

# the first church in chestnut hill

**September 2025**

[UNITARIAN]

26 SUFFOLK ROAD OFF HAMMOND STREET



[www.firstchurchchestnuthill.org](http://www.firstchurchchestnuthill.org)

Rev. Mark J. T. Caggiano, *Minister*  
Kathryn Rosenbach, *Music Director*  
Diego Garrido Barreto, *Ministerial Intern*

## VERITAS, CARITAS, ET RISUS

Welcome back from summer, whether that for you was a different location or mindset. We begin our church year afresh with a new helper for the year. Diego Garrido Barreto will be our intern and church administrator – please say hello to him on Sundays.

As we begin the year and our time with Diego, I thought it would be instructive to explore a common idea: being spiritual but not religious. That is a frequent explanation of modern sensibilities around religion. But what does it mean to be spiritual? And what does it mean in counterpoint to being religious? I have thoughts on the matter.

The fall sermon topics will revolve around mystics: people whose religious lives were characterized by mystical experiences or a mystical outlook. There will also be a few folks who experienced mystical moments, ones that changed them profoundly. As always, these topics will be examined through the lens of the Bible but also through the writings or biographies of these various mystics.

On our first Sunday, we will consider the life of Thomas Merton, an American Trappist monk and prolific writer, whose religious studies covered a wide range of Western and Eastern traditions. Merton remained firmly rooted in the Christian tradition and yet drew upon the mystical experiences of many others. That perspective is one small goal I have for this fall as we join back together.

God bless,

Mark

## BELOVEDNESS

Community of First Church, this is your new administrator and ministerial intern, Diego Garrido Barreto. Hola. I will serve this year, grounded in Latin American theologies of liberation, Catholicism, Methodism, and Eastern Orthodoxy. I wanted to share with you one of my latest inspirations: Henri Nouwen, Dutch Catholic priest, professor at Yale and Harvard. He wrote in *Home Tonight* (Penguin Random House, 2009):

*“We are not what we do. We are not what we have. We are not what others think of us. Coming home is claiming the truth. I am the beloved child of a loving Creator. We no longer have to beg for permission from the world to exist.”*

Reading these words, I felt we all are swimming in God’s love, like Rembrandt’s painting *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (next page). I felt like we all were floating in the ocean, and the Spirit’s arms were spread like wings, embracing us.

I imagined the father’s embrace: the coat’s texture, the beard aged like bourbon, the smell of salt from a son that has returned. A father who listens without excuses, who ignores the rags, the wounds, the burdens. A love that simply receives.

First Church, Nouwen’s words are not a map to love God, but a route into God’s sea—an invitation to rest beyond boats, sails, flags, or cargo. Just love. My invitation is to read Henri Nouwen together, reminding one another that we are loved in the sea of this life. Like Rembrandt’s painting of that return, God’s arms are open on the shore. Let us come to church, each Sunday, with joy, claiming truth in community, loving one another.

Con gusto, Diego.



*The Return of the Prodigal Son*  
(1661-1669)  
Rembrandt van Rijn  
Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

## September 7

Sermon: Seven Storey Mountain  
Scriptures: Jeremiah 18:1-11, Luke 14:25-33  
Scripture Reader: Bert Dane  
Usher: Mark Chadbourne  
Flowers: In loving memory of George Maliff  
By his friends at First Church  
Coffee Hour: Sally and Bert Dane

## September 14

Sermon: Inner Castle  
Scriptures: Numbers 21:4b-9, John 3:13-17  
Scripture Reader: Sally Baker  
Usher: Lisle Baker  
Flowers: In loving memory of Lisle's sisters:  
Betty, Louise, and Mary Stuart.  
By Sally and Lisle Baker.  
Coffee Hour: Sally and Lisle Baker

## September 21

Sermon: Inward Journey  
Scriptures: Amos 8:4-7, Luke 16:1-13  
Scripture Reader: Carol Lohe  
Usher: David Cornish  
Flowers: In loving memory of Ann and Tom  
Gannett  
By Deborah and David Brooks  
Coffee Hour: Church Picnic

## September 28

Sermon: All Shall Be Well  
Scriptures: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15; Luke 16:19-31  
Scripture Reader: Joe Hicks  
Usher: Joseph Hicks  
Flowers: In loving memory of Pat Timothy  
By her friends at First Church  
Coffee Hour: Linda and Joe Hicks

## MUSIC PROGRAM NOTES

We welcome Mezzo Soprano Nicole Plummer to our quartet this Fall.

**Nicole Plummer** is a mezzo-soprano based in Boston, MA. She has been seen in numerous operatic roles and has soloed on works such as Matthew Coleridge's *Requiem* and Saint-Saëns' *Oratorio de Noel*. Nicole holds a Master of Music in Opera Performance from the Maryland Opera Studio and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and French from the University of Miami. In addition to her musical life, she currently works as an Assistant Director of Admissions at Lesley University and is thrilled to be back home in New England!

## ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Rev. Mark hosts bible study at 1:00 PM on Wednesdays on Zoom. In September we are studying selections from the Book of Psalms.

Contact Rev. Mark to be included on the Zoom invitation list at [mjtcaggiano@gmail.com](mailto:mjtcaggiano@gmail.com). All are welcome.

## DONATIONS

If you wish, you may make your donation via Zelle or mail a check to the church. Attention: Treasurer, 26 Suffolk Road, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467.

Many thanks for your anticipated generosity.

## SAVE THE DATES

September 21 - Homecoming Sunday and Cookout

October 5 – Blessing of the Animals

## IN MEMORIAM

Samuel L. “Sandy” Batchelder, Jr.

The memorial service is Saturday, October 25 at 11 AM. Reception will follow at The Country Club 119 Clyde Street Brookline, MA.

