



Freddie Funck

Regathering Sunday
September 7, 2025



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.

Order of Worship

GATHERING ON THE LAWN

*GREETING ON THE LAWN

Mike Solberg and Sarah Higginbotham

- L: Beloved of God, come gather in!
Join together to grow closer to God!
- C: We enter now with all that we are, our stories,
our hopes, our yearnings, our fears.**
- L: God embraces all of it- all of you!
- C: That's crazy, and amazing, and fantastic!**
- L: Siblings in the Spirit, God's heart is open,
and God's invitation is deep and wide.
- C: No matter where our journey has taken us in the past,
we now begin anew to grow closer to God. Alleluia!**

*HYMN C-25

Let There Be Life in This House

WORDS OF WELCOME

Will Erickson

ANTHEM

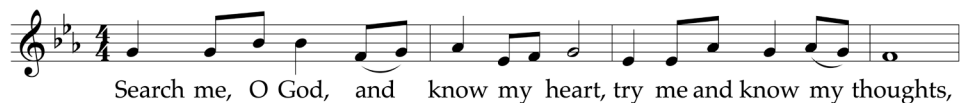
Day by Day

Stephen Schwartz

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SUNG PRAYER



SILENCE



**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 C-28

God's Forgiveness Waits

BLESSING OF CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN & TEACHERS

Adults: May God be with you there.

Children: And may God be with you here.

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

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Kate Layzer

L: Let us pray:

C: **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

Psalm 139:1-14

SERMON

Growing Closer to God

Mike Solberg

*HYMN C-8

Psalm 139

*THE FIRST CHURCH COVENANT

Sadly, the original membership covenant of our congregation is lost to history. It was likely very similar to this covenant, originally from 1630, created by the church in Charlestown and adopted by our congregation in 1872.

C: **We who are now brought together and united into one Church
under the Lord Jesus Christ, our Head,
in such sort as becometh all those whom
He hath redeemed and sanctified to himself,
do solemnly and religiously, as in His most holy presence,
promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways**

according to the rule of the Gospel,
and in all sincere conformity to His holy ordinances,
and in mutual love and respect each to other,
so near as God shall give us grace.

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kate Layzer and Noël Grisanti

CALL TO SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Laurie Friedman

COMMISSIONING THE SENIOR MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE

Phil Servello-Jones

Valerie Blanc, *Co-Chair*
Barbara Hume, *Co-Chair*
Joseph 'Bappu' Antony

Moana Bentin
Lorraine Erickson
Lucy Metz

Paula Paris
George Van Hare
Linda Ziebell

L: There are different gifts.

C: But it is the same spirit who gives them.

L: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit.

C: To be used for the common good.

L: Do you accept the holy task of searching for our next Senior Minister and presenting that person to be called by the congregation?

Committee: Fellow people of First Church, relying on the help of God,
we promise to perform faithfully the vital task
of searching for a new pastor.
We pledge, with God's guidance and your prayers,
to be open to the way of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit
in all we do, say, and decide.
We will endeavor:

- to establish a harmonious working relationship within our committee;
- to maintain consistent attendance at our Search Committee meetings;
- to be open and patient listeners to each other and to the congregation;
- to listen carefully to your hopes and dreams as we consult with you, the members, in the development of a description of our church community; and the style of pastoral leadership we seek;
- to maintain strict confidentiality in all we read, say, and hear—protecting both the privacy of each other and of potential candidates;
- to review all profiles with open minds and hearts, treating all candidates fairly and justly;
- to seek decisions not made by majority rule, but by the coming together

of minds, hearts, and souls in a consensus that will build a firm foundation for the effective future mission and ministry of this church.

**Congregation: We pledge, as a gathered community of faith,
to be patient with you and to respect your need
to be confidential in your task.
We recognize that the work of our Search Committee
is a difficult assignment and will take much effort.
We pray for you and offer our support and words of encouragement
throughout this time.
These things we promise in the hope and belief
that you will be faithful to the guidance of the spirit
as you seek a new Minister to serve with us.**

CLOSING PRAYER

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

O How Amiable

Ralph Vaughan Williams

***DOXOLOGY**

**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.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

SHARING THE FEAST

INVITATION

Karen McArthur

REMEMBERING AND GIVING THANKS

L: Now, O God, with grateful joy, we remember Jesus,
his daring love, his open table.
We remember that he called us friends,
C. and that he called us to follow him.
L: We remember that he gave us peace,
C. and called us to be peacemakers.

