



TOGETHER.
FEARLESS.

Stewardship Season
November 9, 2025



Grounded in God • Growing in Community • Acting in Love

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

VOLUNTARY

Uppon la mi re

Anonymous English 16thC

HYMN 19*

Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven

GREETING*

Leo Neurath

- 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,
All: let us worship God!

WORDS OF WELCOME

ANTHEM

Eternal Light (Prayer for Illumination)

Mark Schweizer

*Eternal Light, shine into our hearts. Eternal Power, be our support.
Eternal Wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance.
Eternal Pity, have mercy on us; that with all our heart and mind and
soul and strength we may seek your face. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.
- Alcuin of York, England, 8th century*

CONFESSING

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

SONG



Layzer/Sykes



SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

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

**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

GREETING OF PEACE*

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: And also with you!

HYMN 369*

A New Commandment

MUTUAL BLESSING*

Mike Solberg

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 classes. Godly Play (PreK-3rd grade), Middler (4/5th grade), and Bible 101 (6/7th grade) students can meet their teachers at the side door by the Children's Book Corner. Caregivers can find the children in the Chapel after worship.

OPENING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

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 spirits to receive your hope;
draw us nearer to you by your word of grace and truth. Amen.**

READING

Luke 20:27-40

SERMON

Resurrection and Social Justice

Mike Solberg

HYMN 493*

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

SHARING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noël Grisanti

CALL TO FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Laurie Friedman

MINISTRY MOMENT

Olivia Olafsson

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.**

STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONY AND INVITATION TO OFFERING

Mary Lightbody

Our offering supports the many ministries of our church, with 10% for missions in the community and beyond. Please use the QR code for online gifts, or place your offering in the plate at the edge of the chancel.



OFFERTORY

Christ Be with Me

Noel Rawsthorne

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*

GOING FORTH

HYMN 241*

We Will Build Your Church, O Christ

BENEDICTION*

VOLUNTARY

Fanfare (for the Reeds)

Craig Phillips

**You are invited to stand.*

Today's Worship Leaders

Laurie Friedman
Noël Grisanti
Kate Layzer
Mary Lightbody
Olivia Olafsson
Leo Neurath
Lee Prouty
Mike Solberg
Peter Sykes

*Clerk
Pastoral Intern
Minister of Street Outreach
offering a Stewardship testimony
offering a Ministry Moment
Liturgist
Facilities Manager
Interim Senior Minister
Music Director*

New to First Church?

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



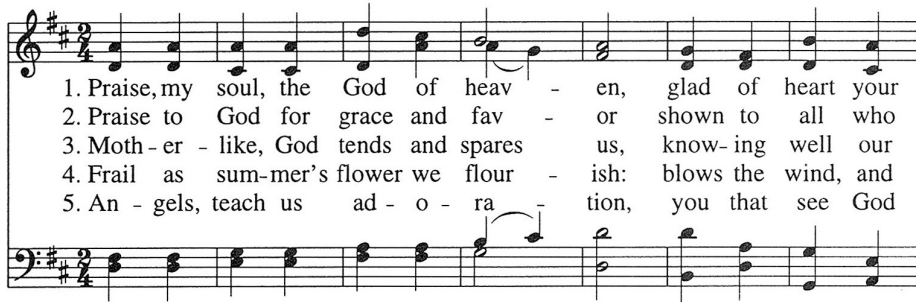
First Church Land Acknowledgment

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.

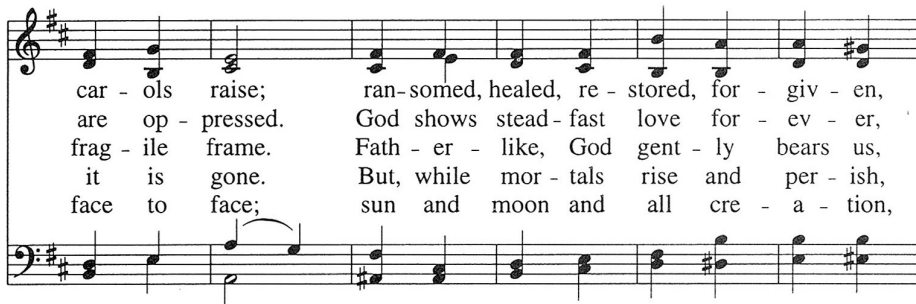
You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment [here](#) or with the QR code.

