

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  
KATE MUSSO, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST  
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

OCTOBER 12, 2025

**PRELUDE** *Pastorale* - Alec Rowley

**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** *Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun* 456

Thomas Ken (1637-1711) was born at Little Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, England, but went to live with his brother-in-law, Isaak Walton, after his parents died when Ken was nine years old. He was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. He was curate for Little Easton in Essex for three years after his ordination in 1662 and served for one year as a domestic chaplain to Bishop Morley. King James II of England declared the author of this hymn, Thomas Ken, the most eloquent preacher among Protestants of his time.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

**Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being,  
whose face is hidden from us by our sin, and whose mercy we  
forget: cleanse us from all offenses, and deliver us from proud  
thoughts and vain desires; that humbly we may draw near to thee,  
confessing our faults, confiding in thy grace, and finding in thee  
our refuge and our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

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

**FIRST LESSON** Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 p. 638

**\*HYMN** *I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes* 234

Here we go back to our singing roots and sing a Psalm. The text is a metrical setting of Psalm 121 from the 1912 hymnal, *The Psalter*, which was a joint work of nine U.S. and Canadian Reformed traditions. The tune is from the 1615 Scottish Psalter, *CL Hymns of David*.

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

**SERMON** Welfare Cases

**\*HYMN** *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* 376

This hymn was written by Charles Wesley and was first published in 1747. Wesley was the 18<sup>th</sup> child of Samuel and Susanna ("She Must Have Been a Saint") Wesley. Charles was an Anglican priest, dedicated to the Methodist movement, and he wrote between 6,000 and 6,500 hymns. Rowland Hugh Pritchard wrote the Welsh tune *Hyfrydol* in 1831 before his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was an assistant loom tender for the Welsh Flannel Manufacturing Company. An interesting point about the melody is that with one exception, it lies within the first five notes of the scale.

**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** *Rise My Song* - Alfred V. Fedak

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

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

**\*HYMN** *O Lord of Every Shining Constellation* 297

This text was written by Albert F. Bayly (1950) and appeared in his first collected volume, *Rejoice, O People* (1951). Albert Frederick Bayly (1901-0651) was born in Sussex, England. He was ordained in 1929 after studying for the ministry at Mansfield College, Oxford and served in several Congregational churches in England. Bayly was made a fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ and honored at Westminster Abbey in 1978. His hymns were published in several hymnals.

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE** *Gaudeamus* - Alec Rowley

\* Stand if able

**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.**

~ CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

Deacons on call this month are Sandy Bechtel and Marsha Pilachowski. Ushers for today's service are Marsha and Dave Pilachowski.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the foyer after the service graciously provided by Nancy Coseo.

Flowers for worship are provided by Jane Van Derpoel-Andrea in memory of Joseph V. McDonald, MD.

**PEW CUSHIONS:** Today is the last day to take some of the old pew cushions. If you would like to have one (or more!) for yourself, please take them with you today. The old pew cushions are located downstairs in the Parlor.

**ART AUCTION:** The online art auction closes on Tuesday, October 14 at 5 PM EDT. Be sure to register in time so you can place your bids!  
<https://www.32auctions.com/oldfirst2025>

The blanket drive and clothing drive continues. All items should be new or gently used and can be given to Jeannette or Anastasia to distribute (if they are not available at worship, there will be bins in the Parlor to place these items in for temporary storage).

Informal drop in Sunday School will run in the half hour before worship starting today. Programs include crafts, games, and classic Bible stories and lessons. All are welcome, but materials best suited for kids under 10.

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

Choir practice 9:45 AM in the choir loft

10/16: Lantern lifting, we expect it will go up by 9 AM (weather permitting)

10/18: Memorial service for Bill Hartz, 11:00 AM, Church

10/19: Harvest Meal, following worship, Barn

10/22: Bible Study, 6:30 PM, Parlor

10/23: Trustee's meeting, 5:30 PM, Parlor

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!