L: We remember that he embodied Divine justice,
a renewal of individual hearts and systems of power,
C: and called us to this work of repair.
L: We remember that, in his resurrection,
he is the first sign of the renewal of all creation,
**C: and we long for all creation to share in that renewal,
with not one person, not one being,
not one thing, not one atom, left behind.**
All: Thanks be to you, Holy One. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Please pray this prayer in words most meaningful to your heart.

**All: Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

*SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

*All who seek to follow Jesus' way of compassion, justice, and peace are welcome at this table.
For those worshipping via the livestream, please take and eat. For those here in the Sanctuary,
please come forward with your bulletins to receive the elements at one of the stations. Then
proceed to the outer edges of the Sanctuary to gather in a circle, making space to include the
front pew in the North Transept ("the family section") in the circle for those who prefer to be
seated.*

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Let us give thanks!
**All: We thank you, God, for your nearness to us,
for gladness in this bread and cup,
for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give,
for joy in the company of friends, for the splendors of creation,
and for the mission of justice you have made our own.
Give us the gifts of this holy communion—
oneness of heart, love for neighbors, forgiveness of enemies,
and the will to serve you all the days of our lives.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

GOING FORTH

*HYMN (insert)

Psalm 23

see page 7

*BENEDICTION

Today's Worship Leaders

Will Erickson	<i>Deacon Liturgist</i>
Laurie Friedman	<i>Clerk</i>
Noël Grisanti	<i>Pastoral Intern</i>
Sarah Higginbotham	<i>Communications & Christian Formation Director</i>
Kate Layzer	<i>Minister of Street Outreach</i>
Karen McArthur	<i>Minister of Stewardship & Finance</i>
Lee Prouty	<i>Facilities Manager</i>
Phil Servello-Jones	<i>Moderator</i>
Mike Solberg	<i>Interim Senior Minister</i>
Peter Sykes	<i>Music Director</i>

New to First Church?

Consider filling out a **welcome card** ([online](#) or on the small clipboards) to get connected.



First Church Land Acknowledgment

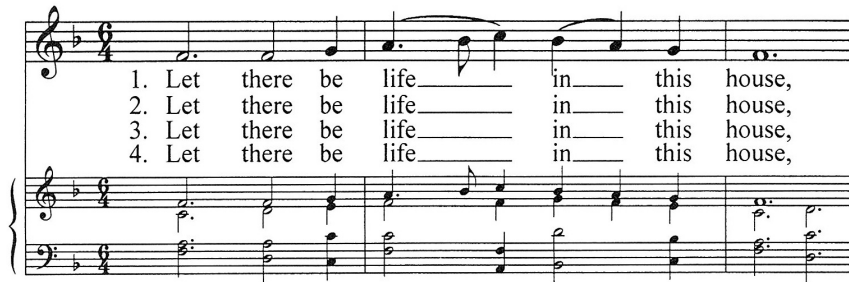
We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

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

OPENING HYMN

Let There Be Life in This House

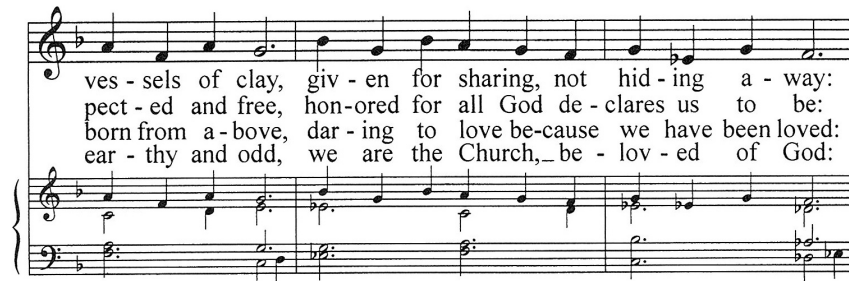
C-25



1. Let there be life in this house,
 2. Let there be life in this house,
 3. Let there be life in this house,
 4. Let there be life in this house,



poured from the riches of God; treasure in so many
 tender and truthful and real; life of being, res-
 life of the Spirit and fire; sisters and brothers new-
 life of the Body divine, kindly and passion-ate,



ves-sels of clay, given for sharing, not hiding a-way:
 pect-ed and free, hon-ored for all God de-clares us to be:
 born from above, dar-ing to love be-cause we have been loved:
 ear-thy and odd, we are the Church, be-lov-ed of God:



Let there be life in this house!
 Let there be life in this house!
 Let there be life in this house!
 Let there be life in this house!