OPENING HYMN

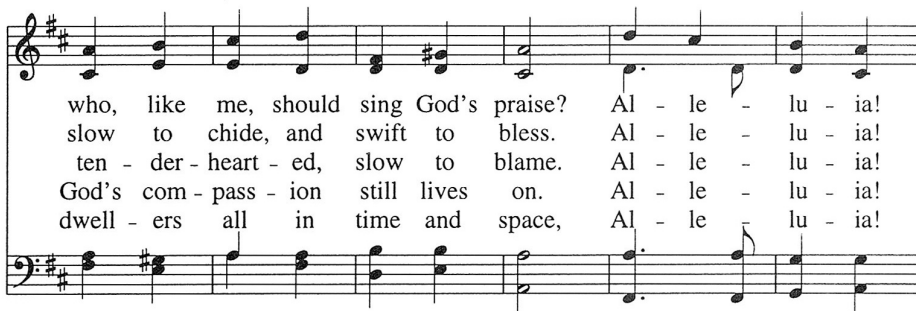
Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven 19



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

369

A New Commandment

The musical score is written for two voices, Soprano and Bass, in a key of D major (indicated by two sharps) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes. The first system covers the first line of the verse, and the second system covers the second line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

A new com-mand-ment I give un-to you: that you love one an-oth-er as

I have loved you, that you love one an-oth-er as I have loved you.

