

The First Church in Swampscott, Congregational
United Church of Christ

40 Monument Avenue, Swampscott, MA 01907

February 16, 2025



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES
at the Intersection of Faith & Life



WELCOME!

Special greetings to you who are worshipping with us for the first time. Join us in person or online via Zoom or at our Facebook live video stream at 10am Sunday:

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchSwampscott/>

ABOUT US

We are a community of Christians seeking meaning, purpose, and mission through our participation in the life of this beautiful local church. We believe that God is Still Speaking and has something new and essential to say to us as we live in this ever more complex and challenging world. We don't have all the answers, but we have some great questions. Together, we rely on the rich resources of the tradition of our Christian faith, the Bible, the revelation of God's love in the person of Jesus Christ, and the God given gifts of each person here, to lead us in our daily lives.

If you would like to learn more about the life of this church and our mission, please feel free to contact Pastor Ian (pastorian@thefirstchurch.org, 978 308 9426).

If you would like to be added to our weekly newsletter or get access to our online worship, please send your name and email address to office@thefirstchurch.org.

GATHERING

** An asterisk is an invitation for the congregation to stand.*

OPENING VIDEO

GATHERING

Prelude "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (BEECHER) John Zundel/Arr. Marc Jordan

Christoph Hofbauer (p)

Patricia Clark

CALL TO WORSHIP Adapted from UCC "Worship Ways"

Kris Holmes (L)

ONE: There is a good word for you if you are weary.

ALL: It is the Word of Love, deeper than every despair.

ONE: There is a good word if you have ever felt unworthy.

ALL: It is the Word of Hope, "Do not be afraid!"

ONE: There is a good word that needs to be heard.

ALL: It is the Word of Life, that raises up abundant blessings.

One: Let us stand and sing, giving praise to God.

*** HYMN** *"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"* (BEECHER) Charles Wesley/John Zundel

Public Domain

Choir with Congregation

ALL: Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of Heav'n to Earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown;
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation, enter ev'ry trembling heart.

HIGH VOICES: Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit, let us find thy promised rest;
Take away our love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

LOW VOICES: Come, Almighty to deliver; let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never, never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy host above,
Pray, and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

ALL: Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation, perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory, till in Heav'n we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise!

WORDS OF WELCOME

Christoph Hofbauer (p)

INVITATION TO PASS THE PEACE OF CHRIST

HYMN #623 *"Woke Up This Morning"* Negro Spiritual

Public Domain

Choir with Congregation

Woke up this mornin' with my mind, and it was stayed on Jesus (3x)
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah!

Can't hate your neighbor with your mind if you keep stayed on Jesus...
Walkin' and talkin' with my mind and it is stayed on Jesus...
Singing and shouting with my mind and it is stayed on Jesus...

PROCLAMATION

Luke 6:17-26

Kris Holmes (L)

He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

"Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

"Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

"But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

"Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

"Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

"Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

SERMON

Rev. Debra Adams

HYMN/ANTHEM *"Lead Me, Lord"* by John D. Becker

First Church Choir

Text: Based on Matthew 5:3-12; 7:7, 13; John 14:6. Text and music © 1987, John D. Becker. Published by OCP. All rights reserved. Used with permission of ONE LICENSE #A-727774

HIGH VOICES: Blessed are the poor in spirit, longing for their Lord,
for God's coming kingdom shall be theirs.
Blessed are the sorrowing, for they shall be consoled,
and the meek shall come to rule the world.

ALL/REFRAIN: Lead me, Lord, lead me, Lord,
by the light of truth
to seek and to find the narrow way.
Be my way; be my truth;
be my life, my Lord,
and lead me, Lord, today.

LOW VOICES: Blessed are the merciful, for mercy shall be theirs,
and the pure in heart shall see their God.
Blest are they whose hunger only holiness can fill,
for I say they shall be satisfied. **REFRAIN**

ALL: Blest are they who through their lifetimes
sow the seeds of peace;
all will call them children of the Lord.
Blest are you, though persecuted in your holy life,
for in heaven, great is your reward. **REFRAIN**

TIME OF PRAYER

One: Let us prepare ourselves for a time of prayer.

Sharon Thomas (L)

If you are online, you are invited to add your prayers using the Chat function in the Zoom application

CALL TO PRAYER:

May the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Let us pray.

SPOKEN PRAYERS

One: We lift up these prayers to you, O Lord.

Sharon Thomas

A TIME FOR PRAYERS FROM THE CONGREGATION (CHAT FUNCTION, PRAYER BOOK).

Christoph Hofbauer (p)

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father/Mother/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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

HYMN #522

"Loving only You, O Christ (AMARTE SOLO)"

Luis Ferrer (AMARTE SOLO)

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Choir and Congregation

Loving only you, O Christ, loving only you, O Christ,
Loving only you, O Christ, and never looking back,
I follow in your steps, my Lord, while never giving up, my Lord,
I fall before your altar, Lord, while never looking back.

Loving only you, O Christ, carrying your cross, O Christ,
Loving only you, O Christ, I seek to do your will.
I will protect the weak, my Lord, while never giving up, my Lord.
I will proclaim your reign, my Lord, while never turning back.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christoph Hofbauer (L)

GOING FORTH

BENEDICTION

Rev. Debra Adams (p)

HYMN #187 *"Blessed are the Persecuted" Tonga Melody/Adapt. Esther C. Bergen*

Text: Tonga; based on Matthew 5; anon. ; adapt. Esther C. Bergen, © 1990 Mennonite World Conferenc. Used with permission of ONE
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Choir with Congregation

CHOIR: Blessed are the persecuted,
For Jesus Christ is living within them.

REFRAIN:/ALL Great will be their reward, they shall be giv'n a crown,
When the Lord comes from heav'n to meet them.

CHOIR: Blessed are they, who are hungry
in spirit for the Lord lives within them. **REFRAIN**

CHOIR: Blessed are the pure in heart,
For Jesus Christ is living within them. **REFRAIN**

CHOIR: Blessed are they who are thirsty in spirit,
For the Lord lives within them. **REFRAIN**

CLOSING

Christoph Hofbauer (L)

Facebook stream ends, Zoom greetings Breakout Rooms

MUSICIANS: First Church Choir with Patricia Clark

USHERS: Richard & Susan Buchanan

COFFEE HOSTS: Janet Fischer and Sharon Thomas

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COVENANT

We, The First Church in Swampscott, Congregational, declare ourselves to be an open and affirming church. We are called by God through Jesus Christ to follow the Great Commandment "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10: 27)

We joyfully welcome everyone of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, ages, races, and ethnicities, economic and social statuses, physical, mental and emotional abilities, faith backgrounds, marital standings and family structures into our community, to share in the full life, leadership and ministry of First Church.

We celebrate the wonderfully rich and diverse world God has created and embrace the joy and growth this diversity inspires. All who seek to know God are encouraged to join with us as we work to live out our mission in faith and love.

THE FIRST CHURCH IN SWAMPSCOTT, CONGREGATIONAL
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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 am to 1 pm
Friday: 4:30pm to 6pm

Office Phone: (781) 592-6081
Patricia Clark Director of Music Ministries
Spencer Aguiar Church Administrator office@thefirstchurch.org

Web Site thefirstchurch.org
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchSwampscott>

First Church Council: Clerk: Sharon Thomas. Treasurer: Sharon Scofield. Members: Janet Fischer, Susan Hamilton, Clarke Orzalli (chair), Heidi Whear, Stephen Rose, Julia Wistran, Betty McNeil, and Melissa Foye

Follow this QR code to provide an offering or gift to the church to support our ministry.

