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Morning Worship  
June 22, 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 22, 2025

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Liturgist</b>            | Heather Stewart   |
| <b>Preaching Today</b>      | Mike Solberg, <i>Interim Senior Minister</i>  |
| <b>Assisting in Worship</b> | Justin Brueggeman, <i>guest musician</i><br>Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Director of Communications &amp; Christian Formation</i><br>Karen McArthur, <i>Minister of Stewardship &amp; Finance</i><br>Lee Prouty, <i>Facilities Manager</i><br>Susan Reynolds, <i>offering a Ministry Moment</i> |
| <b>Bulletin Cover Image</b> | First Church's tower after a storm  |

### Today's Programs and Events

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  |
| 11:00 a.m. | Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and <a href="#">via livestream</a>   |
| 12:30 p.m. | Special Congregational Meeting, Margaret Jewett Hall and <a href="#">via Zoom</a> |

### 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](http://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](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.

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

Have an edit or update for our website?  
Complete the [FCC Website Changes](#) form

## GATHERING

**VOLUNTARY**

Adagio

Felix Mendelssohn

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Heather Stewart

L: The grace of Jesus, the Light of Life, be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

*(Please rise as you are able.)*

L: Friends, this is the first day of the week,  
the day Jesus was raised, revealing the Divine fullness of life:

**C: and we come to discover the fullness of life in him!**

L: It may not be what we expect,

**C: but it will be more than we can imagine.**

L: Let us worship the Living God!

**C: Alleluia!**

### \*HYMN 18

Praise to the Living God

## WORDS OF WELCOME

**ANTHEM**

Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree

Poston arr. Sykes

## CONFESSING

### INVITATION TO CONFESSION AND SILENCE

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray:

**C: Most merciful God,**

**we confess that we have strayed from your way, in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**Grant us true repentance, and hearts eager for the work of repair.**

**Through the love and faithfulness of Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us and forgive us;**

**that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,**

**to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

*\*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.*

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

### \*GREETING OF PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

### \*HYMN 79

Love God with Your Heart

*(Sing through twice.)*

## 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.**

### READING

Philippians 3:20-21

### SERMON

Life and Faith from the Edge

Mike Solberg

### \*HYMN 363

In the Midst of New Dimensions

## SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Higginbotham

### MINISTRY MOMENT

Susan Reynolds

### PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCH AND WORLD

Karen McArthur

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**

Antiphon

Bourland

## **\*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 241**

We Will Build Your Church, O Christ

## **\*BENEDICTION**

## **VOLUNTARY**

Dialogue on the Grand Jeux

Francois Couperin



### **First Church Land Acknowledgment**

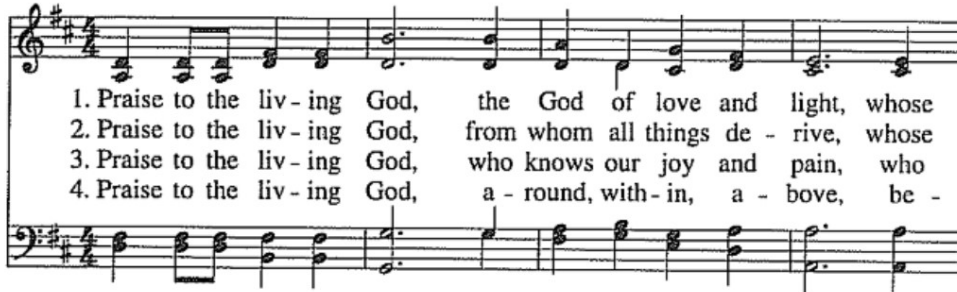
*We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.*

