

First Congregational Church
1 Monument Circle
Old Bennington, VT 05201

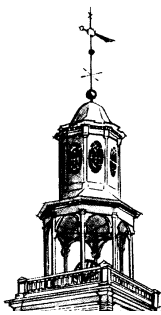
March 2019

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



Daylight Saving Time
begins on Sunday March 11th!





The Lantern

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church (Old First Church)

March 2019

FROM THE MINISTER

The beginning of Lent is an opportunity for each of us to use time to our advantage. Often time seems like an adversary, either slipping away from our wish to savor or piling up with demands and duty. Here are forty days (fewer, now...there's time doing its thing again!) through which we can enter a place of calm and peace. Where is that? It is our quiet self. These Lenten days give us a chance to get acquainted with that same self. The quiet self is less distracted and more focused on the elemental parts of life. The quiet self begins with gratitude. Gratitude for being and being alive. Gratitude for the day and hour. Gratitude for our home and the day we are given. We can build out from there but this simple base is our start.

The kingdom of God is within you. Jesus said these words in Luke's gospel (17:21) some translations have it that the kingdom of God is in your midst though the King James version presents it as "within you". That this reality is so near may come as a surprise to us when we feel discouraged or challenged by health issues or anxious about one thing or another. We often look for help outside ourselves and don't seem to believe sometimes that there is anything worthwhile closer at hand.

Lent and these words of Jesus set us on a journey—a treasure hunt, really. That realm, that kingdom, that place of calm and love and peace is found by looking close at hand. In the space between ourselves and God is something loving, healing and joyful to be found. May we use the time of these Lenten days to journey inward so we may love and serve each other in some time soon to come.

The Rev. Ken Clarke

OLD FIRST CHURCH'S ANNUAL MEETING

The congregation met for its Annual Meeting in the church sanctuary following worship on February 17th. We received the written reports submitted by officers and committees, elected new people to office and adopted the budget for the year. Thank you to all who provided food for the expanded coffee hour.

Our thanks to all committee members who offered their time and talents throughout the year. Special thanks to those who have completed their terms or are stepping down:

Connie Barrett –Clerk
Kathy Buck – Assistant Clerk
Virginia Adams – Christian Ed
Claudia Dalton –Fellowship
Carol Poppe – Mission
Dick Guerrero - Nominating
Paul Goodrich – Open Church
Anastasia Gauthier – Personnel Committee
Tom Schmitt - Trustee

If you were unable to attend the meeting and would like a copy of the report, stop by the church office for a copy.



SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY RESULTS

Thank you to all who participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring fundraiser on Super Bowl Sunday. A total of \$310.00 was raised. To make things interesting again this year two pots were available, one representing the New England Patriots and the other the Los Angeles Rams. The Patriots soup pot was the winner with \$254 and the Eagles soup pot collecting \$56. The Bennington County Interfaith Council's Kitchen Cupboard is the real winner as 100% of the donations raised in our church went to this worthy cause.

1 Monument Circle, Old Bennington, Vermont 05201

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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator



St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Sunday, March 17
Following Worship

We hope you will join us after worship on **Sunday, March 17** at the Barn for a St. Patrick's Day luncheon. To help us plan please let us know if you plan to attend and what dish you might be able to provide (casserole, salad or dessert). Invite a friend!

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

The 16th annual **MEDITATIONS FOR LENT** booklet, comprised of submissions from members and friends of Old First, are available for pick up in the Narthex or at the church office for those wishing to have a copy to read through the season of Lent. Lent begins on Wednesday, March 6th. Thank you to all who submitted devotionals this year.



WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Women's Book Group will meet next on Thursday, March 28, 6:30 PM (place TBD) to discuss the book *Warlight* by Michael Ondaatje.

Newcomers are always welcome. For more information or a listing of all the books being read this year contact Wendy Schmitt or the church office. April's book is: *Joy for Beginners* by Erica Bauermeister.

