

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
THE REV. CHARLES W. FOX, GUEST MINISTER
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST
DAVID VARKER, LAY READER

NOVEMBER 14, 2021

PRELUDE *Opening Voluntary* - John Zundel

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing praises to the Lord for God has done marvelous things.

Come and worship with thanks and joy.

God's work is present in all that we see.

***HYMN** *All People that on Earth Do Dwell* 220

The metrical version of Psalm 100 was published in 1561 in the Anglo-Geneva Psalter by William Kethe. He was a Scotsman who fled to the continent during the reign of Mary, was a chaplain to English soldiers at Havre, and was one of the Geneva Bible translators. The tune *Old Hundredth* by Louis Bourgeois was first the setting of a 1551 version of Psalm 134; but since 1562 it has been linked with this Psalm. Bourgeois got into trouble in Geneva for changing tunes of Psalms people already knew. Of course, we sing this tune each week as a Doxology, as well.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Most holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, that we have sinned against you by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not fully loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not always had in us the mind of Christ. You alone know how often we have grieved you by wasting your gifts, by wandering from your ways. Forgive us, we pray you, most merciful God; and free us from our sin. Renew in us the grace and strength of your Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son our Savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND *GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Psalm 90:1-12 p. 476

SECOND LESSON

Philippians 3:4-15

p. 954

SERMON

Remembering...and Forgetting

***HYMN**

We Gather Together

559

This 17th century folk hymn was written during Holland's struggle for independence with Spain. The political environment is reflected in the text. The tune is named for Eduard Kremser (1838-1914), a Viennese composer and choir director, who discovered the hymn after it had been forgotten for two centuries.

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 *Christ the Cornerstone* - Roger C. Wilson

MOMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP

Wayne Kachmar

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

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

***HYMN**

Now Thank We All Our God

555

This hymn, known as the German Te Deum, was written near the close of the Thirty Years' War and is still sung in German churches on New Year's Eve. The text's author was a minister in Ellenburg, Saxony who in 1637 buried half of the 8,000 who died in an epidemic there. The tune first appeared with this text. The composer was a hymnal editor and adapted the harmonization of this tune from Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang".

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Concluding Voluntary - R.G. Thompson

* Stand if able

Deacons on call this month are Wendy Schmitt and Laurel Varker. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Sandy Bechtel and Susan Katz.

Please join us after worship today for coffee hour in the Narthex provided by Anastasia and Fischer Gauthier.

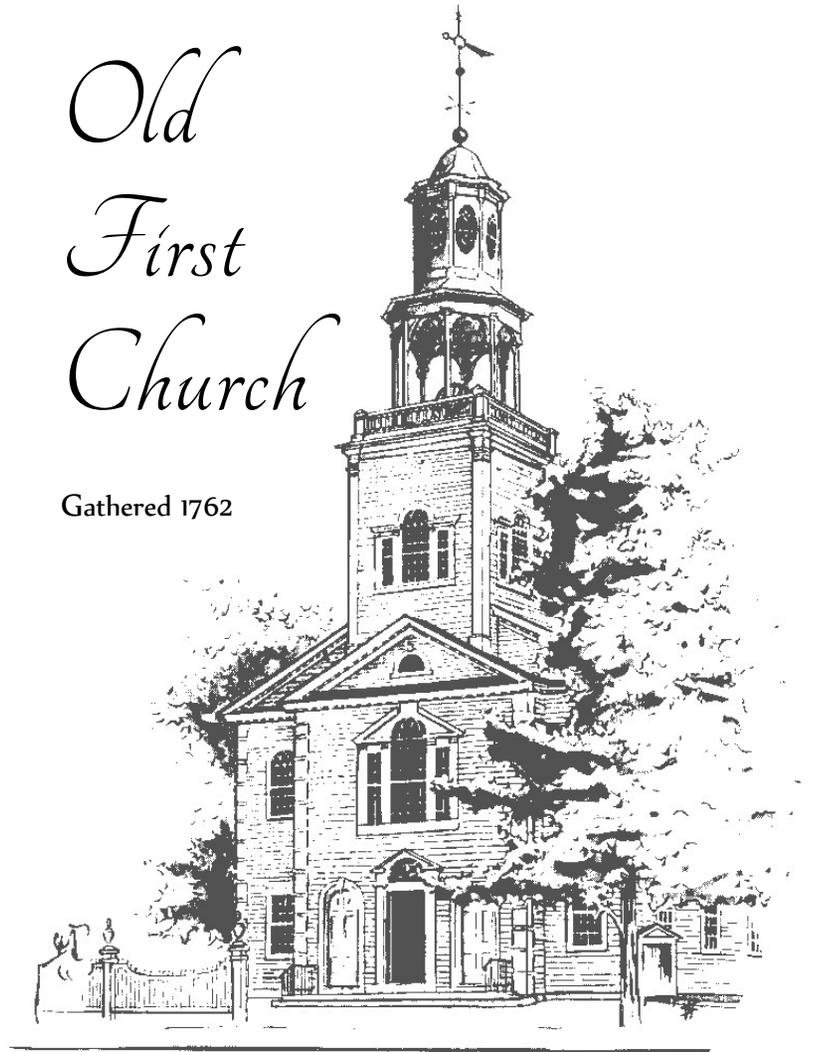
It is a delight to welcome back the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Fox as our guest minister today. Rev. Fox served as minister here at Old First Church from 1977 – 1991. Rev. Fox retired from professorship in Cultural Studies with the State University of NY in 2007 and continues to live in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

Rug raffle tickets can be purchased after worship today – seek out Wendy Schmitt who will have them. Tickets are \$5 each or 6 for \$20, all proceeds benefit the Church's Preservation Fund. The drawing will be held on Dec. 5.

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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All People That on Earth Do Dwell

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell,
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make;
We are His folk, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.

O enter then His gates with praise,
Approach with joy His courts unto;
Praise, laud and bless His name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

For why? The Lord our God is good,
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 90

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals."

For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning;

in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed.

You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh.

The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

SECOND LESSON

Philippians 3:4-15

even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you.

We Gather Together

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing,
Sing praises to His name; He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, wast at our side; all glory be Thine!

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant,
And pray that thou still our defender wilt be.
Let thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom this world rejoices;
Who, from our mothers' arms,
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in God's grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God,
Who reigns in highest heaven,
To Father and to Son
And Spirit now be given.
The one eternal God,
Whom heaven and earth adore,
The God who was, and is,
And shall be ever more.