

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  
SUSAN KATZ, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST  
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

**PRELUDE** *Hail the Day so Rich in Cheer* - Johann Pachelbel

**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** *O God, Our Faithful God* 277

This hymn originally in German was written by Johann Heermann and titled "A Daily Prayer." It was published in *Devoti Musica Hordis, Hauss- und Hertz-Musica* (1630). Heermann (1585-1647) was born in Raudten, Silesia, the youngest and only surviving child of five born to his parents. As a child, Heermann was quite ill and his mother vowed if God would spare him, she would dedicate the child's life to the ministry.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND \*GLORIA PATRI (579)**

**FIRST LESSON** James 3:13-4:3; 7-8a p. 982

**\*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.

**SECOND LESSON** Luke 17:11-19 p. 852

**SERMON** First and Foremost

**\*HYMN** *O God of Earth and Space* 274

Both text and tune were written for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Concordia Lutheran Church, Kirkwood, Missouri.

**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 or hand it to an usher after the service.)

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** *To Be God's People* - Charles F. Brown

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

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

**\*HYMN** *Wherever I May Wander* 294

*for Primary Children* (1963) by Westminster Press for the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The tune NEW ENGLAND is a folk melody from New England. The present arrangement was first published by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE** *All Glory be to God on High*  
- Andreas Nikolaus Vetter

**We extend a warm welcome to our guests and visitors and we are delighted to have you worship with us. 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 Pat Ross. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Pat and Larry Ross.**

**Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the foyer after the service. Our thanks to Sandy Bechtel, Marsha Pilachowski and Pat Ross for providing coffee hour this morning.**

**Flowers for worship are provided by Joyce Goeke.**

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

Choir practice, Sunday mornings, 9:45 AM in the choir loft

9/22: Council Meeting following worship/coffee hour

9/25: Trustee's meeting, 5:00 PM, Parlor

9/26: Bible Study, 7:00 PM, Parlor

**Sunday School:** Informal drop in Sunday School will continue to run in the half hour before worship. Programs for summer include crafts, games, and classic Bible stories and lessons. All are welcome, but materials best suited for kids under 7.

**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!**

To maintain the healthiest standards for public gathering, indoor air is constantly being exchanged with fresh air with a LifeBreath circulation system operating during the service today.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

(OLD FIRST CHURCH)

VT RTE. 9 AND MONUMENT AVENUE

OLD BENNINGTON, VERMONT

**MAILING ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

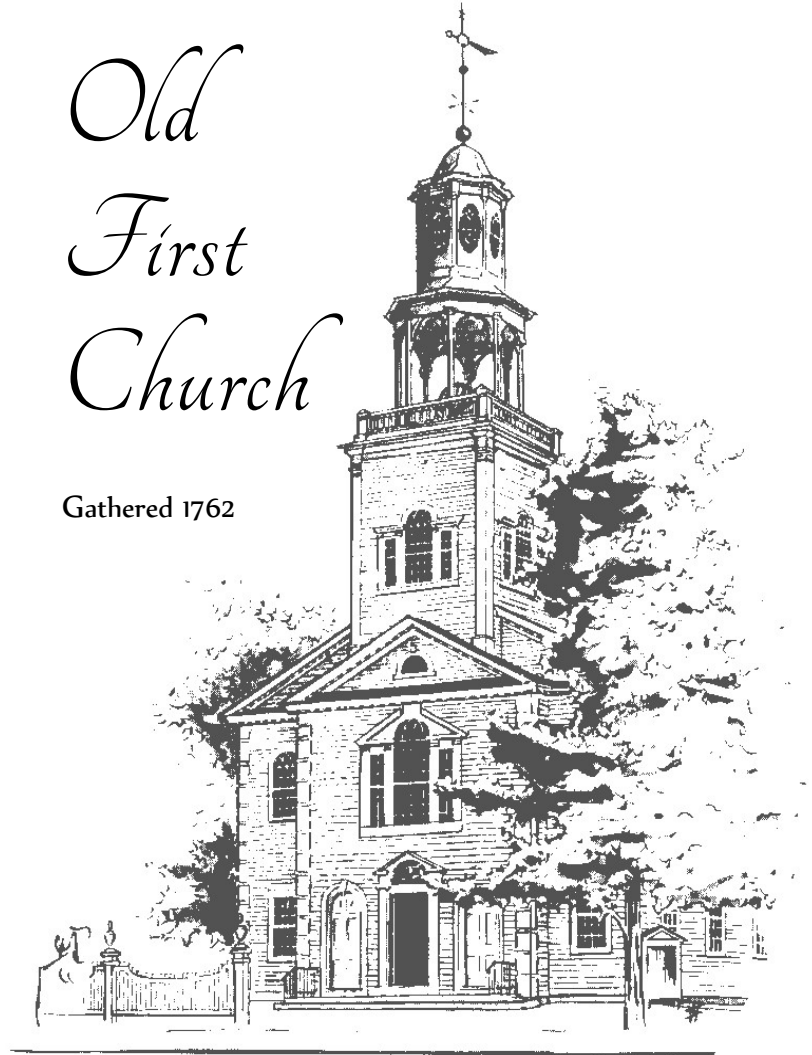
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*Old  
First  
Church*

Gathered 1762



## ***O God, Our Faithful God***

O God, our faithful God,  
O fountain ever flowing,  
without whom nothing is,  
all perfect gifts bestowing,  
grant us a faithful life,  
and give us, Lord, within  
commitment free from strife,  
a soul unhurt by sin.

God, grant us strength to do  
with ready heart and willing,  
whatever You command,  
our calling here fulfilling;  
And do it when we ought,  
with zeal and joyfulness;  
And bless the work we've wrought,  
for You must give success.

If dangers gather round,  
still keep us calm and fearless;  
Help us to bear the cross  
when life is bleak and cheerless,  
to overcome our foes  
with words and actions kind;  
O God, Your will disclose,  
Your counsel let us find.

spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

## ***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**

### **James 3:13-4:3; 7-8a**

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to

## **SECOND LESSON**

### **Luke 17:11-19**

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

### *O God of Earth and Space*

O God of earth and space,  
Of sea and fire and air,  
Your providence surrounds us here  
And everywhere.  
In fruit and grain and tree,  
In shelter from the cold,  
In cooling breezes, flowing wells,  
Now as of old.

Where faithfulness is shown,  
Where love and truth abound,  
Where beauty graces human life,  
There You are found.  
Inspirer of all thought!  
Creative force of art!  
The melody on every tongue,  
In every heart!

Wherever freedom reigns,  
Where sin is overthrown,  
Where justice fused with mercy rules,  
There You are known.  
Give us the courage clear  
To make the earth a home  
For all to live in harmony  
In Christ's shalom.

Your word commands response  
And summons us to life.  
We follow, strengthened by Your grace,  
In calm or strife.  
Our ever-present help,  
Our challenge and our prod,  
We praise You now and to life's end  
Eternal God.

### *Wherever I May Wander*

Wherever I may wander,  
Wherever I may be,  
I'm certain of my Maker's love;  
God's care is over me.  
God made the great high mountains,  
And made the wide blue sea;  
God made the sky where airplanes fly;  
God made the world, and me.

Throughout the whole creation  
I see God's loving care  
For everyone in every land,  
God's children everywhere.  
Wherever I may wander,  
Wherever I may be,  
I'm certain of my Maker's love  
God's care is over me.