



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Old Bennington, Vermont

March 2020 Lantern

## FROM THE MINISTER

We take for granted the coming of spring and though we know it is here soon enough (indeed, if you are reading this the clocks may have already shifted one hour “forward”...) the retreat of snow and unfolding of a new, if muddy, landscape comes in its own time. The church keeps a different time as we approach Easter. These days of preparation and reflection ask many things of us. What do we wait for and want in this life? For what purpose do we live? Why do we suffer and some suffer so much? What lasting good does my effort make?

There is a risk in these questions. They take us to the brink with the possibility that if answers do not come or do not suit rather than a spring and renewal of life we might face loss and darkness. Nothing seems as real as a Good Friday. That Easter follows is all important...but that Easter is an act of faith...far more than the believable dark of a Good Friday the faith of Easter is a personal, heartfelt response to this our world and what it offers.

Easter’s basis in faith is a challenge. Yet we all do live by some faith. Here, in our church, we try to show what a faith means in worship, in warmth of fellowship, in loving service to others and more. We develop a love and faith in the goodness life offers by coming together, sharing both tears and joy and even accepting imperfection and loss as we see great beauty and life’s treasure.

Our Palm Sunday and Easter week activities move us through these places...acknowledging both the risks and joys of life. Join us, if you can. Spring will come and your spirit will be renewed and better for it.

- 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 9<sup>th</sup>. 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:

Marshall Barrett – Trustee (Chair)

Pat Ross - Deacon

Marietta Hibbard – Clerk

Larry Ross- Nominating Committee

Betsy Ehrenfreund – Open Church & Council Member at Large

Reg Jones – Personnel Committee

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



## WOMEN’S BOOK GROUP

The Women’s Book Group will meet next on Thursday, March 26, 6:30 PM in the church parlor, hosted by Jane Radocchia to discuss the book *The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen* by Hendrik Groen.

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: *Becoming* by Michelle Obama

## BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study meets at the Barn on Tuesday afternoons at 4:00 PM, with the exception of the second Tuesday of the month when the Deacon and Trustee meetings are held.

Physical Address: 60 Monument Avenue, Old Bennington

Church Office/Mailing Address: 1 Monument Circle, Bennington, Vermont 05201

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Kenneth A. Clarke, Minister

Don Miller, Moderator



## St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

**Sunday, March 15  
Following Worship**

**W**e hope you will join us after worship on **Sunday, March 15** at the Barn for a St. Patrick's Day luncheon. To help us plan please let us know if you plan to attend.

### LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

The 17<sup>th</sup> 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 began on Wednesday, February 26. Thank you to all who submitted devotionals this year.

### CONCERT AT THE OLD FIRST CHURCH

**ANDRÉ LAURENT O'NEIL PERFORMS  
CELLO SUITES BY J.S. BACH  
Saturday, March 21  
4:00 PM**

On Bach's birthday, André will play some of the unaccompanied cello suites, and launch his CD. Following the concert come to Bach's birthday party at the Barn on Monument Circle

(Suggested donation \$40 to benefit Bennington Baroque)

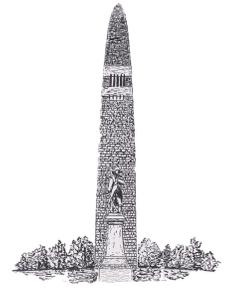
March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 is J. S. Bach's 335<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Cello Suites. There could hardly be a more fitting day to hear selected Cello Suites performed on baroque cello. Hailed by The Daily Gazette (Schenectady) as possessing a "lustrous ringing tone, facile technique and (a) strong convincing grasp of the baroque style," cellist and composer André Laurent O'Neil has performed in distinguished venues worldwide including Carnegie Hall, Symphony Hall in Boston, Disney Hall in L.A., Musikverein in Vienna, and the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. He has also performed with renowned groups such as the Handel & Haydn Society (Boston), New Trinity Baroque (Atlanta), New Belgrade Opera (Serbia), and II Rossignolo (Italy), among others. He is the newly appointed Principal Cellist of the Schenectady Symphony Orchestra.

Following the performance everyone is invited to a gala birthday party in the Barn at 1 Monument Circle.

### MONUMENTAL TAG SALE

**SATURDAY JUNE 6**

This year the Old First Monumental Tag Sale will take place on **Saturday, June 6**. You may want to keep the sale in mind while doing your spring cleaning and set aside items for the sale. Ask your friends and neighbors to do the same!