MONUMENTAL TAG SALE

Save the date!!! This year the Old First Monumental Tag Sale is returning Saturday, June 8th. The warm winds of June seem like a distant dream today but the months will pass quickly. **NOW** is the time to clean out your attic and those over-stuffed closets and to set aside items for the sale. Ask your friends and neighbors to do the same.

We are in the process of forming this year's tag sale committee. If you are willing to help in the same capacity as last year or if there are folks out there who are looking to join a great bunch of people please contact Marsha (447-3868) or the church office (447-1223). We had a great time last year!

Our first organizational meeting will take place on **Sunday, April 7, following worship.**

FREE SUNDAY SUPPER

Thank you to Bill Hartz, Sue Katz, Wendy and Tom Schmitt for signing up to host the **FREE SUNDAY SUPPER** at Second Congregational Church on March 10th and to the many others from our church who are providing food for the meal

OPEN CHURCH DOCENT TRIP:

The annual Open Church Docent trip is being planned but details are not firmed up yet. We are hoping to visit some sites a bit closer to home this year, potentially visiting St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cambridge - with its Tiffany windows and interesting interior and possibly the Baptist Church in Shaftsbury, now owned by the Shaftsbury Historical Society.



Details about the trip will be announced as soon as arrangements have been made.

THANK YOU TO MY CHURCH FAMILY

On behalf of my dad and my brothers and sisters, I would like to thank you for your prayers, support and the beautiful flower arrangement that was sent. Your kindness and thoughtfulness meant so much at this difficult time. Mom passed away peacefully at the age of 89 after many years of declining health.

Faithfully yours,

Nancy (Smolen) Andrews

GOD'S GARDEN MUST BE BEAUTIFUL

God looked around the garden,
and found an empty space
He looked down upon the Earth,
and saw your tired face.
He put His arms around you,
and lifted you to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best.
He knew that you were weary,
and He knew you were in pain.
He knew that you would never,
be well on Earth again.
He saw the roads were getting rough,
and the hills were hard to climb.
So He closed your weary eyelids,
and whispered peace be thine.

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Manno family Barn use 10 AM – 5 PM Communion Sunday 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister		Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn		UVM Foster Family Training @ the Barn 4-9 PM		Perrone family Barn Use 10 AM- 5 PM
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Partenope family Barn use 11 AM-4 PM 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	Old Bennington Planning mtg. 7 PM, Barn	Deacon's Mtg. 4 PM, Barn Trustee Meeting 5:30 PM, Barn		UVM Foster Family Training @ the Barn 4-9 PM		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
 St. Patrick's Luncheon following worship 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister				UVM Foster Family Training @ the Barn 4-9 PM		Gaudette family Barn use 11 AM-5 PM
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	Old Bennington Master Gardner's mtg. @ the Barn 5:30 – 8 PM			Women's Book Group 6:30 PM Location TBD UVM Foster Family Training @ the Barn 4-9 PM	Apple Hill Annual mtg. @ the Barn 6-8 PM	Douglas family Barn use 11 AM-4 PM
31						
11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister						

DEACONS ON CALL:

Marsha Pilachowski & Pat Ross

USHERS:

3/3: Marsha Pilachowski, Pat Ross & Wendy Schmitt
3/10: David & Laurel Varker
3/17: Wendy & Tom Schmitt
3/24: Donna & Katie Jones
3/31: Marsha & Dave Pilachowski

READERS:

3/3: Dave Pilachowski
3/10: Marsha Pilachowski
3/17: Lou Guariniello
3/24: Bill Gordon
3/31: Claudia Dalton

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

3/3: Betsy Ehrenfreund & Pat Ross
3/10: Betsy Ehrenfreund, Anastasia & Fischer
Gauthier assisted by Marsha Pilachowski
3/17: St. Patrick's Luncheon
3/24:
3/31:

FLOWERS:

3/3: The Tronsen Family IMO Eric Tronsen
3/10: Mary LaCasse in honor of Sandy Bechtel
3/17: Anastasia & Fischer Gauthier
3/24: Darlene & Jeff Munson
3/31: