

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

APRIL 12, 2020  EASTER SUNDAY

PRELUDE *Jesus Christ is Risen Today* - Calvin Hampton

EASTER PROCLAMATION (responsive)

This is the day of resurrection! Let us rejoice and be glad.

Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed.

This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Let us rejoice and be glad!

HYMN *Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain* **114**

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

This hymn was written in the middle of the eighth century by John of Damascus. It was used on the first Sunday after Easter (St. Thomas Sunday). The ode originated in an Old Testament canticle "The Song of Moses" from Exodus 15.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

We believe in God:

Who has created and is creating,

Who has come in Jesus,

The word made flesh,

To reconcile and make new,

Who works in us and others

By the spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

To celebrate God's presence,

To live with respect in creation,

To love and serve others,

To seek justice and resist evil,

To proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

Our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone,

Thanks be to God. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Jeremiah 31:1-6 p. 641

HYMN *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today* **123**
(verses 1, 2 and 4)

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

The first three stanzas are from the 14th century, first published in the 1708 "Collection of Divine Songs and Hymns, partly newly composed, partly translated from the High German and Latin Hymns; and set to easy and pleasant tunes." The tune is the only surviving tune from this hymnal.

SECOND LESSON Matthew 28:1-10 p. 811

SERMON There You Will See Him

HYMN *Thine Is the Glory* **122**

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

Edmond Louis Budry wrote this French hymn, "*A toi la Gloire*," in 1885. He was pastor of the Free Church, Vevey, Switzerland, for 33 years. Richard Birch Hoyle translated it; he worked in England for the YMCA and as a pastor, was a seminary professor in Pittsburgh, and translated 30 hymns from the French. George Frederick Handel (1685-1759) wrote the tune, originally in 1748 for the oratorio *Joshua*, and then for *Judas Maccabeus*. Handel started in Saxony but ended up in England where he became a citizen in 1726. He was a biblical scholar who chose the texts for his works.

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 *Trumpet Voluntary* - William Boyce

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

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

HYMN *All Creatures of Our God and King* **455**
(verses 1, 2 and 6)

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

The text is based on St. Francis' *Canticle of the Sun*, considered the first religious Italian poem, written in 1255, one year before Francis' death, when he was blind and ill. The translator and adapter, William Draper, was an Anglican priest. The composer is unknown, although the first line is the same as a 16th century tune. Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote the harmony in 1906 for the hymn, "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones".

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Improvisation - *Toccata: The Strife Is O'er*
- Alfred V. Fedak

Deacons on call this month are Bill Gordon and Jeannette Lesser.

Sadly, we cannot gather together today to celebrate Easter Sunday as a congregation with the joyful decorations, memorial lilies and the much anticipated Easter egg hunt. We thank those who have made donations to the memorial flowers and we will celebrate with those donations on the Sunday we return. For the time being we offer our prayers for all those we love and remember at this time.

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:

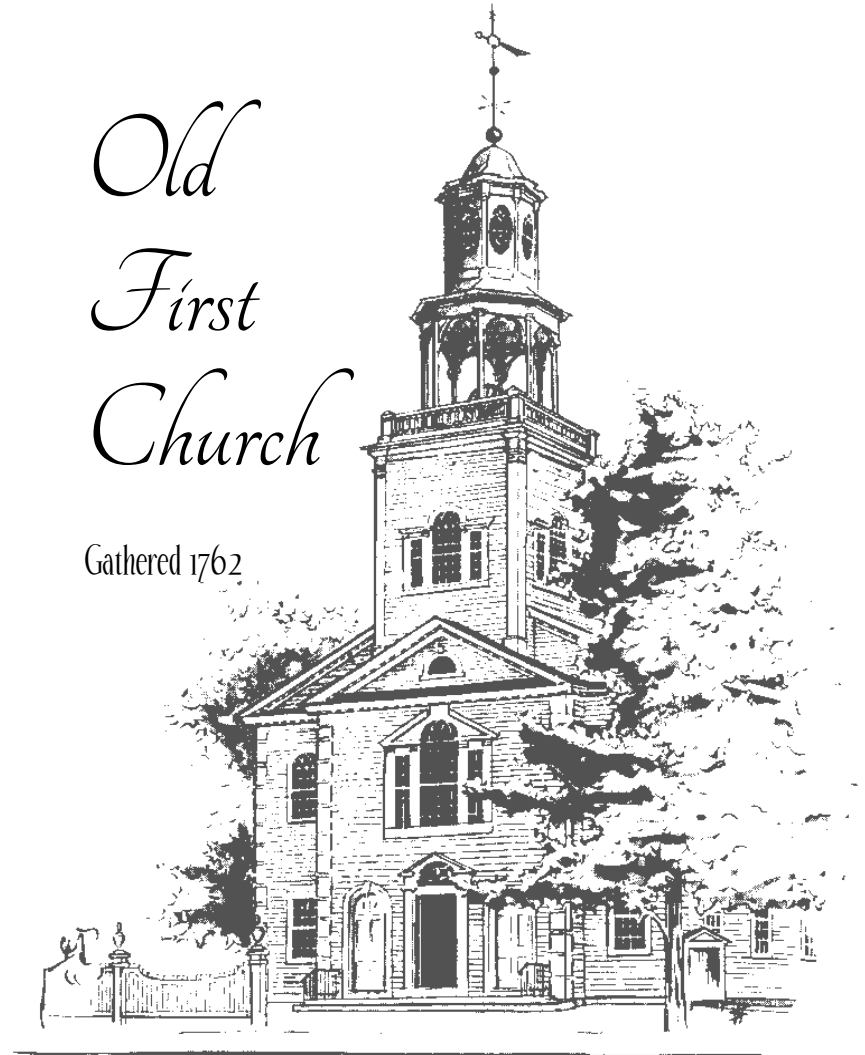
<http://oldfirstchurchbenn.org/worship/worship-here-and-now/>

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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Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain

1. Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
of triumphant gladness;
God hath brought forth Israel
into joy from sadness;
loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters;
led them with unmoistened foot
through the Red Sea waters.
2. 'Tis the spring of souls today;
Christ hath burst His prison,
and from three days' sleep in death
as a sun hath risen.
Now rejoice, Jerusalem,
and with true affection
welcome in unwearied strains
Jesus' resurrection!

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today
(verses 1, 2 and 4)

1. Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!
2. Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia!
Unto Christ our heavenly King, Alleluia!
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!
Sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!
4. Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
Praise eternal as God's love; Alleluia!
Praise our God, ye heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!

Thine Is the Glory

1. Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes where Thy body lay.

Refrain:

*Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.*

2. Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
for the Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.

[Refrain]

3. No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of life!
Life is naught without Thee; aid us in our strife.
Make us more than conquerors, through Thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.

[Refrain]

All Creatures of Our God and King
(verses 1, 2 and 6)

1. All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
thou silver moon with softer gleam,
alleluia! Alleluia!
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
2. Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
ye clouds that sail in heaven along,
O sing ye, alleluia!
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
ye lights of evening, find a voice!
alleluia! Alleluia!
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
6. All creatures, your Creator bless,
and worship God in humbleness.
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One!
alleluia! Alleluia!
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Jeremiah 31:1-6

At that time, says the LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus says the LORD: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit. For there shall be a day when sentinels will call in the hill country of Ephraim: "Come, let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God."

Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."