**Our first planning meeting will take place after worship on Sunday, March 8 in the Church Sanctuary.** We are looking to develop an expanded leadership team, so then please be thinking if there is one aspect of the sale that interests you. Bring your ideas and suggestions. Everyone is welcome! If you haven't been involved in the past we have a great time working on the tag sale and getting to know each other better. Please contact Marsha P. (447-3868); Susan K. (447-0738); Pat R. (753-7123) or the church office (447-1223) if you have any questions.

### OPEN CHURCH

The 2020 Open Church season is rapidly approaching and excitement is building for another great year of welcoming visitors from all over the world. At this time, our regular guides from last year are encouraged to get in touch with the church office or Don Miller (Open Church Advocate) to lock down their preferred day/shift to be at the church. The season officially begins on Memorial Day Weekend (May 23-25) and runs weekends only through the month of June. The church is open daily July – October 18<sup>th</sup> (+/-). Morning shift 10AM -1PM and afternoon shift 1– 4 PM; 1– 4 PM on Sundays.

### OPEN CHURCH

#### DOCENT TRIP

We are in the process of researching options for the annual Open Church Docent field trip.



The field trip is open to anyone and everyone so feel free to invite a friend! Details about the trip will be announced as soon as arrangements have been made.

### MEMORIAL SERVICE DETAILS FOR OUR FRIEND AND FORMER ORGANIST

A memorial service for Charles Olegar will be held on Saturday, March 14, 2:00 PM at the East Greenbush Reformed Church, 688 Columbia Turnpike, East Greenbush, NY 12061. For more information please call the East Greenbush church office at (518) 477-6030.

# March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <b>Communion Sunday</b>  11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	2	3 <b>Bible Study 4 PM at the Barn</b>  Old Bennington Trustee mtg. 7 PM, Barn	4  Hope for Parents Al-Anon meeting 6:30 -7:30 PM in the Parlor	5	6	7  Spears family Barn use 10 AM-5 PM
8  Peabody family Barn use 11 AM -3 PM <b>Tag Sale Mtg. Following worship</b> 11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	9  Old Bennington Planning Committee mtg. 7:30 PM, Barn	10 <b>Deacon's Mtg. 4 PM at the Barn</b>  <b>Trustee Mtg. 5 PM at the Barn</b>	11  Hope for Parents Al-Anon meeting 6:30 -7:30 PM in the Parlor	12	13	14
15  <b>St. Patrick's Luncheon following worship</b>  11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	16	17 <b>Bible Study 4 PM at the Barn</b>  <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18  Hope for Parents Al-Anon meeting 6:30 -7:30 PM in the Parlor	19	20	21 <b>300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert celebrating Bach's "Cello Suites" 4:00 PM at Old First Church Reception following at the Barn</b>
22  Belanger family Barn use 12 -4 PM  11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	23	24 <b>Bible Study 4 PM at the Barn</b>	25  Hope for Parents Al-Anon meeting 6:30 -7:30 PM in the Parlor	26 <b>Women's Book Group meeting 6:30 PM in the church Parlor, hosted by Jane Radocchia</b>	27  MPCC Social Hall use 11:30-4:30 PM	28
29  11:00 AM worship The Rev. Ken Clarke Minister	30	31 <b>Bible Study 4 PM at the Barn</b>				

## DEACONS ON CALL:

Marie Guariniello & Marietta Hibbard

## USHERS:

3/1: Marie Guariniello & Marietta Hibbard  
3/8: David & Laurel Varker  
3/15: Larry & Pat Ross  
3/22: Stacy Carreau & Paul Goodrich  
3/29: Tom & Wendy Schmitt

## READERS:

3/1: David Varker  
3/8: Marsha Pilachowski  
3/15: Bill Wood  
3/22: Claudia Dalton  
3/29: Jim Dilley

## COFFEE HOUR HOSTS:

3/1: Amber & Noah Langford and Marsha Pilachowski  
3/8: Mary LaCasse & Amy Tronsen  
3/15:  
3/22:  
3/29:

## FLOWERS:

3/1: The Tronsen Family IMO Eric Matthew Tronsen  
3/8: Mary LaCasse IMO John Oleson  
3/15:  
3/22:  
3/29: