

ORDER OF SERVICE

First Church Boston
66 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA
Sunday, May 31, 2020

This service is broadcast live from 11:00 am to noon on WERS, 88.9FM.

Vivian Borek, WERS announcer.

Also streamed live on First Church Boston's Facebook page, Michael Sullivan, video.

- Prelude** Selection from Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552 Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)
- Call to Worship** Rev. Stephen Kendrick
- Hymn** # 20 Be Thou My Vision
- Chalice Lighting and Invocation** Katie McQuage-Loukas
Love is the spirit of this church, and Service its law. This is our
great covenant, to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one
another.
- Poem for All Ages** "Songs for the People," by Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911)
Abolitionist, Suffragist, Teacher, sought common ground between Unitarian
and African Methodist Episcopal Churches Daniel Lawlor
- Go Now in Peace** Daniel Lawlor
- Unison Reading** # 483 "The Peace of Wild Things," by Wendell Berry Rev. Kendrick
- Musical Meditation** "In Mutual Love," by Leo Collins
Performed by the First Church Choir (pre-recorded)
- Reading** "How Does One Address a Mystery?" by Gordon "Bucky" McKeenan
Katie McQuage-Loukas
- Announcements** Daniel Lawlor
- Prayer and Meditation** Rev. Kendrick
- Musical Affirmation** # 123 "Spirit of Life"
- Sermon** "Not a Contest, but a Doorway" Katie McQuage-Loukas
- Offertory**

Text Messaging Donation

You can use text messaging on your smartphone to send a contribution to the First Church offertory. Text a number representing your dollar amount (5, 10, 20, etc) to (617) 917-5610. The first time you do that, it will ask you to fill in credit card information that can be reused for subsequent contributions. You will receive an emailed receipt. Thank you!

Charge	“A Common Destiny,” by Rev. David Eaton	Daniel Lawlor
Hymn # 100	Peace Like a River	
Benediction		Katie McQuage-Loukas
Postlude	Selection from Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552	Johann Sebastian Bach

Readings and Texts

Hymn # 20 “Be Thou my Vision”

Be thou my vision, O God of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me God;
thou my soul’s shelter, thou my high tower,
raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor world’s empty praise,
thou my inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, first in my heart,
Sov’ reign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Unison Reading # 483 “The Peace of Wild Things,” by Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Musical Affirmation # 123 “Spirit of Life”

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.

Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

Musical Meditation "In Mutuall Love," a choral piece composed by former First Church Boston Choir Director Leo Collins, performed by the First Church Choir.
The tune is based on "The Old Hundredth" and the words are adapted from the 1630 Covenant of The First Church in Boston, reading:

In obedience to ... holy will, and divine Ordinance.

Wee whose names are here underwritten, being by most wise and good Providence brought together into this part of America (in the Bay of Massachusetts) and desirous to unite ourselves into one Congregation or church do hereby solemnly and religiously Promisse and bind ourselves to walke in all our wayes... in all sincere Conformity to holy Ordinances and in mutuall love, and respect each to other, So near as God shall give us grace.

Reading ["How Does One Address a Mystery?"](#)

by Gordon "Bucky" McKeeman

How does one address a mystery?

Cautiously—let us go cautiously, then, to the end of our certainty, to the boundary of all we know, to the rim of uncertainty, to the perimeter of the unknown which surrounds us.

Reverently—let us go with a sense of awe, a feeling of approaching the powerful holy whose lightning slashes the sky, whose persistence splits concrete with green sprouts, whose miracles are present in every place and moment.

Hopefully—out of our need for wholeness in our own lives, the reconciliation of mind and heart, the conjunction of reason and passion, the intersection of the timeless with time.

Quietly—for no words will explain the inarticulate or summon the presence that is always present even in our absence.

But what shall I say?

Anything—any anger, any hope, any fear, any joy, any request, any word that comes from the depth of being addressed to Being itself—or, perhaps, nothing, no complaint, no request, no entreaty, no thanksgiving, no praise, no blame, no pretense of knowing or of not knowing.

Simply be in the intimate presence of mystery, unashamed—unadorned—unafraid.

And at the end say—Amen.

Charge "A Common Destiny," by Rev David Eaton

All
living substance, all substance

of
energy, being, and purpose,
are
united and share the same destiny.

All
people,
those
we love and those we know not of,
are
united and share the same destiny.

Birth-to-death
we
share this unity with

the
sun,
earth,

our
brothers and sisters,
strangers,

flowers
of the field,
snow
flakes,

volcanoes
and moon beams.

Birth-Life-Death
Unknown-Known-Unknown

Our
destiny: from unknown to unknown.

May
we have the faith to accept this mystery

and
build upon its everlasting truth.

Hymn # 100 "I've Got Peace Like a River"

I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul. (2x)

I've got joy like a fountain...

I've got love like an ocean...

I've got pain like an arrow...

I've got tears like the raindrops ...

I've got strength like a mountain ...