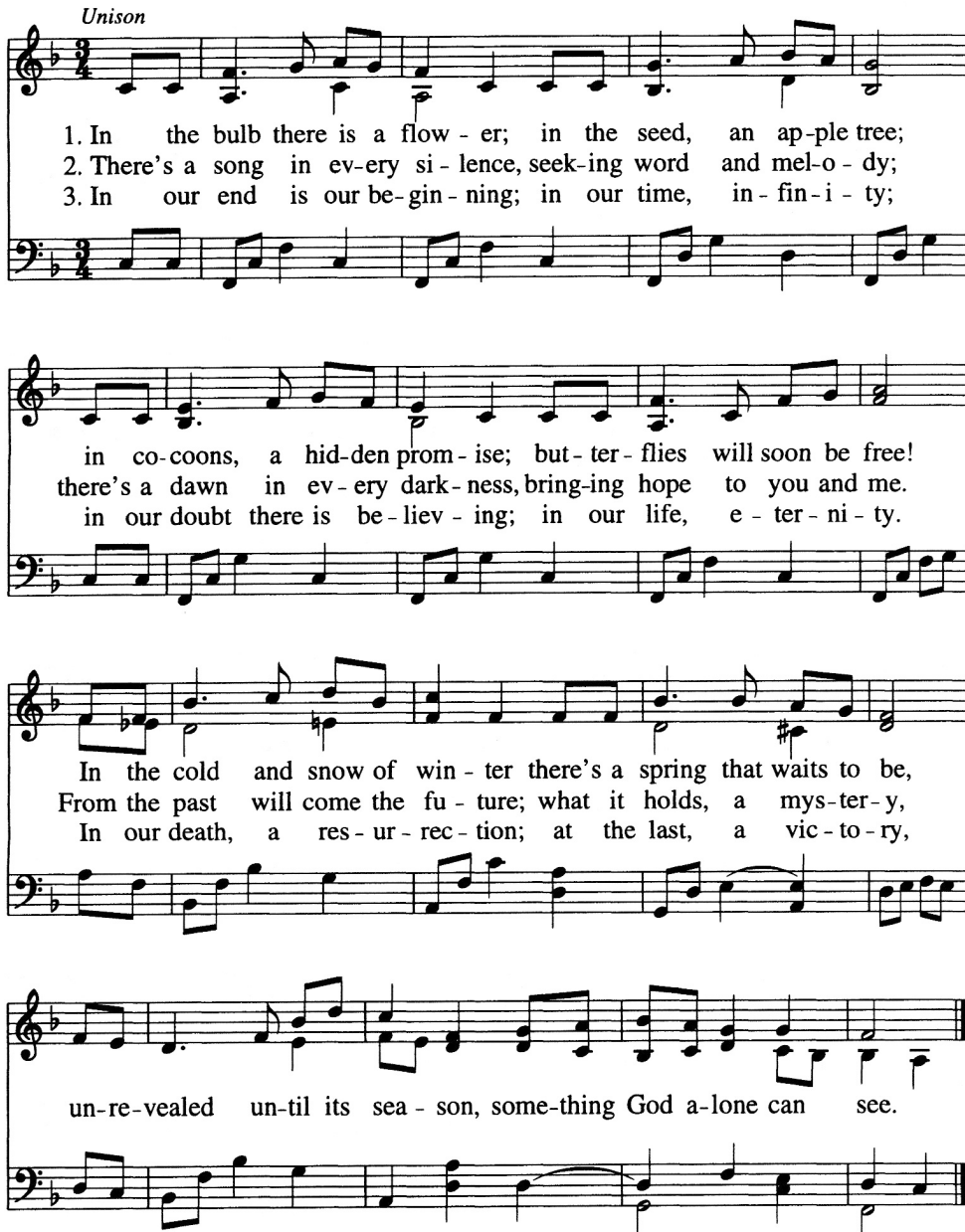
WORDS: John 13:34
MUSIC: Anonymous

NEW COMMANDMENT
10 12.12

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

493

Unison



1. In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
 2. There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
 3. In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise; but - ter - flies will soon be free!
 there's a dawn in ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

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

- We celebrate with Kathy Williams on the marriage of her daughter Laura Williams to Max Cohen on November 8.
- We pray for Amani and Amini Mataboro Tom, friends of First Church who have settled recently in Kenya, as they take in the difficult news that Amini's uncle was killed recently in Congo.
- We pray for Lya Williams Howard, a newcomer to First Church, now home, and beginning at-home peritoneal dialysis.
- 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: Betsy Opitz; First Church friend Kelly; Devin Hansen's aunt Ellen Smith and cousin Rob Dencola; Jeff Morgan, Gaylen's brother; Tim Schoenfield, Henry's brother; Louise Higginbotham, Sarah's mother; Karen Anne Zee's daughter Becky Collet and her son-in-law Stewart Bailey; and Beth and Polly, Ann McCann's sisters.
- We pray for the island nations in the Caribbean, including Jamaica and Cuba, in the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa.
- We pray for all those impacted by the federal government shutdown, including those who are losing their jobs, those losing their SNAP benefits, and those who are concerned about looming cuts to health care subsidies.
- We pray for the moral courage of our political leaders, in particular in the places where Immigration and Custom Enforcement agents are intensifying their unlawful campaigns of violent detention, disappearance, and deportation, including here in Massachusetts. We pray for all who are living in an increased state of terror due to these actions, and that all of us may have the strength to take action and to bear witness to our neighbors in need.
- We pray for US cities under continuing threat of militarization by our federal government, and especially for those impacted by the forceful raid by ICE agents at an Allston-Brighton carwash this past week.
- 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, including in Gaza and Israel; 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.

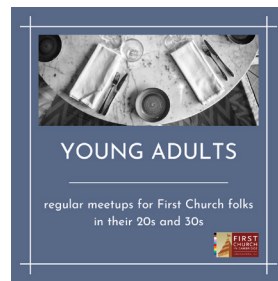
TODAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Young Adults: Pre-Worship Breakfast at Felipe's

Today, 9:45 - 10:30 a.m.

Anyone in their 20s or 30s (and their kids) is invited to breakfast before worship at Felipe's in Harvard Square! The Young Adults group meets a few times each month for casual fellowship, and we welcome anyone in that age group, especially newcomers.

Email: youngadults@firstchurchcambridge.org to get on the mailing list for future events.



Christian Formation: Multigen @ 10

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

Join Noël Grisanti and Sarah Higginbotham for a recap of spiritual practices explored at the All-Church Retreat back in September. Try out some of the practices shared at the retreat, and check in with friends about how your practice commitments have been going since our time on the Cape. All are welcome, whether you were with us on retreat or not!

Stewardship Luncheon

Today, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., Margaret Jewett Hall

Join us for our Stewardship Luncheon as we begin this year's journey of **Togetherness and Fearlessness**. Over good food and fellowship, we'll celebrate how your gifts have helped our church share God's love in our community and beyond. Let's gather with grateful hearts to keep that love at the center of our lives and our giving.



Postcarding Action for Immigrant Justice

Today and Sunday, November 16, Hastings Common

Join a postcarding campaign sponsored by the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) in support of two bills on Beacon Hill:

- **Expanding the Safe Communities Act**, which would prevent partnerships between local law enforcement and ICE and prohibit local law enforcement from asking about immigration status; and
- **Immigrant Legal Defense Act**, which would create a funded statewide program to provide free immigration legal defense to immigrants in Massachusetts who are at imminent risk of deportation, especially those held in federal immigration detention.

Look for the postcarding table in Hastings Common before and after worship this Sunday and next. Postcards will be collected at church on November 16 to be presented by MIRA to legislators at the State House on November 25.

COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH



Israeli Peace Movement Visiting Cambridge

Today, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., First Parish in Cambridge, 3 Church St.

