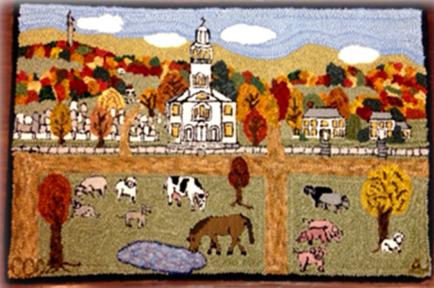


First Congregational Church
1 Monument Circle
Old Bennington, VT 05201

November 2018

*Vermont's Colonial Shrine: Welcoming all to share God's light,
and proclaiming God's embracing love since 1806*



TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Don't miss your chance to win this one of a kind rug designed by Claudia Dalton and handcrafted by Ann Herrick. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 6 tickets for \$20 and can be purchased during coffee hour on Sunday mornings or at the church office during the week. The drawing will be held on Sunday, December 2nd.

CROP WALK – We are pleased to report over \$4,500 was raised at the CROP Hunger Walk on October 28th. There were a total of 34 walkers, 8 of which from our church. Funds raised by this event will be used to fight hunger around the world and in Bennington too!

FALL CLEAN UP

The trustees will be setting the date for the annual Fall Clean Up. We hope to have many volunteers join in the effort to clean up the Barn and Church properties. Stay tuned for details.





The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church (Old First Church)

November 2018

FROM THE MINISTER

And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.

So wrote Edward Winslow in 1621 in his description of the first Thanksgiving celebrated by the Pilgrims in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Those words form the core image of what this day and month are about as we look on life and with thanks to God count blessings, remember good things and gather together.

The words are wisely written because there is something contingent in them as well. It may not always be so good, so plentiful. Leaves clear the trees and the outlines of a year past become apparent, disclosing both joys and pain, regret and hope. This is the matter of our spiritual journey. Anyone on such a path comes by all these places and we move forward with the knowledge that through God's love we are indeed "so far from want" that we have means to share our abundance with each other.

We are a thankful people and each week we gather in community to give thanks to God who created, holds and cares for this November world.

There can be no true Thanksgiving without prayer." Calvin Coolidge, 1930

The Rev. Ken Clarke

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

Each year, the Church asks members and friends to consider prayerfully what they will give so the work of the church can continue throughout the year. We hope you consider your gifts for such work in 2019 among your highest priorities. Our annual Stewardship campaign was kicked off by Don Miller saying a few words during worship about why he gives to the church. In an effort to stimulate thought and reflection we will hear from others in the church during the "Moment for Stewardship".

Pledge cards can be placed in the birdhouse size wooden church in the narthex on Sundays through November 11th or brought to the church office during the week. We will celebrate the end of our Stewardship campaign on November 11th with a special coffee hour.

Let our light shine! As they once put a "lantern" signifying the grace of Christ on the top of the church building, our joy and work is to let the light that we still have from God shine, too. Many thanks for all your faithfulness in the past, and please do all you can, not only to help us meet our goal, but to be faithful witnesses to the grace of God in the world.



WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Women's Book Group will meet on Thursday, November 29, 6:30 PM at Wendy Schmitt's house to discuss the book *The News of the World* by Paulette Jiles. There will be no meeting in December. If you would like more information about the Women's Book Group, feel free to attend the next meeting or speak with Wendy Schmitt.

1 Monument Circle, Old Bennington, Vermont 05201

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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator

OPEN CHURCH

Another season has come and gone and we couldn't be more appreciative to our team of docents who volunteer their time at Open Church keeping our doors open to visitors. It is clear that our volunteers make a difference when you read the comments they post on Trip Advisor. Their positive remarks and high ratings kept us #1 on "Things to Do" in Bennington throughout 2018! This is just one example written by a tourist from Atlanta:

Great stop. Kind tour guide.

So glad we stopped! It is a great piece of history with a great story. Of course, we saw the Robert Frost burial site, but the story of the church is equally as interesting. The tour guide was very kind and did a great job of showing us around.