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

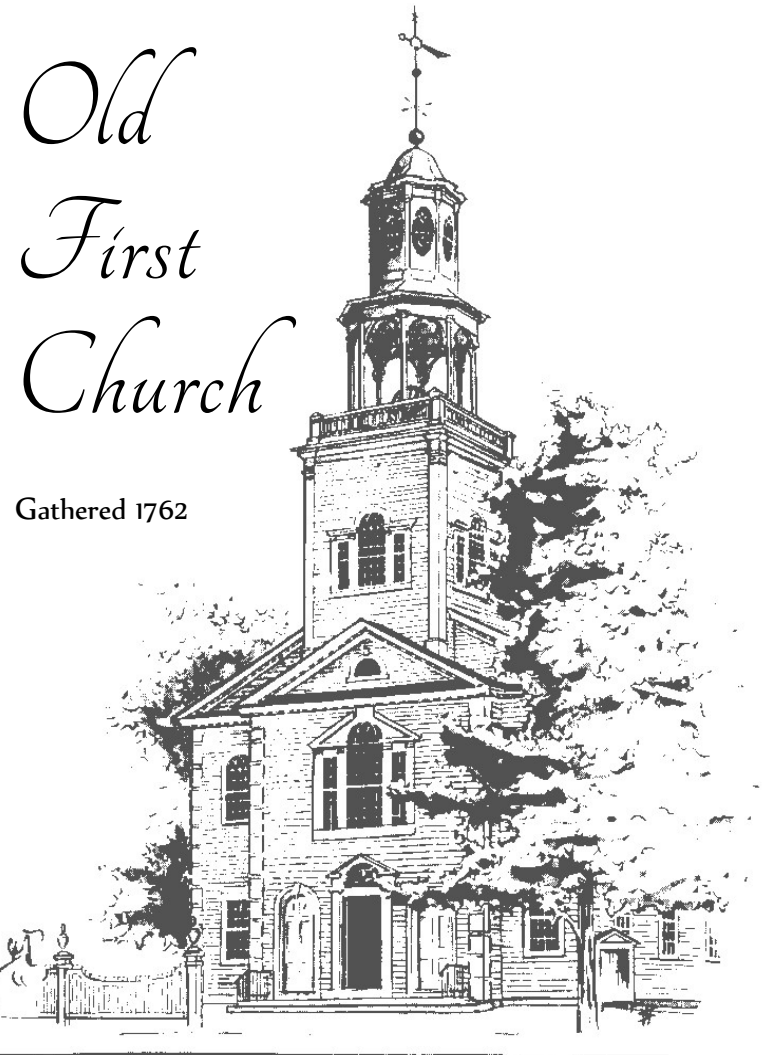
VT RTE. 9 AND MONUMENT AVENUE

OLD BENNINGTON, VERMONT

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### *Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun*

Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
your daily stage of duty run;  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise  
To pay your morning sacrifice.

Lord, I my vows to You renew.  
Disperse my sins as morning dew;  
Guard my first springs of thought and will,  
And with Yourself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest, this day,  
All I design or do or say;  
That all my powers, with all their might,  
in Your sole glory may unite.

### *I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes*

I to the hills will lift my eyes;  
From whence shall come my aid?  
My help is from the Lord alone,  
who heaven and earth has made.

God will not let your foot be moved,  
your guardian never sleeps;  
God's watchful and un-slumbering care  
protects and safely keeps.

Your faithful keeper is the Lord,  
your shelter and your shade;  
'Neath sun or moon, by day or night,  
you shall not be afraid.

From evil God will keep you safe,  
provide for all you need;  
Your going out, your coming in,  
God will forever lead.

### **FIRST LESSON**

#### **Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7**

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce.

Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease.

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

### **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's 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."

### *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

Love divine, all loves exceling,  
Joy of heaven to earth come down,  
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,  
All Thy faithful mercies crown!  
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,  
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;  
Visit us with Thy salvation,  
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit  
Into every troubled breast!  
Let us all in Thee inherit,  
Let us find the promised rest;  
Take away the love of sinning;  
Alpha and Omega be;  
End of faith, as its beginning,  
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all Thy life receive;  
Suddenly return, and never,  
Never more Thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
Serve Thee as Thy host above;  
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,  
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish, then, Thy new creation;  
Pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see Thy great salvation  
Perfectly restored in Thee;  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

### *O Lord of Every Shining Constellation*

O Lord of every shining constellation  
that wheels in splendor through the midnight sky,  
grant us Your Spirit's true illumination  
to read the secrets of Your work on high.

You, Lord, have made the atom's hidden forces,  
Your laws its mighty energies fulfil;  
Teach us, to whom You give such rich resources,  
in all we use, to serve Your holy will.

You, Lord, have stamped Your image on Your creatures,  
And though they mar that image, love them still;  
lift up our eyes to Christ, that in His features  
we may discern the beauty of Your will.