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

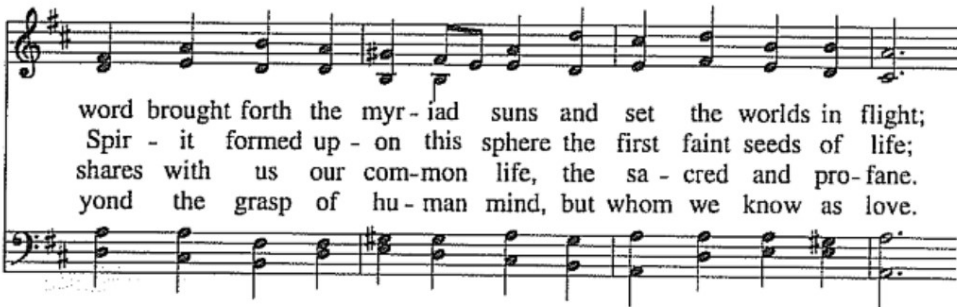
# OPENING HYMN

18

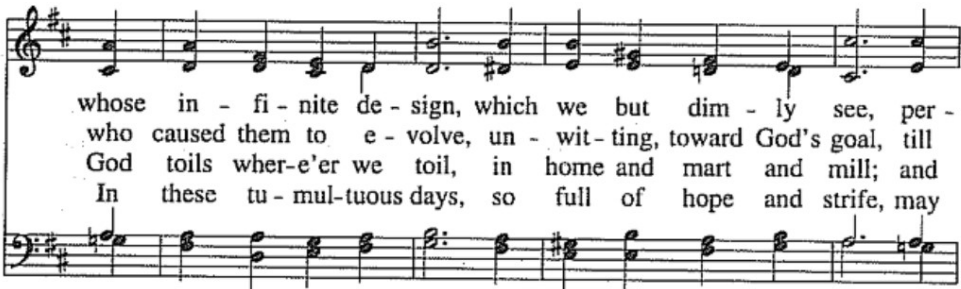
## Praise to the Living God



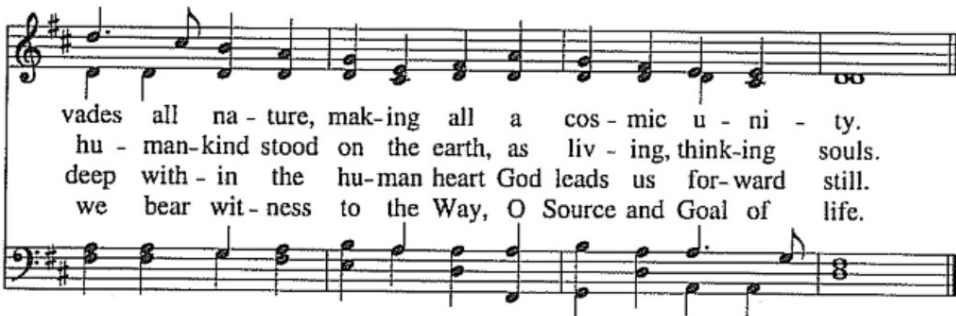
1. Praise to the liv - ing God, the God of love and light, whose  
 2. Praise to the liv - ing God, from whom all things de - rive, whose  
 3. Praise to the liv - ing God, who knows our joy and pain, who  
 4. Praise to the liv - ing God, a - round, with - in, a - bove, be -



word brought forth the myr - iad suns and set the worlds in flight;  
 Spir - it formed up - on this sphere the first faint seeds of life;  
 shares with us our com-mon life, the sa - cred and pro-fane.  
 yond the grasp of hu-man mind, but whom we know as love.



whose in - fi - nite de - sign, which we but dim - ly see, per -  
 who caused them to e - volve, un - wit - ting, toward God's goal, till  
 God toils wher-e'er we toil, in home and mart and mill; and  
 In these tu - mul-tuous days, so full of hope and strife, may



vades all na - ture, mak - ing all a cos - mic u - ni - ty.  
 hu - man-kind stood on the earth, as liv - ing, think - ing souls.  
 deep with - in the hu-man heart God leads us for-ward still.  
 we bear wit - ness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

WORDS: Curtis Beach, 1966, alt.  
 MUSIC: George J. Elvey, 1868

DIADEMATA  
 SMD

79

## Love God with Your Heart

*May be sung as a round*



Love God with your heart and your neigh-bor as your - self;



Love God with your mind and your neigh-bor as your - self;



Love God with your strength and your neigh-bor as your - self.

WORDS: Matthew 22:37-39, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:27

MUSIC: Folk melody

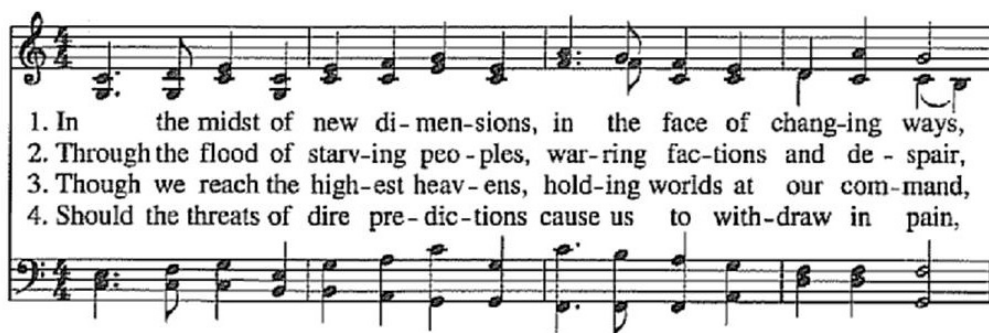
LOVE GOD  
12.12.12

This text is known as 'The Great Commandment.'