WORDS: Kate Layzer
 MUSIC: Peter Sykes

For First Church in Cambridge on the tenth anniversary
 of its declaring itself an Open and Affirming Church

PEACE HYMN

C-28

God's Forgiveness Waits

God's for-give-ness waits, pa-tient as God a-lone, work-ing up-on the

The first system of musical notation for the hymn. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "God's for-give-ness waits, pa-tient as God a-lone, work-ing up-on the".

hu-man heart like wa-ter drip-ping on a stone; _____ like

The second system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "hu-man heart like wa-ter drip-ping on a stone; _____ like". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands.

wa-ter on a stone, wear-ing the stone a-way, God's mer-cy calls un-

The third system of musical notation. The vocal line continues with the lyrics: "wa-ter on a stone, wear-ing the stone a-way, God's mer-cy calls un-". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands.

to it-self the hard-ened heart that can - not pray. The

The fourth system of musical notation. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "to it-self the hard-ened heart that can - not pray. The". The piano accompaniment concludes with chords and moving lines in both hands.

PEACE HYMN, continued

heart that can-not pray will some-day praise God's name with ev-ery voice on

The first system of the hymn features a vocal melody in the treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The lyrics are: "heart that can-not pray will some-day praise God's name with ev-ery voice on". The melody is in a major key and 4/4 time, with a tempo of quarter notes. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand.

earth un-til the stones them-selves God's grace pro - claim. Praise

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: "earth un-til the stones them-selves God's grace pro - claim. Praise". The melody has a long note on "claim" followed by a rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and single notes.

God! the time-less one, for God's-for-give-ness waits, e - ter-nal, ten-der,

The third system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: "God! the time-less one, for God's-for-give-ness waits, e - ter-nal, ten-der,". The melody has a long note on "e - ter-nal" followed by a rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and single notes.

age-less, true, to save the world that God cre - ates.

The fourth system concludes the hymn. The lyrics are: "age-less, true, to save the world that God cre - ates." The melody has a long note on "cre - ates" followed by a rest. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and single notes.

