

The First Church in Swampscott, Congregational
United Church of Christ
August 30, 2026



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.

The First Church in Swampscott, Congregational is so named because it was the first church established in the town in 1846 as Swampscott was developing into an independent town, separating from nearby Lynn.

If you would like to be added to our weekly newsletter, 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

Rev. Katie Cole

PRELUDE

"Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing" (Alles ist an Gottes Segen)

Patricia Clark

CALL TO WORSHIP

(By Steve Garnaas-Holmes)

Roy Young

One: Loving God, Fountain of Life, Eternal Source, our very being flows from you.

ALL: We sing your praise, with all Creation.

One: Your heart is among us in Christ. Your hand is upon us in the call of Jesus.

ALL: We rise to your call, humble and longing.

One: Your Holy Spirit stirs in us. We breathe deeply of holy courage, divine grace, infinite life.

ALL: Alleluia! Come, Holy Spirit, and transform us by your grace. Alleluia!

OPENING HYMN

#453 *"Called As Partners in Christ's Service" (BEECHER) Jane Parker Huber/John Zundel*

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Nina Clark and Patricia Clark with Congregation

ALL: Called as partners in Christ's service
Called to ministries of grace
We respond with deep commitment
Fresh new lines of faith to trace
May we learn the art of sharing
Side by side and friend with friend
Equal partners in our caring
To fulfil God's chosen end

HIGH VOICES: Christ's example Christ's inspiring
Christ's clear call to work and worth
Let us follow never faltering
Reconciling folk on earth
Men and women richer poorer
All God's people young and old
Blending human skills together
Gracious gifts from God unfold

LOW VOICES: Thus new patterns for Christ's mission
In a small or global sense
Help us bear each other's burdens
Breaking down each wall or fence
Words of comfort words of vision
Words of challenge said with care
Bring new power and strength for action
Make us colleagues free and fair

ALL: So God grant us for tomorrow
Ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow
With a calm that conquers strife
Make us partners in our living
Our compassion to increase
Messengers of faith thus giving
Hope and confidence and peace

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Katie Cole

INVITATION TO PASS THE PEACE OF CHRIST

* **PEACE PASSING SONG** *"God Is Still Speaking"* Marty Haugen

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Nina Clark and Patricia Clark with Congregation

REFRAIN/ALL: God is still speaking, blessed invitation,
God is still speaking, Listen and draw near.
God is still speaking, see a new creation.
God is still speaking. Stand and do not fear.

SOLO: Open up your ears to hear. (God is still speaking.)
Living Good News strong and clear. (Listen and draw near.)
Through the struggle, grief and pain (God is still speaking.)
God can raise us up again. (Stand and do not fear. **REFRAIN**

HIGH VOICES: Though the nations rage and fight. (God is still speaking.)
Hear God's voice of grace and light. (Listen and draw near.)
Choose the way that leads to peace. (God is still speaking.)
True compassion, sweet release. (Stand and do not fear.). **REFRAIN**

LOW VOICES: Hear the sound of justice ring. (God is still speaking.)
Hear the sound of mercy sing. (Listen and draw near.)
To the ones in deep despair. (God is still speaking.)
Be the sign of hope and care. (Stand and do not fear.). **REFRAIN**

PROCLAMATION

Matthew 16:21-28

Roy Young

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?"

"For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

SERMON

"Follow Me"

Rev. Katie Cole

HYMN *"I Surrender All (SURRENDER)"* Judson Wheeler Van DeVenter/Winfield Scott Weedon

Public Domain

Nina Clark and Patricia Clark with Congregation

SOLO: All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

REFRAIN/ALL: I surrender all, I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

SOLO: All to Jesus I surrender,
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine;
Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine. **REFRAIN**

SOLO: All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power,
Let Thy blessing fall on me. **REFRAIN**

ALL: All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

TIME OF PRAYER

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

Heidi Whear

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.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

(From The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition)

Eternal and merciful God, you have loved us with a love beyond our understanding, and you have set us on paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Yet we have strayed from your way; we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, through what we have done and what we have left undone. As we remember the lavish gift of your grace symbolized in baptism, O God, we praise you and give you thanks that you forgive us yet again. Grant us now, we pray, the grace to die daily to sin, and to rise daily to new life in Christ, who lives and reigns with you, and in whose strong name we pray. Amen.

Spoken Prayer

Heidi Whear

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

Rev. Katie Cole

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

MUSICAL MEDITATION "Gymnopedie" Erik Satie

Patricia Clark

PRAYER SONG "Holy Spirit" Stuart Townsend and Keith Getty

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Nina Clark and Patricia Clark with Congregation

HIGH. VOICES: Holy Spirit, living breath of God,
Breathe new life into my willing soul.
Let the presence of the Living God
Renew my heart and make me whole.
Cause your Word to come alive in me,
Give me faith for what I cannot see.
Give me passion for your purity,
Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.

LOW VOICES: Holy Spirit, from creation's birth,
Giving life to all that God has made.
Show your power once again on earth,
Cause your church to hunger for your ways.
Let the fragrance of our prayers arise,
Lead us on the road of sacrifice,
That in unity the face of Christ
May be clear for all the world to see.

ALL: Repeat v.1

GOING FORTH

BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Katie Cole

BENEDICTION

Rev. Katie Cole

*** PARTING SONG** "Lead Me, Lord" John D. Becker

Words and Music - ©1987 Oregon Catholic Press

Nina Clark and Patricia Clark with Congregation

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.

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 life, be my truth, 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**

CLOSING

Rev. Katie Cole

Facebook stream ends, Zoom greetings, Breakout Rooms

CLOSING 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 life, be my truth, my Lord,
And lead me, Lord, today.

MUSICIANS: NINA CLARK, VOCALIST; PATRICIA CLARK, PIANIST AND ORGANIST

USHERS: SUE BURGESS AND HEIDI WHEAR

REFRESHMENTS: CAROLE BANNISTER AND CINDY FOGARTY



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Amanda Grant Rose	Community Minister
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Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchSwampscott

First Church Council: Clerk: Melissa Foye. Treasurer: David Foye. Members: Janet Fischer (Chair), Rebecca Kinchley, Katie Day, Andrew Steingiser, Stephen Rose, Julia Wistran, Betty McNeil

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.