

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
BENNINGTON, VERMONT

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

THE REV. KENNETH A. CLARKE, MINISTER
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST

OCTOBER 18, 2020
TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PRELUDE *Prelude in D Major* - J. K. F. Fischer

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

Sing to the Lord a new song.

Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

In the peace of this hour may God's word comfort us.

HYMN *I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art* 457

(LYRICS REPRINTED AT THE END OF THE ORDER OF SERVICE)

This hymn first appeared in the French Psalter of 1545 published under the leadership of John Calvin, the leading theologian of the early Reformation. The tune is a form of old 124th (#236 in our book), which was first published in the Genevan Psalter of 1551.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Exodus 33:12-23 p. 70

HYMN *O Sing a New Song to the Lord* 216

(LYRICS REPRINTED AT THE END OF THE ORDER OF SERVICE)

The hymn text is a paraphrase of Psalm 96 by Charles Hutchison Gabriel and is a departure from his usual hymn writing. Charles H. Gabriel (1856-1932) was born in Wilton, Iowa. He was one of the most prolific gospel song writers of his day. It has been estimated that Gabriel was involved in the writing of more than eight thousand gospel songs.

SECOND LESSON Matthew 22:15-22 p. 803

SERMON Face to Face

HYMN *O God of Earth and Altar* 291

(LYRICS REPRINTED AT THE END OF THE ORDER OF SERVICE)

The present text is a composite. The original hymn was written by G. K. Chesterton for *The Commonwealth*, the journal of the Christian Social Union, and later appeared in *The English Hymnal* (1906). The alterations to stanza 2 and the new stanza 3 were written by Jane Parker Huber at the request of Lewis Mudge, for the final worship of the Life and Mission Statement Consultation held at Mo Ranch in 1985.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE CHURCH (Visitors are kindly requested to fill out one of the visitor's cards in the pew and put it in the offering plate.)

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Fantasia* - Johann Pachelbel

***DOXOLOGY (592) AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

CLOSING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts/debtors) p. 16

HYMN *The World Abounds with God's Free Grace* 556

(LYRICS REPRINTED AT THE END OF THE ORDER OF SERVICE)

The author, David Mehrtens, was a researcher for DuPont in Waynesboro, Virginia. This was the first publication of his 1980 hymn. The tune is from G. F. Handel's oratorio *Susanna* (1748) where it was the setting for the aria, "Ask if yon damask rose be sweet." C Winfred Douglas wrote the present harmony for *The Hymnal 1940*. He was an Episcopal priest and editor of two Protestant Episcopal hymnals in 1916 and 1940.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Toccata in F Major* - Dietrich Buxtehude

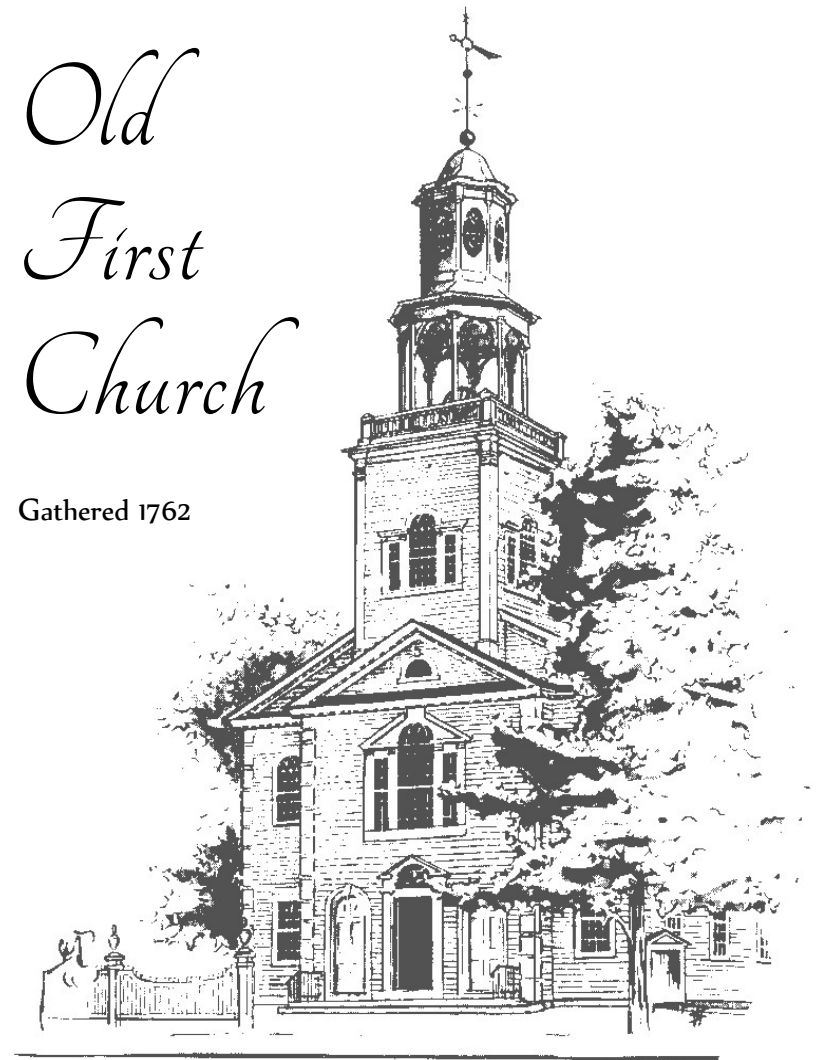
Deacons on call this month are Bill Gordon and Marie Guariniello.