WORDS: Kate Layzer

MUSIC: Peter Sykes

The images in this hymn come from a sermon given by Allen Happe

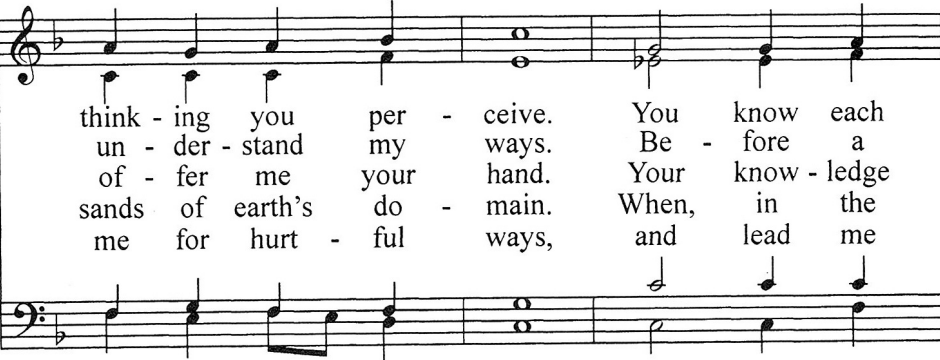
SERMON HYMN

C-8

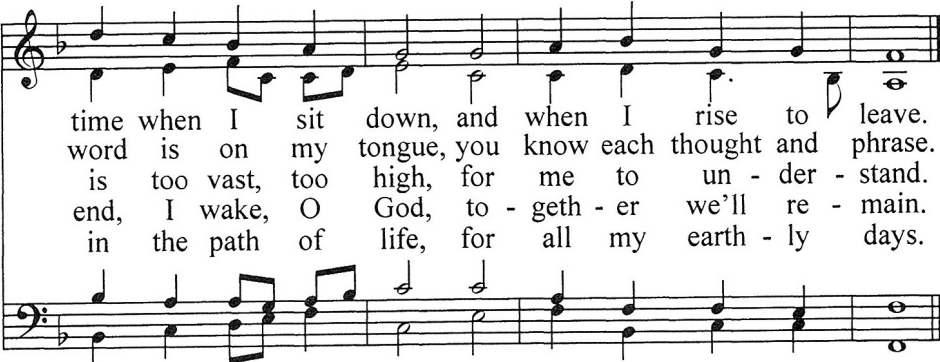
Psalm 139



1. O God, you've searched and known me well, my
2. You know my path and rest - ing place, and
3. You guide my steps and guard my path, you
4. Your count - less thoughts, so dear, ex - ceed the
5. Ex - a - mine me and know my thoughts, search



think - ing you per - ceive. You know each
un - der - stand my ways. Be - fore a
of - fer me your hand. Your know - ledge
sands of earth's do - main. When, in the
me for hurt - ful ways, and lead me



time when I sit down, and when I rise to leave.
word is on my tongue, you know each thought and phrase.
is too vast, too high, for me to un - der - stand.
end, I wake, O God, to - geth - er we'll re - main.
in the path of life, for all my earth - ly days.

WORDS: New translation by Denise Karuth

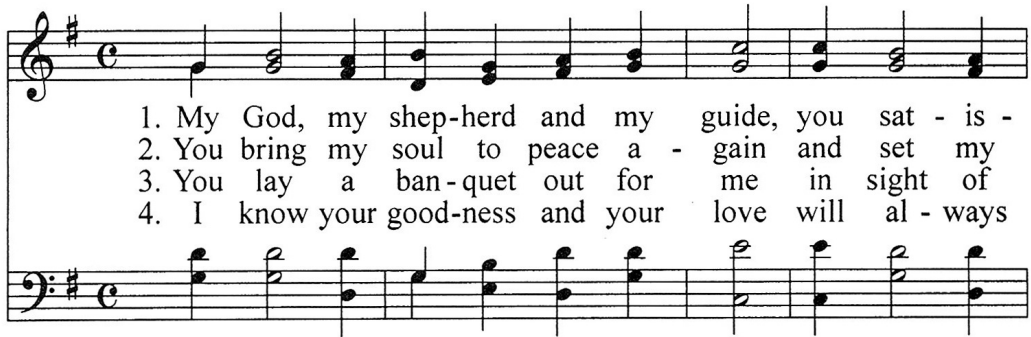
MUSIC: Scottish Psalter, 1635

WIGTOWN

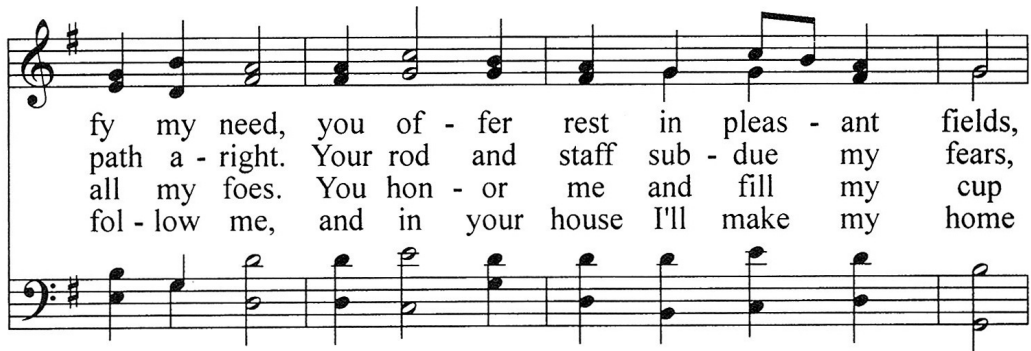
CLOSING HYMN

Psalm 23

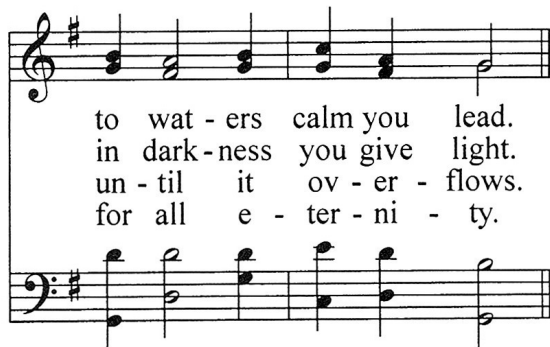
C-3



1. My God, my shep-herd and my guide, you sat - is -
2. You bring my soul to peace a - gain and set my
3. You lay a ban-quet out for me in sight of
4. I know your good-ness and your love will al - ways



fy my need, you of - fer rest in pleas - ant fields,
path a - right. Your rod and staff sub - due my fears,
all my foes. You hon - or me and fill my cup
fol - low me, and in your house I'll make my home



to wat - ers calm you lead.
in dark-ness you give light.
un - til it ov - er - flows.
for all e - ter - ni - ty.

