

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
DAVID PILACHOWSKI, LAY READER
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

MARCH 6, 2022

PRELUDE *Abide with Me* - Robert J. Powell

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

We gather in this place for worship.

God is our refuge and our strength.

God's word calls to us.

Open our hearts and minds that we may see clearly.

***HYMN** *O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!* 476

Robert Grant paraphrased Psalm 104 for this hymn. Born and died in India, he was a British member of Parliament who introduced a bill in 1833 emancipating the Jews. The text of verse two has been altered to be closer to the language of the Psalm ("chariots of wrath," which some may remember, isn't in the Psalm!) It is not certain that Johann Michael Haydn, Franz Joseph's brother, was the composer. A number of pieces by both contain the first line. Johann was a singer who supposedly had a range of three octaves.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND *GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Deuteronomy 26:1-11 p. 158

***HYMN** *Now Praise the Lord* 255

Fred Anderson wrote this metrical setting for Psalm 147 in 1986. He is pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City and has been metering Psalms for 20 years. The tune, *St. Anne*, is named for St. Anne's Church, Soho, England, where composer William Croft was organist, and was used by Handel and Bach.

SECOND LESSON Luke 4:1-13 p. 835

SERMON Tempted

***HYMN** *The Glory of These Forty Days* 87

This hymn is ascribed to one of the oldest authors in our hymnal, Gregory the Great (c. 540-604). A Roman senator, he became a Benedictine monk after his father's death and established six monasteries on his father's land. He became pope in 590. His Gregorian chant became a standard in the Western church. Some think the tune was by Martin Luther, with harmony by J. S. Bach, who based his Cantata 126 on the tune.

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 *Dust and Ashes* - David Haas

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

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (insert)

The congregation is invited to participate in the service as found in the insert included in this order of service. (*Please note that grape juice is on the outer circle only and wine inside. We partake together after all have been served.*)

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY

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

***HYMN** *I Come with Joy* 507

Brian Wren wrote this hymn as a summary of a series of sermons to his congregation on the meaning of Communion. Wren is a minister in the United Reformed Church (formerly English Congregational) and has been called the most successful English hymn writer since Charles Wesley. The tune is an American folk melody, first published in 1854, and arranged in 1977 by Austin Lovelace, a prolific composer and professor of music at various seminaries and colleges.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee* - Neil Harmon

We welcome all visitors and hope you will return! Please fill out a visitor's card found in the pew and be sure to identify yourself so we can present you with a gift bag.

Deacons on call this month are Sandy Bechtel and Sue Philpott. Ushers and communion servers for today's service are Jeannette Lesser and Sue Philpott.

Please join us in the narthex after worship today for coffee hour provided by Marsha Pilachowski.

Flowers for worship today are in memory of Eric Matthew Tronsen given by his family.

Our church Mission group will be working on gratitude bags for members of our community. More information about this program and a list of suggested items can be found on the insert in today's bulletin. Speak with Anastasia Gauthier if you have any questions. Items can be left in the box on the small table in the Narthex.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS: *(All meetings are open to members of the church)*

Choir practice, Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM in the choir loft

