harm. Money raised in the Reparations Fund in 2024 was dispersed in the following ways:

• \$21,000 was given to "The Collective," people of African descent engaged in activism and anti-racist work who, over the past 3 years of the Reparations Fund, have supported urgent immigration needs, prevented families from eviction, aided small business ventures, and more.



- \$21,000 was given to the <u>Slavery Legacy History Coalition</u>, founded by the Lloyd family who are direct descendants of enslaved people in First Church's archives. First Church is a founding member of the Coalition.
- \$10,500 was given to <u>blackyard</u>, a Cambridge-based, black-led grassroots initiative offering vital support through a unique blend of homeschool co-op opportunities (including for suspended and expelled youth), a welcoming creative drop-in space for families, and transformative after-school programming for ALL Black, Indigenous, and Brown youth, including Queer & Trans youth.

Your continued support is vital to the First Church Reparations Fund for ongoing support of "The Collective," support for direct descendants of enslaved people in our church records, and for identification of a local indigenous group to receive a portion of the funds in 2025 as a small restitution for the leading role a First Church member played in the genocide of indigenous people.

You may give online; please be sure to choose "Reparations Fund." Or you may write a check payable to "First Church in Cambridge" with "Reparations Fund" in the memo line.

Learn more about First Church's Reparations work.

Give to the Reparations Fund.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



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 provided. Come, and participate in the life of our community as we journey together in faith.

Call to Special Congregational Meeting

Notice is hereby given that a Special Congregational Meeting of First Church in Cambridge, Congregational,
United Church of Christ,
will be held in its 390th year at 12:30 p.m.,
Sunday the 22nd of June 2025,
in person in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom conference
for the following purposes:



- 1. To receive the report of the 2025 Discovery Team
- To affirm the membership of a search committee for the next settled minister of First Church
- 3. To hear recommendations from the Parsonage Working group on the future of 44 Garden Street, and
- 4. To receive a financial update from the Treasurers for the current fiscal year.

No other business may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of the Executive Council,

Laurie Friedman, Clerk Cambridge, Massachusetts April 29, 2025

LOOKING AHEAD



Summer Building Hours

Because of our limited Sexton staffing and the slower building pace during the summer, we have reduced our building hours. Going forward, the building will close at 2:00 p.m. on most Saturdays and Sundays. In July, the building will close in the early evenings on most weekdays, and after the conclusion of Friday Café on Fridays. Closing times may vary if there are previously scheduled events taking place. If you have any questions about the summer building schedule, please contact Director of Operations <u>Kirsten Manville</u>.

Intergenerational Field Games Sunday, June 29, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Church lawn and Cambridge Common

Join us on the lawn (weather permitting) following worship for relayraces, group improv games, and other field day activities. We will start alongside our first summer outdoor Coffee Hour. All ages and abilities welcome! Questions? Talk to Casey Marsh (kc.marsh103@gmail.com).



Seeking Church School Teachers for 2025-26

First Church has a lively and varied Church School program for children in PreK through high school that relies on volunteer teachers to be successful. Accompanying our youngest members on their journey of spiritual formation is an opportunity to live out the promise we make at each baptism to "help them grow in faith." All

lesson plans and leader guides provided, as well as support from Sarah! We have openings for teachers in the following classes/groups:

- **Godly Play,** a Montessori-inspired curriculum of storytelling and wondering for PreK-1st graders and 2nd-4th graders
- Middlers, a book and Bible study for 5th graders
- **Bible 101,** a two-year introduction to the Bible for 6th & 7th graders (they will be in Year B: New Testament)
- **Confirmation,** a one-year curriculum preparing our 8th & 9th graders leading to an affirmation of faith and the choice to join as members of First Church
- Youth Group, a variety of fun and formational activities for 8-12th graders If you'd like to learn more, please reach out to Sarah Higginbotham, who would love to talk with you!

-12-

LOOKING AHEAD

Save the Date!

All-Church Fall Retreat at Craigville Retreat Center Friday, September 26 - Sunday, September 28, 2025

The All-Church Retreat at Craigville is an amazing opportunity to spend time with our multigenerational church community in a glorious location on the Cape. Join Sarah Higginbotham, Leslie Pelton-Cairns, and other church leaders for a weekend of community-building in fellowship, formation, and fun. Take advantage of large group gatherings, small group sessions, supervised play/crafting time for kids,



worship, group games, a "campfire" sing-a-long, 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 26, and stay through midday on Sunday, September 28, for the full event; or come for a portion of the weekend, for just one night, or even a daytrip on Saturday.

Save the weekend on your calendar now! Registration will open soon; stay tuned for details on this year's retreat theme. Questions? Contact <u>Sarah Higginbotham.</u>



Spring & Summer Clothing Donations for the Friday Café

Donations should be bagged, labeled "Friday Café," and left at the church office at 11 Garden St., Cambridge, during regular business hours. Please check our Donation Guidelines to find out more about what we can (and cannot) accept for distribution.



Monday, June 16

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

6:00 p.m. Faith & Life Group: Care for the Caregivers, via Zoom

See our <u>Events Calendar</u> for Zoom links and details.

Sign up <u>here</u> to receive our weekly e-newsletter.

Tuesday, June 17

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

Have a church program or event to promote?
Complete the <u>First Church</u>
Communications Request form.

Wednesday, June 18

9:30 a.m.
3:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.
Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom
Arts & Communications Committee, via Zoom
Missions & Social Justice Committee, via Zoom

Thursday, June 19 - Church Office & Building Closed for Juneteenth Holiday

Sunday, June 22

10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream12:30 p.m. Special Congregational Meeting and Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall



scan for online bulletin

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