## ALTAR FLOWERS

Attention flower donors: please contact Dana Flynn (617-680-0702) to coordinate the delivery of your flower donation. He will meet the florist (or you) at the church on the Saturday prior to your date. If you prefer, we also have tasteful silk arrangements which can easily be placed on the altar.

If you would like to donate flowers, multiple dates are still available for the year. Please contact Diego Garrido if you are interested at [26suffolk@gmail.com](mailto:26suffolk@gmail.com).

## VOLUNTEER SCRIPTURE READERS

If you would like to join the group of volunteer scripture readers, please contact Carol Lohe at [ctroyen@mfa.org](mailto:ctroyen@mfa.org). This is a rewarding opportunity to be part of our Sunday services.

## SEPTEMBER MUSIC

September 7, 2025

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Prelude	3 Miniatures	Peeters
Anthem	O Almighty God	Barcrofte
Hymn 1	O God, Our Help in Ages Past	
Response	O Hear, My God, My Pray'r and Sore Complaining	Bach
Offertory	O Christ, who art the Light and day	Whyte
Anthem		
Hymn 576	Lord, Thou Hast Searched Me	
Hymn 92	I Look to Thee in Every Need	
Choral	The Lord Bless You and Keep You	Lutkin
Amen		
Postlude	Gigue	Handel

September 14, 2025

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Prelude	Toccata	Frescobaldi
Anthem	Alleluia	Thompson
Hymn 217	Lord, of All Hopefulness	
Response	Lord Jeus Christ, with Us Abide	Bach
Offertory	Kyrie	Schubert
Anthem		
Hymn	On Eagle's Wings	
Hymn 228	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	
Choral	Twofold Amen	Traditional
Amen		
Postlude	Canzona	Buxtehude

September 21, 2025

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Prelude	Magnificat primi toni	Buxtehude
Anthem	Wade in the Water	Spiritual
Hymn 434	God Send Us Men Whose Aim 'Twill Be	
Response	All Living Men Are but Mortal	Bach
Offertory	Deep River	Spiritual
Anthem		
Hymn 495	We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder	
Hymn 428	When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	
Choral	Threefold Amen	Traditional
Amen		
Postlude		

September 28, 2025

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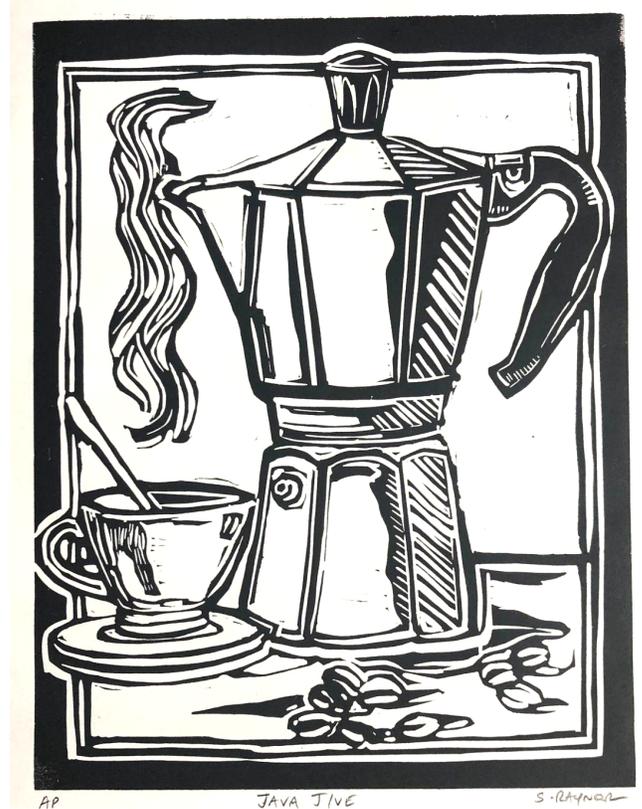
Prelude	Chaconne	Handel
Anthem	See the Conquering hero come	Handel
Hymn 193	Thine is the Glory	
Response	Awake, My Heart	Bach
Offertory	Almighty God, who hast me brought	Ford
Anthem		
Hymn 294	Eternal God, Whose Power Upholds	
Hymn	Jerusalem	Parry
Choral	Threefold Amen	Traditional
Amen		
Postlude	Sonata	Handel

## Liturgy for the Ritual of Morning Coffee

Meet me, O Christ  
in this stillness of morning.  
Move me, O Spirit,  
to quiet my heart.  
Mend me, O Father,  
from yesterday's harms.  
From the discords of yesterday,  
resurrect my peace.  
From the discouragement of yesterday,  
resurrect my hope.  
From the weariness of yesterday,  
resurrect my strength.  
From the doubts of yesterday,  
resurrect my faith.  
From the wounds of yesterday,  
resurrect my love.  
Let me enter this new day,  
aware of my need and awake to your grace,  
O Lord.

Amen

From *Every Moment Holy* by Doug Mckelvey



## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

.....  
**to** .....  
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*grow spiritually*  
*foster community*  
*serve others*

### MUSIC DIRECTOR and CHOIR

Kathryn Rosenbach, 617-821-0385

Christina Grandy de Oliveira, Soprano

Nicole Plummer, Mezzo Soprano

MinSun Im, Tenor

Guanghao Yu, Baritone

### SEXTON

Dana Flynn, 617-680-0702

### ADMINISTRATOR

Diego Garrido Barreto

26Suffolk@gmail.com

### FOR THOSE IN NEED THIS MONTH

Please contact Rev. Mark at the church or via email

([mjtcaggiano@gmail.com](mailto:mjtcaggiano@gmail.com))