3/8: Deacon's meeting, 4:00 PM in the church parlor and remote

3/15: Trustee's meeting, 5:30 PM in the church parlor and remote

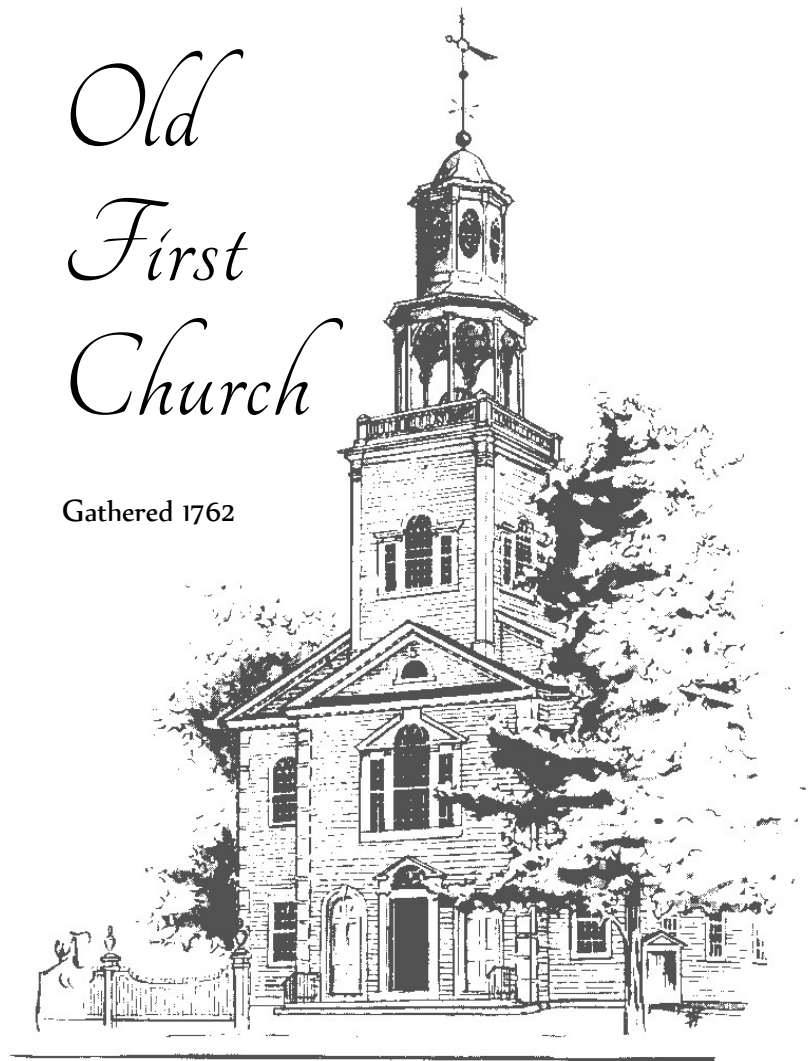
3/20: St. Patrick's Luncheon at the Barn, following Sunday morning worship

(Set up for the luncheon will be on Saturday at Noon, all are welcome to come help!)

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)

1 Monument Circle • Old Bennington, Vermont 05201 • (802) 447-1223

office@oldfirst.comcastbiz.net • www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org

O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!

O worship the King, all-glorious above! O gratefully sing God's power and God's love; our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

O tell of God's might, O sing of God's grace, whose robe is the light, whose canopy space. The chariots of heaven the deep thunderclouds form, and bright is God's path on the wings of the storm.

The earth with its store of wonders untold, almighty, Thy power hath founded of old; hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree, and round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light; it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, in Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail; Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end, our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.

Now Praise the Lord

1. Now praise the Lord, all living saints,
Sing praises that endure.
Our children God does surely bless,
Our future is secure.
2. God brings us peace in midst of strife,
Our borders to protect.
All those who trust the Lord for strength
Need never fear neglect.
3. God's Word runs swiftly o'er the earth,
The seasons to command.
Spring, summer, winter, autumn, all
Display that wondrous hand.
4. Your life-filled Word brings order to
The chaos of our days.
In love You claim us as Your own;
What better cause for praise?
5. Instruction, guidance, holy law,
Some common names are these
For God's own rule for living life.
What other word can please?
6. No other people are so graced,
No nation is so blest,
As those who know God's living Word
And this one name confess.

FIRST LESSON

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us." When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me." You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

SECOND LESSON

Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

I Come with Joy

The Glory of These Forty Days

The glory of these forty days
We celebrate with songs of praise;
For Christ, by whom all things were made,
Himself has fasted and has prayed.

Alone and fasting, Moses saw
The loving God who gave the law;
And to Elijah, fasting, came
The steeds and chariots of flame.

So Daniel trained his mystic sight,
Delivered from the lion's might;
And John, the Bridegroom's friend, became
The herald of Messiah's name.

Then grant that we like them be true,
Consumed in fast and prayer with You;
Our spirits strengthen with Your grace,
And give us joy to see Your face.

1. I come with joy to meet my Lord,
Forgiven, loved, and free,
In awe and wonder to recall
His life laid down for me,
His life laid down for me.
2. I come with Christians far and near
To find, as all are fed,
The new community of love
In Christ's communion bread,
In Christ's communion bread.
3. As Christ breaks bread and bids us share,
Each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
And strangers now are friends,
And strangers now are friends.
4. And thus with joy we meet our Lord.
His presence, always near,
Is in such friendship better known:
We see and praise Him here,
We see and praise Him here.
5. Together met, together bound,
We'll go our different ways,
And as His people in the world,
We'll live and speak His praise,
We'll live and speak His praise.