Standing Together is a progressive grassroots movement

organizing Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel against the occupation and for peace, equality, and social justice. At this free event, co-leaders of Standing Together Sally Abed and Alon-Lee Green will share their reflections on the last two years, the grassroots success to achieve a ceasefire, and the steps the movement will be taking going forward to end the occupation and build peace. [Please register to attend](#). The organizers are expecting a large crowd, so First Church folks plan to be at First Parish by 1:30 to get seats.

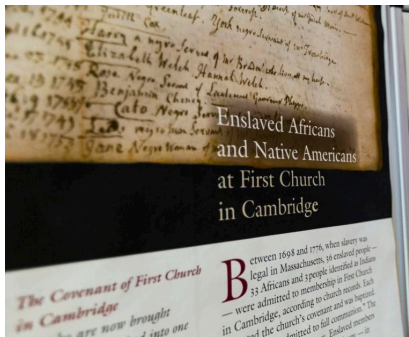
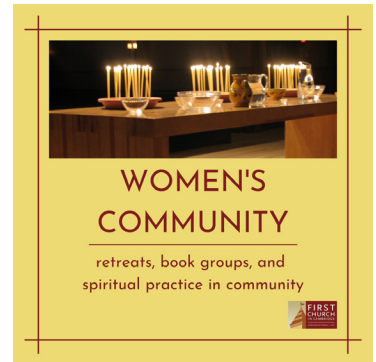
Women's Community Book Group

Tuesday, November 11, 6:30-7:45 p.m., via Zoom

Join us for a wonderful book suggested by one of our members:

[*Kitchens of the Great Midwest: A Novel*](#) by J. Ryan Stadal. A library that chose the novel for its monthly read introduced the book this way: "The book is clearly a love letter to the strong food culture of the Midwest. The seven chapters are named after a food item..."

Let's gather and share our reflections and maybe even some recipes! For questions or to receive the zoom link, contact Alex Steinert-Evoy: alex@steinert-evoy.org



Talk About Racial Justice: Join the Conversation

Sunday, November 16, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

At First Church, we affirm in our public witness and on our website that we aspire to be an anti-racist church. On Sunday, November 16, we invite you to reflect with us: How does this commitment resonate with you? If it does, can you share why it's meaningful to you? If it doesn't, know that it is equally welcome and important to express that too. In a time when

our core racial justice values are being tested by forces beyond our walls, it grounds and energizes us to deepen our shared understanding and commitment within our FCC community. Please join us for an open and inclusive conversation about First Church's racial justice ministry.

Your Beloved Community team will be hosting lunch and offering space for all voices and perspectives as we imagine the next chapter of this essential work. Everyone is warmly welcome. We look forward to seeing you there. Questions? Please contact Dave Kidder (David.e.kidder@gmail.com)

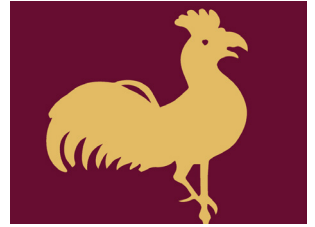
COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH

Fall Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 23, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom

Every year at our Fall Congregational Meeting, we review and vote upon a budget proposal for the upcoming year. This year's meeting takes place on our Pledge Dedication Sunday, when we commit what we can to sustain the ministries of First Church. Come enjoy a light luncheon or join us virtually, as we gather to do this important work of the church.



Call to Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Fall 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 23rd of November 2025, in person in Margaret Jewett Hall and via Zoom conference for the following purposes:

1. To approve the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting of September 21, 2025, and the Annual Meeting of January 26, 2025
2. To review and vote on the proposed 2026 annual budget of the Congregation as recommended by the Executive Council.

No other business may legally come before the meeting.

By direction of the Executive Council,

Laurie Friedman, Clerk
Cambridge, Massachusetts
October 28, 2025



Commit to a 13th Month

In September, our Treasurers provided the congregation with [a financial update for 2025](#). In short, the good news was that with frugal spending, plus some new and strong giving, we have had a great year of ministry and reduced the expected deficit for this year from \$98,000 (as bravely approved by the congregation) to \$60,000. Now, we invite the whole congregation to help close the remaining gap for 2025. ***We renew the Treasurers' request that everyone prayerfully consider adding a "13th month" to your giving for 2025.*** If you don't give monthly, we note that's an extra 8%. We'd love as many as possible of those 13th month gifts to come in by November 19, hoping that we will have good news for the congregation at the November 23 Fall Congregational Meeting. [Give a 13th month for 2025 here.](#)

COMING UP AT FIRST CHURCH

◆ OPEN TO ALL



RSVP



COMMUNITY DEFENSE: SUPPORTING OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS

MON, NOV 17TH 7:00 PM

**HARVARD-EPWORTH
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

1555 Mass Ave, Cambridge

LEARN ABOUT:

- The state of ICE in MA
- Preparing our Community for Safety
- Knowing Your Rights
- What to do if you See ICE
- Supporting our Immigrant Community Members
- Front-line organizations

Join other First Church Faithful Resisters at this important one-hour in-person training next Monday evening.