WORDS: New translation by Denise Karuth

MUSIC: New England Psalter, 1698

LOW DUTCH

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

- We pray for Amani and Amini Mataboro Tom as they transition into life in Kenya and continue their human rights work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- We pray for Cathy Patton's friend Elmo, whose mother Margaret Mickel died recently following a stroke. We also pray for Radley, another friend of Cathy, who is recovering after a hospitalization.
- 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; Katy Bauer, Sunnessa Schettler's mother, who is experiencing COPD; and Keith Manville, Kirsten's father, who has atypical Parkinsonism. We also pray for those in treatment for cancer: Mary Martha Thiel, Betsy Opitz; Tim Schoenfield, Henry's brother; 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 impacted by the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan that has taken well over 2,000 lives.
- We pray for the hundreds of children seeking entrance to the US from Guatemala who have been threatened by the federal government with removal without due process.
- In this tense time in our country, we pray for all those resisting abuses of power, especially those paying significant personal costs. We pray for strength to not turn away from our neighbors in need, even as our government dramatically expands detention, disappearance, and deportation initiatives that ignore rights guaranteed by our nation's constitution. We pray for city leaders responding to unwanted federal deployments of national guard and other military servicemembers.
- 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 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, especially all the innocent victims of the deadly power games of political rulers: in the Middle East, including in Gaza, where the lack of safe access to food is causing mass starvation; in Ukraine; in Haiti; and in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- 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

Growing Closer to God: Regathering Season 2025

The Discovery Team wrote in their comprehensive report last spring that First Church *“stands at a tender and transformative moment in its life together. This time of transition invites us to reflect deeply on who we are, what we value, and where we feel called to go as a community of faith.”*

The report highlights that many within our congregation are seeking more spiritual grounding and growth, especially to support us as we live out our values of social justice and anti-racism. And, at the same time, people are not sure exactly what spiritual grounding and growth might look like!

With that in mind, this fall we will center our regathering around a question:

What does it mean to grow closer to God, as individuals and as a church community? We'll be exploring a range of possible responses to this question, both from an individual and a communal perspective, and also simply affirming that this is a good discussion to have! Join us in worship, small groups, Bible study, and multigenerational formation as we practice our faith together.

GROWING CLOSER TO GOD

Regathering Season 2025



Regathering Luncheon

Today at 12:15 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us after worship for an all-church luncheon in MJH. Reconnect with each other after the summer, meet new friends, and hear from staff and lay leaders about the season ahead of us. All are welcome! Child care will be available for kids who would like to have a picnic lunch and play.

Confirmation Class Orientation

Sunday, September 7, 12:30 - 1:15 p.m., Harter Room

This year's Confirmation journey for 8th and 9th graders begins with an orientation meeting for students and parents after worship. Fix yourself a plate at the All-Church Luncheon buffet, and then join Sarah Higginbotham for an introduction to the program alongside co-teachers Devin Hansen and Phil Servello-Jones. Classes take place approximately twice monthly on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m., leading up to Confirmation Sunday on June 14, 2026.



TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH



Night Song Returns

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

Sanctuary and [via livestream](#)

Night Song is a worship opportunity that offers stillness and sublime music in a darkened sanctuary for respite and reset. We all need time set aside from the demands of daily life and the issues facing our community and our world—a regular time to be still, to find clarity and purpose, and to center ourselves for the coming week. You'll leave breathing more deeply and recharged to engage with

your world. Night Song is a hybrid offering of First Church for in-person attendance in the Sanctuary and viewing via livestream or listening at another time on the Night Song YouTube channel. [Learn more about Night Song.](#)

Staffing Update

There have been a few additions to the First Church staff over the summer months. You have probably already seen the announcements about our new Pastoral Intern **Noël Grisanti**, who started with us in late August. We also have two new Sextons. **Jess McWilliam** joined the staff as a full-time Sexton in early August. One of his shifts is on Sunday afternoons, so you will see him stepping in after Jonathan at the end of our busy Sunday morning programming. We also have welcomed **Francisco Proskauer Valerio** as a new part-time sexton. He covered Monday afternoons for us during the summer and will continue to pick up shifts here and there, depending on coverage needed. Finally, although she is not a new addition, we are looking forward to the return of our Pastoral Associate **Emma Mitchell** from maternity leave in mid-November. As you cross paths with Jess, Franky, or Noël, please say hi, introduce yourself, and welcome them to First Church.



Register for Church School 2025-26

Church School classes begin on September 14! We offer a variety of opportunities for Christian formation for children and youth, including age-based classes, creative arts and pastoral care workshops, child care for little ones, and youth group activities for teens. All children from infants through high school seniors are welcome in the Church School! You can read all the details

on the [Faith Formation for Children & Youth](#) page on our website. Registering your children helps us to prepare for them, but drop-ins are always welcome. Please complete [this registration form](#) to let us know a bit about your children.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

10:00 O'Clock Formation Hour 2025-26

This Regathering season, we're experimenting with a new "rotation model" of formation programs in the 10 O'Clock Hour. Check out the schedule of Sundays below, and plan to join us! *We begin 10 O'Clock Hours next Sunday, September 14.*



Bible Study @ 10:

"Hello, Bible. My name is _____."

**First & Third Sundays, September 21, October 5 & 19,
November 2 & 16, December 7 & 21**

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

Feel like maybe you would like to get a better feel for what the Bible has to do with your life and the world today? Here's a

chance to take a first step in that direction. Pastor Mike will be helping us get to know the Bible better as part of our 10:00 O'Clock Hour offerings this fall. These sessions are for everyone, no matter your Bible background. The Bible has a fascinating personality, so take the first step in getting to know it: Hello Bible. My name is _____.



Multigen @ 10

**Second Sundays, September 14, October 12, November 9 &
December 14**

10:00 - 10:45 a.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Come, one and all, to this experiential formation hour for all ages. Sarah Higginbotham will help us connect with folks we may only know by face through games, songs, and activities that allow us to share more deeply with each other.



Small Groups @ 10

Fourth Sundays: September 28, October 26 & November 23

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

In these difficult times, we need to strengthen our hope, perhaps more than ever. Led by Brent Coffin, this monthly adult formation hour provides us an opportunity to get to know one another better through soulful conversations. And together, we will explore how to strengthen our practices of hope, both for ourselves and others. Please join us, whether each month or just once.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

Register for the All-Church Fall Retreat

Friday, September 26 - Sunday, September 28

Registration is now open for the 2025 All-Church Retreat at Craigville Retreat Center! The retreat is an amazing opportunity to spend time with our multigenerational church community in a glorious location on the Cape. Join Sarah Higginbotham, Noël Grisanti, and other church leaders for a weekend of community-building in fellowship, formation, and fun. [Register here!](#) ***Please register by September 14 to assist our planning efforts!***



Newcomers Gathering

Sunday, September 14, 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Harter Room

Feeling new here at First Church? Thinking about becoming a member? Either way, come join us for a newcomers' gathering after worship on September 14. Come meet other folks who are new, connect with staff and a few members of the church, learn a bit more about membership, and ask any questions you might have. We'll even provide lunch! We'll meet up in the Harter Room after the service (just ask anyone for the location).

Thinking About Joining the Church?

Thursdays, September 18 & 25, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m., via Zoom

For those interested in church membership, we'll also have additional more in-depth sessions via Zoom on two Thursday evenings, September 18 & 25, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. (attend both, if possible). Then we'll welcome new members in worship on Sunday, October 5. See/contact Pastor Mike (mike@firstchurchcambridge.org) with any questions. And welcome!

Faith & Life Groups: Fall 2025 - Call for Leaders!