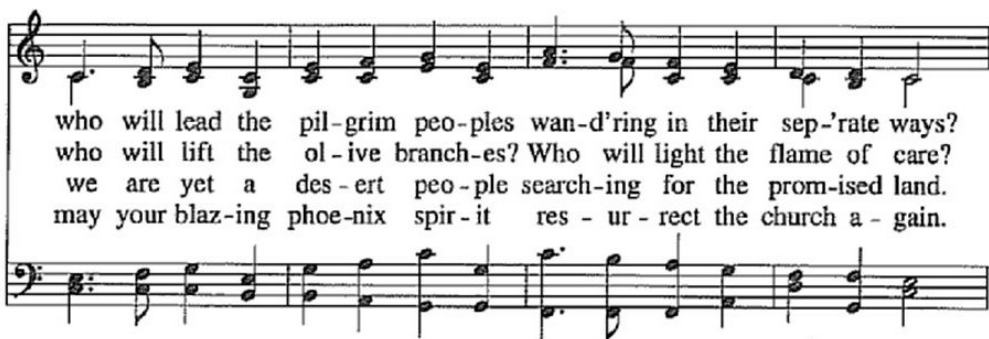


# In the Midst of New Dimensions

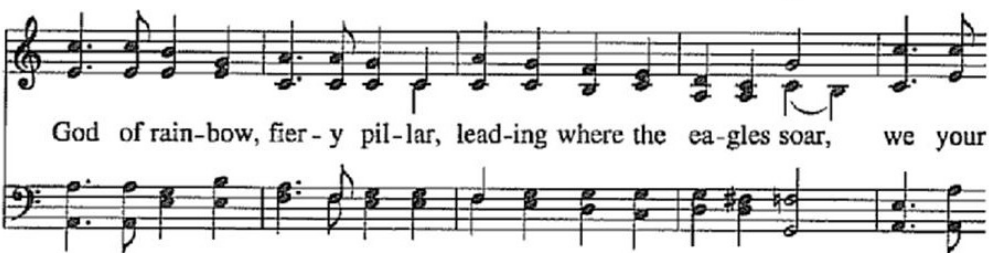
363



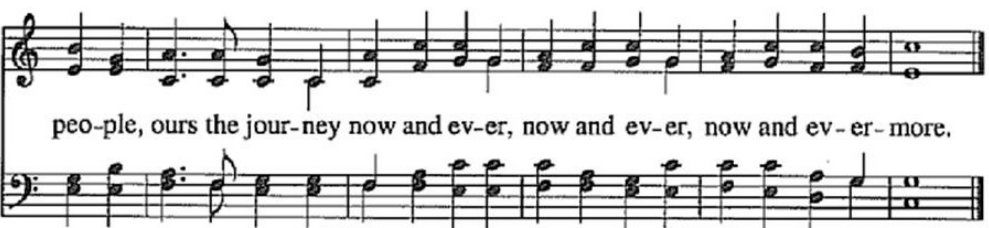
1. In the midst of new di-men-sions, in the face of chang-ing ways,  
 2. Through the flood of starv-ing peo-ples, war-ring fac-tions and de - spair,  
 3. Though we reach the high-est heav-ens, hold-ing worlds at our com-mand,  
 4. Should the threats of dire pre-dic-tions cause us to with-draw in pain,



who will lead the pil-grim peo-ples wan-d'ring in their sep-'rate ways?  
 who will lift the ol-ive branch-es? Who will light the flame of care?  
 we are yet a des-ert peo-ple search-ing for the prom-ised land.  
 may your blaz-ing phoe-nix spir-it res - ur - rect the church a - gain.



God of rain-bow, fier - y pil-lar, lead-ing where the ea-gles soar, we your

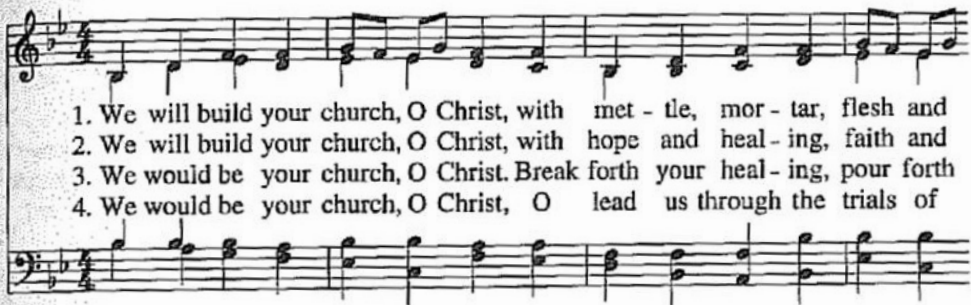


peo-ple, ours the jour-ney now and ev-er, now and ev-er, now and ev-er-more.

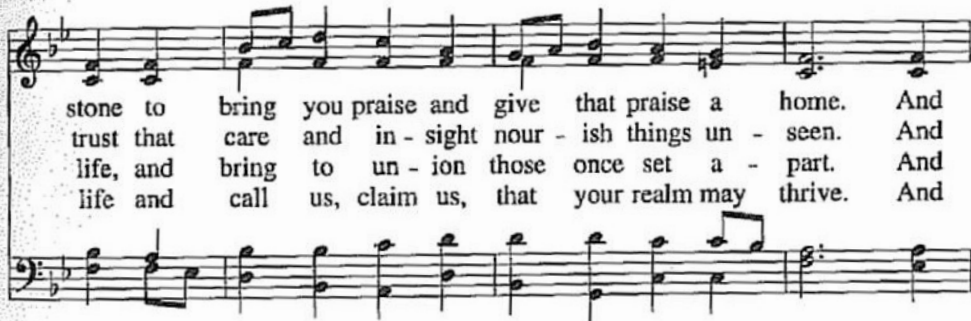


# CLOSING HYMN

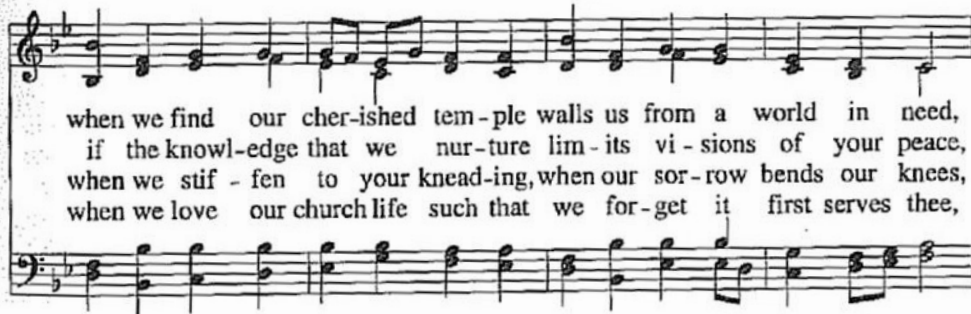
## We Will Build Your Church, O Christ 241



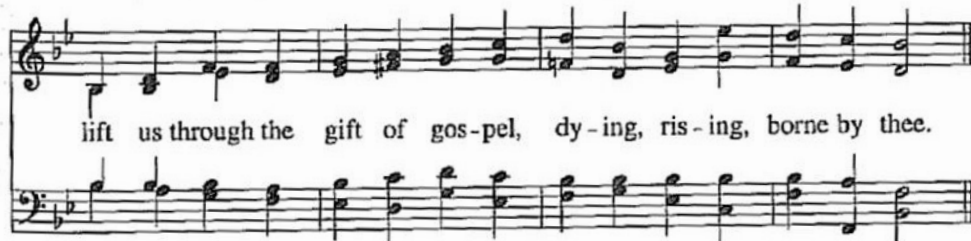
1. We will build your church, O Christ, with met - tle, mor - tar, flesh and  
 2. We will build your church, O Christ, with hope and heal - ing, faith and  
 3. We would be your church, O Christ. Break forth your heal - ing, pour forth  
 4. We would be your church, O Christ, O lead us through the trials of



stone to bring you praise and give that praise a home. And  
 trust that care and in - sight nour - ish things un - seen. And  
 life, and bring to un - ion those once set a - part. And  
 life and call us, claim us, that your realm may thrive. And



when we find our cher - ished tem - ple walls us from a world in need,  
 if the knowl - edge that we nur - ture lim - its vi - sions of your peace,  
 when we stif - fen to your knead - ing, when our sor - row bends our knees,  
 when we love our church life such that we for - get it first serves thee,



lift us through the gift of gos - pel, dy - ing, ris - ing, borne by thee.