Our numbers are a little lower this year probably due to the major road construction, the summer heat and the less than stellar fall foliage. We aren't alone as the folks at the Monument report a similar decline. Nonetheless, any day we were open and welcomed guests was a bonus and we couldn't have done it without the following volunteers:

Ann Bugbee, Paul Capriola, Stacy Carreau, Claudia & Steve Dalton, Patty Duffy, Betsy Ehrenfreund, Paul Goodrich, Lou & Marie Guariniello, Pat Guerrero, Bill Hartz, Ann Herrick, Marietta Hibbard, Sue Katz, Walt Klinger, Brandy Lesser, Jeannette Lesser, Don Miller, Patrice Nolan, Dave & Marsha Pilachowski, Virginia Poole, Vicky Printz, Jane Radocchia, Muriel Rice, Don Swanda, Bob Tegart, Amy Tronsen, Kathy Wagenknecht, Roberta Webb and Pat White.

The following information comes from our treasurer and the "Daily Sheets" our guides fill out each day:

Open Church 2018

Total Visitors	7716	
Total Buses	29	
Total Income	\$ 9,853.00	estimated
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,311.52</u>	
Net Income	\$ 8,541.48	\$1.11 per person

Open Church 2017

Total Visitors	7869	
Total Buses	31	
Total Income	\$ 11,998.00	
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,325.00</u>	
Net Income	\$ 10,673.00	\$1.36 per person

Looking Ahead

CHRISTMAS AT THE OLD FIRST CHURCH

12/2: Hanging of the Greens

12/9: Poinsettias arrive

12/16: Candlelight Service, 7:00 PM

12/24: Christmas Eve Service, 5:00 PM



Memorial Poinsettias

If you are interested in donating a poinsettia in memory of a loved one this holiday season, please provide the name of that person(s) along with your name to the church office (or fill out a BLOG found in the worship bulletin and place on the offering plate). Donations in any amount toward the cost of the poinsettias would be greatly appreciated.

Give the Gift of Warmth...



With winter weather arriving soon we are reminded of those in need and the desire to help keep them warm and safe in the elements.

The annual Mitten Tree and Blanket Drive will once again happen at Old First and your help is greatly appreciated.

Donations of hats, mittens, gloves and scarves can be placed on the Mitten Tree which will be set up in the Narthex of the Church, new or gently used blankets (please make sure they are clean) can be placed under the tree. We are NOT allowed to give electric blankets.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

In anticipation for the Church's Annual Meeting in February our nominating committee, consisting of Dick Guerrero, chair, Sandy Bechtel, deacon rep. and Dave Pilachowski, trustee rep. invite all members of Old First Church to consider serving on one or more boards/advocacy positions. You can find details about each of these positions in your church by-laws or a condensed version insert found in the weekly bulletin. Please note that not all positions are currently vacant, however if you would like to be considered for any of these positions please sign up on a Sunday morning BLOG and indicate your preference.

November 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 UVM Foster Family Training 4-9:30 PM, Barn	2 Open Church Season End meeting/lunch 11 AM, Barn	3
4 Springer family Barn Use 1-4 PM Communion Sunday 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	5	6 Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn	7	8	9	10 Maccioli family Barn Use 1-4 PM
11 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister Veterans Day	12 Old Bennington Planning mtg. 7 PM, Barn	13 Deacon's Mtg. 4 PM, Barn Trustee Meeting 5:30 PM, Barn	14	15	16	17 Jolin family Barn Use 1-4 PM
18 Remington family Barn Use 1-4 PM 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	19	20	21	22 Church office closed Brownell family Barn Use 10 AM – 8 PM Thanksgiving	23	24
25 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Lou Guariniello Guest Minister	26	27 Council Mtg. 5 PM, Barn	28	29 Women's Book Group mtg. 6:30 PM at Wendy Schmitt's house	30 Special Olympics holiday gathering 5:00-8:30 PM, Barn	

DEACONS ON CALL:

Sandy Bechtel and Marie Guariniello

USHERS:

11/4: Marie Guariniello, Marietta Hibbard & Lynda Swanda

11/11: Claudia Dalton & Jeannette Lesser

11/18: Sandy Bechtel & Evie Wild

11/25: Marshall & Connie Barrett with their granddaughters Skyla & Saige

READERS:

11/4: Marsha Pilachowski

11/11: Anastasia Gauthier

11/18: Claudia Dalton

11/25: Bill Gordon

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

11/4: Pat Guerrero, Ann Herrick & Wendy Schmitt

11/11: Anastasia Gauthier & Pat Ross

11/18: Stacy Carreau & Lynda Swanda

11/25: Carlos & Kristin Castellanos at their home on Monument Avenue

FLOWERS:

11/4:

11/11: Wendy Schmitt

11/18:

11/25: Anastasia Gauthier & Fischer