Are you interested in leading a small group over Zoom or in person this Fall? Contact Beth Spaulding (bspaulding68@gmail.com) to discuss your idea for the next round of Faith & Life Groups, running in October/November, with registration happening in September. Led by First Church members, Faith & Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful connections through shared interests, whether exploring a spiritual practice, opening our eyes to the beauty around us, delving into a challenging social issue, or attending to significant life stages (parenting, aging, job transitions, etc.). ***Pitch your idea for a Faith & Life Group to Beth by Monday, September 22.***



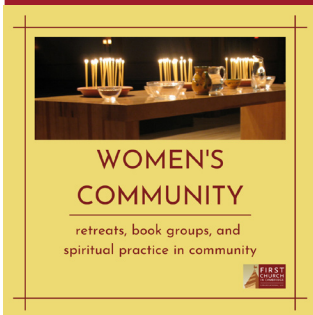
REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH

Family Nights This Fall

Tuesdays, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Sep 16 & 30, Oct 14 & 28, Nov 18, and Dec 9, Sage Hall

Family Night pasta dinners will start up on September 16! We provide pasta and red sauce, you bring a side dish or dessert to share. All are welcome, especially children with their parents and caregivers. Please let Meredith know how many are coming by emailing: familynight@firstchurchcambridge.org. No RSVP is too late! We'll eat in Sage Hall (our basement playspace) so that kids can play freely after dinner.



Women's Community Book Group

Tuesday, September 16, 6:30-7:45 p.m., via Zoom

All those who identify as women are invited to join us for our opening book discussion on Liz Walker's [*No One Left Alone: A Story of How Community Helps Us Heal*](#).

This is a piece of non-fiction written by the first Black woman to anchor a major Boston TV station, who then went on to seek ordination. Rev. Liz served the community of Roxbury Presbyterian Church, where

she developed amazing programs to support and heal her community. We hope this will be the start of another year of community building among women at First Church; please encourage your friends to give this a try. For questions or to receive the zoom link, contact Alex Steinert-Evoy: alex@steinert-evoy.org

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 3-4 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.**](#)



In Memoriam

A celebration of the life of **Joan Whitaker** will take place on Saturday, September 20, at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary and via livestream, with a reception to follow in Margaret Jewett Hall. Joan was a founder and 30-year staff member of the First Church Shelter; she was a beloved member of the Shelter community.

REGATHERING SEASON AT FIRST CHURCH



Special Congregational Meeting and Luncheon Sunday, September 21, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

Drawing on the work begun by the Assets Group three years ago, the Parsonage Working Group has spent many 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. We have now reached the point in our discernment process for the congregation to vote on a plan of action. Please join us for this important meeting, where First Church members will be asked to make their voice heard through our democratic meeting process. Lunch and child care will be provided. All are welcome!



***We invite volunteers to help with hall setup, light meal prep, clean-up, and bringing a sweet treat or fruit for the September 21 luncheon.
[Sign up 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 21st of September 2025,
in person in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom conference
for the following purposes:

1. To approve the minutes of the June 22nd Congregational meeting
2. To vote on the recommendations from the Executive Council to pursue the sale of the parsonage at 44 Garden Street, with proceeds to be used to purchase a new property to serve as ministerial housing.

No other business may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of the Executive Council,

Laurie Friedman, Clerk
Cambridge, Massachusetts
August 26, 2025



CALENDAR

FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL

389 YEARS
ON THE WAY

1 6 3 6 – 2 0 2 5

Today's Events

- 10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Regathering Sunday Worship, Sanctuary & via livestream
- 11:20 a.m. Church School: Pastoral Care Sunday, Library
- 12:15 p.m. All-Church Luncheon, Margaret Jewett Hall (MJH)
- 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Class Orientation, Harter Room
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary & via livestream

The Week Ahead

Monday, September 8

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

Tuesday, September 9

- 7:00 p.m. Arts & Communications Committee, via Zoom

Wednesday, September 10

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
- 3:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom
- 7:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room

Friday, September 12

- 12:00 p.m. Friday Café, MJH

Sunday, September 14

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Formation Hour: Multigen @ 10, MJH
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Sanctuary & via livestream
- 11:20 a.m. Church School Classes for PreK-7th grade
- 12:15 p.m. Refreshments in MJH
- 12:15 p.m. Newcomers Gathering, Harter Room
- 12:30 p.m. Godly Play Teacher Orientation, Library
- 7:30 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary & via livestream



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Visit firstchurchcambridge.org to:

- Read all the [latest news](#).
- See our [events calendar](#) for Zoom links and details.
- Find transcripts and recordings of [sermons](#).
- Complete a [First Church Communications Request Form](#) to promote a church event.