Worship and life at Old First is changing in response to the need to reduce activity as we work to get through the challenge of the COVID-19 presence in our life. Our prayers and thoughts go to everyone immediately affected and thanks go to all people who work to provide care and supply our needs in this time. An audio version of our weekly worship services can be found on the church's website by clicking on the "Worship" tab and selecting "Worship Here and Now". Or simply paste the following into your computer's browser at the top of the page: <http://oldfirstchurchbenn.org/worship/worship-here-and-now/> If this link appears in blue on the device you are using to read this, you can also just "click on the link" and you will be there! The church office has been temporarily moved to the home of our office administrator. Please use email, phone or U.S. Mail for correspondence.

If you are interested in discussing matters of faith and want to inquire about Christian membership in the church, please contact Rev. Clarke. We welcome the chance to have you join us in our historic, but active-in-the-world, community of faith!

Old First Church

Gathered 1762



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

(OLD FIRST CHURCH)

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I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

I greet Thee, who my sure Redeemer art,
My only trust and Savior of my heart,
Who pain didst undergo for my poor sake;
I pray Thee from our hearts all cares to take.

Thou art the King of mercy and of grace,
Reigning omnipotent in every place:
So come, O King, and our whole being sway;
Shine on us with the light of Thy pure day.

Thou art the life, by which alone we live,
And all our substance and our strength receive;
Sustain us by Thy faith and by Thy power,
And give us strength in every trying hour.

Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness,
No harshness hast Thou and no bitterness:
O grant to us the grace we find in Thee,
That we may dwell in perfect unity.

Our hope is in no other save in Thee;
Our faith is built upon Thy promise free;
Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure,
That in Thy strength we evermore endure.

O Sing a New Song to the Lord

O sing a new song to the Lord,
Sing, all the earth and bless that Name;
From day to day God's praise record,
The Lord's redeeming grace proclaim.

Tell all the world God's wondrous ways;
Tell heathen nations far and near;
Great is the Lord, and great God's praise;
The Lord alone let nations fear.

The heathen gods are idols vain;
The shining heavens the Lord supports;
Both light and honor lead the train,
While strength and beauty fill the courts.

Let every tongue and every tribe
Give to the Lord due praise and sing;
All glory unto God ascribe,
Come, through the courts, and offerings bring. Alleluia!

O God of Earth and Altar

- 1). O God of earth and altar,
bow down and hear our cry;
our earthly rulers falter,
our people drift and die;
the walls of gold entomb us,
the swords of scorn divide;
take not Your thunder from us,
but take away our pride.
- 2). From all that terror teaches,
from lies of pen and voice,
from all the easy speeches
that make our hearts rejoice,
from sale and profanation
of honor and the sword,
from sleep and from damnation,
deliver us, good Lord!

- 3). Awaken us to action
And forge us into one,
Defying sect and faction;
O God, Your will be done!
Oppressive systems snare us;
Our apathies increase.
Great God, in mercy spare us
For justice and for peace!

The World Abounds with God's Free Grace

The world abounds with God's free grace;
What wonders bless the land!
And on through boundless starry space,
God's matchless works expand.

Refrain:

**Lord, teach us an attitude that thanks You all our days,
A love that shows our gratitude through deeds that live our praise.**

Give thanks for plains and valleys spaced
By mountains thrusting high;
Give thanks by fighting greed and waste
That drain their treasures dry. **Refrain**

In full thanksgiving for God's love,
From which earth's blessings flow,
Protect the precious air above,
The waters spread below. **Refrain**

Give thanks in hope, rejoice, repent,
And practice all you prayed;
True thanks can never be content
To foul the world God made. **Refrain**

EXODUS 33:12-23

Moses said to the Lord, “See, you have said to me, ‘Bring up this people’; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” He said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” And he said to him, “If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.” The Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, ‘The Lord’; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,” he said, “you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.” And the Lord continued, “See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.”

MATTHEW 22:15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.