



Morning Worship
June 29, 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 29, 2025

Liturgist	Linda Ziebell
Preaching Today	Mike Solberg, <i>Interim Senior Minister</i>
Assisting in Worship	Justin Brueggeman, <i>guest musician</i> Sarah Higginbotham, <i>Director of Communications & Christian Formation</i>
Bulletin Cover Image	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 via livestream
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments on the Lawn with Intergenerational Field Games

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

VOLUNTARY

Our Father in Heaven

J.S. Bach

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Linda Ziebell

- L: Beloved people, God has set this day before us—
C: a day of resurrection, and thus a day of renewal and praise.
L: God has set our lives before us—
C: a span of years in which to love, and learn, and serve.
L: God has set a sense of the Eternal upon our hearts and minds,
C: so that we might live into the fullness of Divine love.
L: With gratitude for this moment with Jesus among us, let us worship God.

***HYMN 19**

Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Know That God Loves You

Cooman

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.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

**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.*

***GREETING OF PEACE**

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: **And also with you!**

***HYMN 510**

O Christian, Love

Children are invited to remain in worship today, and they are welcome to visit the Children's Book Corner (near the side door) at any time. If young ones need a break, they are welcome to join the Nursery in Sage Hall (our basement playspace) or on the outdoor playground.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

READING

Galatians 5:1, 13-14

READING

Luke 10:25-37

SERMON

Is Love Really Enough?

Mike Solberg

***HYMN 409**

How Can We Name a Love

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

COVENANT TESTIMONY

All: We believe that our covenant with God and each other calls us:
to love God with all that we are,
and our close and distant neighbors as ourselves;
to seek peace through justice and equity for all people;
to engage in nonviolent resistance to evil;
to respect and preserve God's earth;
to foster community across every barrier and division;
to attend to God's unfolding and reconciling Word;
to support each other in our frailties and strengths,
that we may embody that love which overcomes fear and death.
This we testify, confessing always our reliance on God's grace in Christ,
and on the power of the Holy Spirit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Higginbotham

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 [all-in-one link](#) for gifts from your
bank account or by credit/debit card:*



OFFERTORY Laudate Nomen Domini Tye

*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 C-13 Christ, We Meet You on Our Way

*BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY Prelude in C major D. Buxtehude



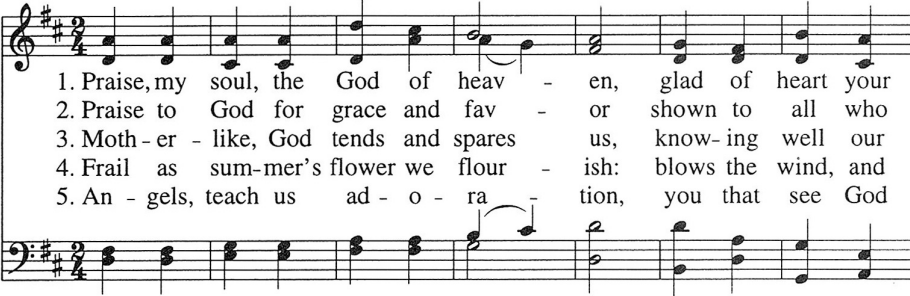
First Church Land Acknowledgment
We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc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

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

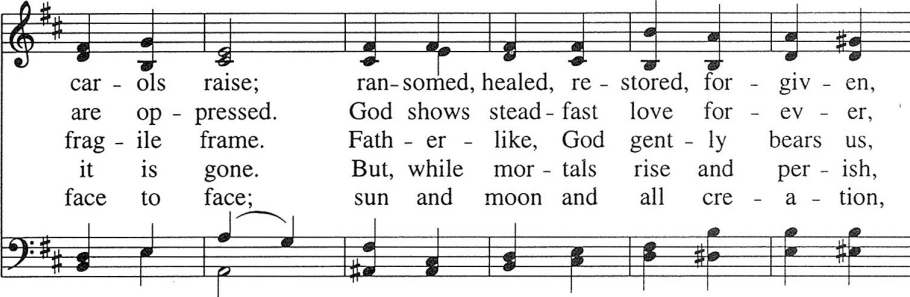
OPENING HYMN

Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven

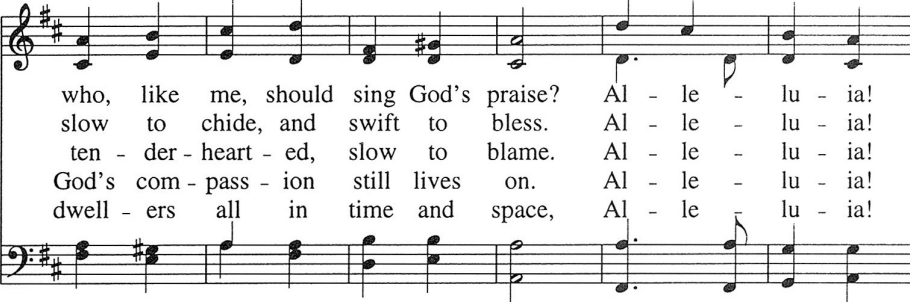
19



1. Praise, my soul, the God of heav - en, glad of heart your
 2. Praise to God for grace and fav - or shown to all who
 3. Moth - er - like, God tends and spares us, know - ing well our
 4. Frail as sum - mer's flower we flour - ish: blows the wind, and
 5. An - gels, teach us ad - o - ra - tion, you that see God



car - ols raise; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,
 are op - pressed. God shows stead - fast love for - ev - er,
 frag - ile frame. Fath - er - like, God gent - ly bears us,
 it is gone. But, while mor - tals rise and per - ish,
 face to face; sun and moon and all cre - a - tion,



who, like me, should sing God's praise? Al - le - lu - ia!
 slow to chide, and swift to bless. Al - le - lu - ia!
 ten - der - heart - ed, slow to blame. Al - le - lu - ia!
 God's com - pass - ion still lives on. Al - le - lu - ia!
 dwell - ers all in time and space, Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the Mak - er all our days.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious is God's faith - ful - ness!
 Al - le - lu - ia! All with - in me praise God's name!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the high e - ter - nal One!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace!

WORDS: Henry F. Lyte, 1834; adapt. Ecumenical Women's Center and Ruth Duck, 1974, alt.
 MUSIC: John Goss, 1869

LAUDA ANIMA
 87.87.87

510

O Christian, Love

1. O Chris - tian, love your sis - ter and your bro - ther!
 2. Fol - low with rev - erent steps the great ex - am - ple
 3. Then shall all shack - les fall, the storm - y clan - gor

Where pit - y dwells, the peace of God is there;
 of Christ whose ho - ly work was do - ing good;
 of wild war - mu - sic o'er the earth shall cease;

to wor - ship right - ly is to love each oth - er,
 so shall the wide earth seem a hal - lowed tem - ple,
 love shall tread out the bale - ful fire of an - ger,

each smile a hymn, each kind - ly deed a prayer.
 each lov - ing life a psalm of grat - i - tude.
 and in its ash - es plant the tree of peace.

WORDS: John Greenleaf Whittier, 1848, alt.
 MUSIC: Alfred Scott-Gatty, 1902

WELWYN
 11 10.11 10

409

How Can We Name a Love

1. How can we name a love that wak - ens heart and mind, in -
 2. If we a - woke to life up - held by lov - ing care that
 3. When peo - ple share a task, and strength and skills u - nite in
 4. So, in a hun - dred names, each day we all can meet a

dwel - ling all we know or think or do or seek or find?
 asked no great re - ward but firm, as - sured, was sim - ply there,
 pro - jects old or new, to make or do with shared de - light,
 pres - ence, sensed and shown at work, at home, or in the street.

With - in our dai - ly world, in ev - ery hu - man face, love's
 we can, with par - ents' names, des - cribe, and thus a - dore, love
 our Friend and Part - ner's will is bet - ter un - der - stood, that
 Yet names and ti - tles all shine in a bright - er sun: in

ech - oes sound and God is found, hid in the com - mon - place.
 un - con - fined, a fa - ther kind, a moth - er strong and sure.
 all should share, cre - ate, and care, and know that life is good.
 Christ a - lone is love full grown and life and hope be - gun.

WORDS: Brian Wren, 1973

MUSIC: Traditional English melody; adapt. Franklin L. Sheppard, 1915

TERRA BEATA
SMD

CLOSING HYMN

Christ, We Meet You On Our Way C-13

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The score consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

1. Christ, we meet you on our way: Al - le -
2. Take our lives, our hopes, our dreams, Al - le -
3. Join us in a bond of love, Al - le -
4. Let your joy - ous songs be sung, Al - le -

lu - ia! Com - ing to re - deem the day, Al - le -
lu - ia! Wash them in bap - tis - mal streams; Al - le -
lu - ia! With saints here and saints a - bove, Al - le -
lu - ia! In each place, by ev' - ry tongue, Al - le -

lu - ia! Ris - ing out of dark des - pair, Al - le -
lu - ia! Now from e - vil and from death, Al - le -
lu - ia! Chil - dren, strang - ers, ev' - ry - one, Al - le -
lu - ia! Gen - tle Sov - ereign, Ris - en Friend, Al - le -

lu - ia! You would claim a world so fair, Al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia! Raise us with re - new - ing breath, Al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia! You for us the vic - t'ry won, Al - le - lu - ia!
lu - ia! Liv - ing Spi - rit, with - out end, Al - le - lu - ia!

WORDS: Allen Happe

MUSIC: Robert Williams

LLANFAIR

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 Lia Ingersoll and her family as they adjust to her new diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes.
- 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 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.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH



Intergenerational Field Games

Today, 12:30 - 1:00 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!

Discovery Team Report Available for Review

The Discovery Team has produced a report of their work over the past several months, and [you can find it on our website](#). Gleaned from many large and small group conversations, as well as our Congregational Survey, the report speaks to who we are today, who we are called to be in the future, and our desires for the core competencies of our new lead minister. We will continue, as a congregation, to dive into its findings to understand what it reveals about First Church in Cambridge past, present, and future. We hope that everyone in our church community will take the time to read it in full. And we extend heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Discovery Team—Moana Bentin, Andy Clark, Bill Hsiao, Martha Mueller Cook, Curt Nickisch, Meredith Quinn, and Mike Solberg—for their tremendous efforts in guiding us through this important phase of our transition!



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](#).

Summer Worship Begins at 10 O'Clock, Starting NEXT Sunday, July 6

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 next Sunday, July 6, at 10:00 a.m.!



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 and August, 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](#).

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.



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!

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. 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](#).



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.](#)

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

A Message from Our Moderator

June 24, 2025

One of my favorite things about First Church is our appetite for participation. We not only want to know what's happening, but why, and how we can shape it. This was evident at our Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 22. It was great to have about 70 members participate in a 90-minute deliberative process, despite it being about 100% humidity in Margaret Jewett Hall!



If you couldn't make it, here's what we learned:

- **Our deficit is on the way down.** After passing a budget in January with a \$98,000 deficit, we now are on track to end with only a \$57,000 deficit. Pledging is up! Thank you! Offering income is also up, along with building use revenue. We've also found about \$30,000 in savings. If you have not made your 2025 pledge yet, please consider doing so at: firstchurchcambridge.org/give, or consider increasing it. In uncertain economic times, we have the power to guarantee a certain future for First Church. Congratulations to the Finance and Investments teams, Stewardship, Buildings & Grounds, and others who've gotten us this far!
- **The Discovery Team report is now live.** [Read it here](#). It's a rich portrait of who God is calling us to be and who we are seeking as our next pastor. In short, we are being called to deepen our spiritual grounding and multigenerational connections, and are seeking a collaborative teacher and preacher, with a strong understanding of the ongoing impact of racism and systemic injustice. Congratulations to Martha Mueller Cook and the whole Discovery Team!
- **The Parsonage Working Group** gave a detailed report on their listening sessions, research and options to address 1) our obligation to provide **good, stable, and affordable housing for our senior minister**; and 2) what to do with **our parsonage property at 44 Garden Street**. In order to call our next pastor, we need to house them! The meeting was in agreement that now is the time to make a decision on the future of our parsonage and best choice for ministerial housing, and that the following three options are the best available:
 - ♦ **Renovate** and keep as a single family property;
 - ♦ **Redevelop** into multiple units (2-3);
 - ♦ **Sell and buy** a new property for ministerial housing.

TRANSITION AT FIRST CHURCH

It was decided that **some additional discussion is needed to understand the risks and opportunities of these options** and come to consensus. Recognizing timing needs for our Pastoral Search Committee, the meeting felt confident that **we can vote on a final path by September**. This will be necessary to provide clarity to ministerial candidates about their housing situation. Please keep an eye out for opportunities to discuss the options over the summer and speak to Jim Cairns, Laurie Burt, Chris Baker, Audrey Bellinger, David Torrey, or me if you have additional questions.

- Speaking of the next pastor, the meeting resoundingly affirmed our **Pastoral Search Committee**, who, combined, have more than 170 years at First Church! They are:
 - Valerie Blanc, Co-Chair
 - Barbara Hume, Co-Chair
 - Joseph 'Bappu' Antony
 - Moana Bentin
 - Lorraine Erickson
 - Lucy Metz
 - Paula Paris
 - George Van Hare
 - Linda Ziebell

We will commission them in worship this fall, and they will spend the summer preparing our church profile for posting on the national United Church of Christ site.

There are a lot of transitions happening at church, but all of them are connected to this one: becoming the church God is calling us to be. In our tradition, we believe that God speaks to the church through its membership. That means that congregational meetings and deliberations can be messy, exhausting, exhilarating, and ultimately sacred. Thank you all for being trusting, caring, thoughtful, and courageous participants in our church.

Phil Servello-Jones
First Church Moderator



THIS WEEK

Looking ahead to this week's programs and events



Monday, June 30

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

Tuesday, July 1

- 7:00 p.m. GBIO Relational Training, St. James Episcopal Church, Porter Square

Friday, July 4 - Church Office & Building Closed for Independence Day Holiday

Sunday, July 6 - Summer Worship moves to 10:00 a.m.

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Multigenerational Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:15 a.m. Refreshments on the Lawn (weather permitting)

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 • www.firstchurchcambridge.org

[/firstchurchcambridge](https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchcambridge) [/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchInCambridge) [/c/FirstChurchInCambridge](https://www.youtube.com/c/FirstChurchInCambridge)