



**FIRST CHURCH
SOMERVILLE UCC**

First Congregational Church
of Somerville
United Church of Christ
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June 14, 2023

First Church Somerville, United Church of Christ

Press Release

On Sunday June 11th, immediately following a joyful Pride worship service, a fire was set in our beloved Sanctuary. The congregation was downstairs in our social hall, directly below the Sanctuary, working on a service project when the fire began.

The Somerville Fire Department was alerted after a member of the congregation extinguished the fire. No one was physically harmed. There is some damage to our Sanctuary, but we are grateful that the damage is localized to one portion of our space. The incident is currently being investigated by the local and state authorities. We do not yet know whether there is a connection between our Pride service and the fire. We are grateful to the Somerville Fire Department for their ongoing investigation and support.

Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, First Church Somerville will continue to be unapologetically queer, queer affirming, and Christian. We know queer people are made in the image of our Creator and the queer community holds prophetic power in the kin-dom of God.

All are welcome to worship with us this Sunday, 6/18, at 10am on the lower floor of our building as we continue the celebration of queer joy and the power of Christian community. Please enter the building by the blue side door on Francesca Ave. We ask any visitors to refrain from audio or video recording or photography.

We will not take interviews or comment beyond this statement at this point in the investigation. Press inquiries can be sent to press@firstchurchsomerville.org.