WORDS: Gail S. Ransom, 1984, alt.  
 MUSIC: Gail S. Ransom, 1984; harm. FCC, 1997

NEEDVILLE  
 78 10.9787

## COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- In this tense time 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 touched by the political assassination of Rep. Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, and the attack on Rep. John Hoffman, and his wife Yvette. 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 plane crash last week 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 and in the face of a recent Supreme Court ruling that upholds a ban on gender-affirming care for youth in Tennessee, 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 all the innocent victims of the deadly power games of political rulers: in the Middle East, including the wars between Israel and Gaza, and between Israel and Iran; in Ukraine; in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and in the Kashmir region of India and Pakistan. In these seemingly intractable wars, may a love of God and respect for human life lead anew to peace for all.
- We continue to pray for our earth and for all creation in the face of the climate crisis.
- We pray for all those giving and receiving care, compassion, and needed services from First Church's homeless ministries, both in the First Church Shelter and at the Friday Café. We continue to pray and work for a just society where housing is recognized as a human right.

***Join the [First Church List](#) to see and offer up more community prayer requests.***

## TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



### Special Congregational Meeting

Today, 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.

*You may review the Discovery Team's report [here](#).*

### 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
2. 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

## SUMMER AT FIRST CHURCH



### 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 [Kirsten Manville](#).

### 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 [online obituary](#).



### Breaking Bread Together: Stewardship Meals

As the school year winds down and summer gatherings begin, the Stewardship Committee is organizing a series of meals to help foster community, connection, and a sense of belonging. A few folks have kindly agreed to host - now we just need to find friends to join in!

If you would be interested in sharing a meal and connecting with about 8-10 others from First Church, please express your interest by completing [this form](#). All you need to do is indicate your interest and whether you are available on the dates noted, and the Stewardship Committee will follow up to confirm your date, time, location, and coordinate a potluck sign-up!

### Invitation to Contribute to Coffee Hour

Please help us make worship as delicious as it is spiritually sustaining! For Coffee Hour each week we are looking for 2-4 households to bring 3 dozen cookies each, or the equivalent of snacks such as cheese & crackers or fruit. In general, the church has a No Nuts policy. If possible, please include a brief list of relevant ingredients for those with allergies.



[SIGN UP HERE.](#)

Questions? Difficulty with the online signup? Contact Lisa DiNardo at [ladinardo@hotmail.com](mailto:ladinardo@hotmail.com).

## SUMMER AT FIRST CHURCH



### 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 relay-races, 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](mailto:kc.marsh103@gmail.com)).

### Greater Boston Interfaith Organization Relational Training

**Tuesday, July 1, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

#### St. James Episcopal Church, 1991 Mass Ave., Cambridge

Join leaders from GBIO institutions across Cambridge and Somerville for a training session dedicated to one-on-one relational meetings, the foundational tool we use for community organizing. You'll learn about what makes relational meetings effective and how you can use them to build power for justice within your networks. [Register here to attend.](#)



### 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!



## 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 [Sarah Higginbotham](#).



### **Summer Worship Begins at 10 O’Clock!**

In July and August, we begin our worship one hour earlier at 10:00 a.m., followed by lemonade and other refreshments on the lawn (weather permitting).

Join us for one more 11:00 a.m. service on June 29;  
then mark your calendar to arrive by 10:00 a.m. starting on July 6.

## 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 [Slavery Legacy History Coalition](#), 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 [blackyard](#), 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.](#)





# THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



## Monday, June 23

- 4:30 p.m. Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom  
7:00 p.m. Discovery Team / Search Committee Joint Meeting, via Zoom

## Tuesday, June 24

- 7:00 p.m. Executive Council, via Zoom

## Friday, June 27

- 11:00 a.m. Memorial Service for George Battit, Sanctuary and via livestream

## Sunday, June 29

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  
11:00 a.m. Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream  
12:15 p.m. Refreshments on the Lawn with Intergenerational Field Games

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

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

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



SCAN ME

scan for online bulletin

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

617-547-2724 • [info@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:info@firstchurchcambridge.org) • [www.firstchurchcambridge.org](http://www.firstchurchcambridge.org)

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