

**First Church in Boston
ORDER OF SERVICE**

**First Church Boston
66 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA
Sunday, August 22, 2021**

*Broadcast 11:00 am to noon on WERS, 88.9FM, Vivian Borek, announcer
Streamed on Facebook @firstchurchboston, Craig Hildreth, audio and video engineer
Masha Stepanova, video editor*

*Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Sheldon Bennett,
Guest Musicians Larry Thomas Bell, pianist; Jennifer Webb, mezzo-soprano;
Thomas Gregg, tenor*

Prelude Prelude and Fugue in c minor, *The Well-Tempered Clavier Bk. 1*
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Opening Words “Into the Peace of Wild Things,” by Wendell Berry
Rev. Sheldon Bennett

Hymn # 4 I Brought My Spirit to the Sea JACQUI

Chalice Lighting and Tolling of the Bell Rev. Aisha Ansano
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.

Time for all Ages “A Cormorant Spreads Its Wings” Rev. Bennett

Responsive Reading # 531 “The Oversoul,” by Ralph Waldo Emerson Rev. Bennett

Musical Meditation *Parables of Love and Death* (2021) based on poems by
Emily Dickinson
Larry Thomas Bell (b. 1952)
#15 How many flowers fail
#16 Within my Reach!
*Thomas Gregg—tenor
Larry Bell—pianist*

Reading From *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics* by Carlo Rovelli
Rev. Bennett

Announcements Rev.
Ansano

Hymn # 92 Mysterious Presence, Source of All WAREHAM

Prayer and Meditation Rev. Bennett

Affirmation # 123 Spirit of Life

Sermon "Close Encounters of the Infinite Kind" Rev. Bennett

Offertory *Parables of Love and Death* (2021) based on poems by
Emily Dickinson
Larry Thomas Bell
#17 A Death Blow is a life Blow
Jennifer Webb—mezzo soprano
Thomas Gregg—tenor
Larry Bell—pianist

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. You will receive confirmation by email. If you prefer to donate by check, simply make one out to First Church in Boston and send it to 66 Marlborough St., Boston 02116. Thank you!

Hymn # 1064 Blue Boat Home HYFRYDOL (adapted)

Benediction Rev. Bennett

Postlude Prelude and Fugue in D major,
The Well-Tempered Clavier Bk. 1 Johann Sebastian Bach

Please note, this order of service may vary from the actual broadcast service.

Hymn Texts (8/22/21)

Hymn # 4 I Brought My Spirit to the Sea JACQUI

I brought my spirit to the sea;
I stood upon the shore.
I gazed upon infinity,
I heard the waters roar.

And then there came a sense of peace,
some whisper calmed my soul.
Some ancient ministry of stars
had made my spirit whole.

I brought my spirit to the trees
that loomed against the sky.
I touched each wand'ring careless breeze
to know if god was nigh.

And then I felt an inner flame that

fiercely burned my tears.
Upright, I rose from bended knee
to meet the asking years.

Responsive Reading # 531 "The Oversoul," by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Let us learn the revelation of all nature and thought; that the Highest dwells within us, that the sources of nature are in our own minds.

As there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so there is no bar or wall in the soul where we, the effect, cease, and God, the cause, begins.

I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

There is deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is accessible to us.

Every moment when the individual feels invaded by it is memorable.

It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whosoever will put off what is foreign and proud; it comes as insight; it comes as serenity and grandeur.

The soul's health consists in the fullness of its reception.

For ever and ever the influx of this better and more universal self is new and unsearchable.

Within us is the soul of the whole; the wise silence, the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One.

When it breaks through our intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through our will, it is virtue; when it flows through our affections, it is love.

Hymn # 92

Mysterious Presence, Source of All

WAREHAM

Mysterious Presence, source of all —
the world without, the soul within —
thou fount of life, O hear our call,
and pour thy living waters in.

Thou breathest in the rushing wind,
thy spirit stirs in leaf and flower;
nor wilt thou from the willing mind
withhold thy light and love and power.

Thy hand unseen to accents clear
awoke the psalmist's trembling lyre,
and touched the lips of holy seer
with flame from thine own altar fire.

That touch divine again impart,
still give the prophet's burning word;
and vocal in each waiting heart
let living psalms of praise be heard.

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.

Hymn # 1064

Blue Boat Home

HYFRYDOL (adapted)

Though below me, I feel no motion standing on these mountains and plains.
Far away from the rolling ocean still my dry land heart can say:
I've been sailing all my life now, never harbor or port have I known.
The wide universe is the ocean I travel and the earth is my blue boat home.

Sun my sail and moon my rudder as I ply the starry sea,
leaning over the edge in wonder, casting questions into the deep.
Drifting here with my ship's companions, all we kindred pilgrim souls,
making our way by the lights of the heavens in our beautiful blue boat home.

I give thanks to the waves up holding me, hail the great winds urging me on,
greet the infinite sea before me, sing the sky my sailor's song:
I was born up on the fathoms, never harbor or port have I known.
The wide universe is the ocean I travel, and the earth is my blue boat home.