Or save the date of **Sunday, December 14**, when the same training will be offered after worship here in Margaret Jewett Hall.

Looking for more opportunities to preserve our democracy? Bookmark this page on our website; it is updated regularly with new information!

firstchurchcambridge.org/fairful-resistance

 bit.ly/CDT17Nov2025

Friday Café Benefit Show

Tuesday, December 2 at 7:30 p.m.

The Backroom at the Burren, Davis Square, Somerville

Each year at the start of the holiday season, a variety of outstanding performers gather at the Burren in Davis Square to benefit our own Friday Café. This year's show features local favorite David Coffin, Sephardic Ladino singer Lily Henley, fiddler Ellery Klein and friends, Irish dancers from the Rebecca McGowan school, and many others. Every \$35 ticket directly benefits the work of the Friday Café. Come early and have dinner before the show! [Buy tickets here.](#)



FIRST CHURCH NEWS

Pastoral Search Update

The Search Committee has been hard at work this fall to draft First Church's congregational profile, which describes the community that we are and the leader we hope to call. The profile is very close to complete, and the committee's goal is to post the position by mid-November. At that point, the position will be open for applications via the UCC's Search and Call process. The committee thanks the congregation for its ongoing faith and confidence in the discernment process!

[Read all the news of our time of transition as a church.](#)



How to Support Hungry Neighbors

On November 1, in response to the ongoing government shutdown, SNAP funds (aka "food stamps") were cut off for 42 million Americans, including 1.1 million Massachusetts residents. Here are some direct ways you can help neighbors who depend on food assistance:



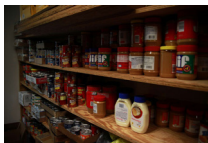
Cook for the Friday Café

The Friday Café, First Church's weekly community meal program, is anticipating increased demand as food cuts come home. We would love your help! If you would like to contribute a homemade dish for an upcoming meal, please visit: thefriday.cafe and click VOLUNTEER to access our online meal signup.



Donate to the Greater Boston Food Bank

Food banks are struggling in the wake of previous food aid cuts, and will need support to meet increased demand. Donate at: gbfb.org/



Bring donations of canned and dry goods to church on the first Sunday of each month, to be passed along to our local food pantry.

Feeling the pinch? **The First Church Deacons' Fund** may be able to help. Speak confidentially to Pastor Mike, Will Erickson, or Beth Spaulding.

CALENDAR

FIRST CHURCH
IN CAMBRIDGE
CONGREGATIONAL

389 YEARS
ON THE WAY

1636 – 2025

Today's Events

9:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:00 a.m.	Christian Formation: Multigen @ 10, Margaret Jewett Hall
11:00 a.m.	Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:20 a.m.	Church School: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes
12:30 p.m.	Stewardship Luncheon, MJH
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream

The Week Ahead

Monday, November 10

4:30 p.m.	Contemplative Practices Gathering, via Zoom
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Tuesday, November 11 - Church Office & Building Closed for Veterans Day Holiday

6:30 p.m.	Women's Community Book Group, via Zoom
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Wednesday, November 12

9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting, Harter Room and via Zoom
4:00 p.m.	Buildings & Grounds Committee, via Zoom
5:30 p.m.	Faithful Resistance Steering Team, via Zoom
7:00 p.m.	Deacons' Meeting, Harter Room

Thursday, November 13

5:00 p.m.	Faith & Life Group: <i>Reflecting on Miracles and Wonder: The Historical Mystery of Jesus</i> by Elaine Pagels, via Zoom
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Friday, November 14

12:00 p.m.	Friday Café, MJH
7:00 p.m.	Youth Group Gathering at the home of the Baker family

Sunday, November 16

9:15 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10:00 a.m.	Christian Formation: Bible Study @ 10, MJH
11:00 a.m.	Morning Worship, Sanctuary and via livestream
11:20 a.m.	Church School: Godly Play, Middler, and Bible 101 classes
12:15 p.m.	Refreshments in Hastings Common
12:30 p.m.	Talk About Racial Justice, MJH and via Zoom
7:30 p.m.	Night Song, Sanctuary and via livestream



scan for online bulletin

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.