

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

JUNE 28, 2020

PRELUDE *Slane* - Charles Callahan

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good.

God's steadfast love endures forever.

Sing praise for the beauty of the earth

And the wonder of God's creation.

HYMN *Morning Has Broken* 469

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

Eleanor Farjeon, the author of nursery rhymes and singing games, wrote the text for this tune. It was first published in 1931. A more recent popular recording by Cat Stevens made the song popular in this country. *Bunessan* is a Gaelic melody first published in 1888. The present arrangement was made for the Christian Reformed Church hymnal in 1985.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

God of grace and truth,
in Jesus Christ you came among us
as light shining in darkness.

We confess that we have not always welcomed the light,
or trusted good news to be good.

We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst,
expecting little, and hoping for less.

Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope,
so that we may receive the fullness of your grace,
and live in the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Genesis 22:1-14 p. 15

HYMN *Come, All You Servants of the Lord* 242

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

This paraphrase of Psalm 134 by Arlo D. Duba was written after hearing the tune DANBY which was brought to the attention of the Psalter Task Force of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by Kenneth E. Williams. It was first published in *A Psalm Sampler* (1986).

SECOND LESSON Matthew 10:40-42 p. 791

SERMON Where Is the Lamb?

HYMN *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* 268

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

Catherine Arnott Cameron, a social psychology professor at the University of La Verne, California, published her hymn first in a supplement by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship in 1969 during a time when she said she was "experiencing a new sense of direction, growth and creativity in my life." The tune, attributed to William Moore of Tennessee, was first published in 1825.

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 *Lento* - Leon Boellmann

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

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

HYMN *When in Our Music God Is Glorified* 264

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

The hymn text is by Fred Pratt Green, who has been credited with starting the twentieth century's hymn explosion. It was written at the request of John Wilson, who wanted a hymn for a Festival of praise or choir anniversary set to the tune ENGLEBERG.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Postlude on Darwall's 148th* - Charles Callahan

Deacons on call this month are Sandy Bechtel and Bill Hartz.

CHURCH PICNIC, SUNDAY, JUNE 28

We have scheduled a noon picnic time on the church grounds this Sunday. As you can expect, there are a variety of opinions on this and so it is good to be clear that this is not a "re-opening" of worship at this point rather it is a time for those who wish and are comfortable to be in one spot to see each other and say hello while enjoying a self-made picnic on the grounds around the church.

As such, there is no pressure to "be at a church event" or, as they say, no fear of missing out. The church--including parlor and bathroom--will be closed and this is not a time to be in the meetinghouse for any reason. If it rains, plan on being in your car or under a tree (unless there is thunder as well!). If it rains hard and long, check the church website in the morning under the "Worship Here and Now" tab for any cancellation of these plans. Most of all, use your judgement.

We will expect everyone who chooses to be there to have their mask on, we will make a record of those who attend and we will expect safe distancing outside of family groups. Bring hand sanitizer as well--though there won't be shaking of hand greetings you might have need for it at some point.

Those who wish to attend should pack everything needed for your own picnic lunch and a chair or blanket to sit on.

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.

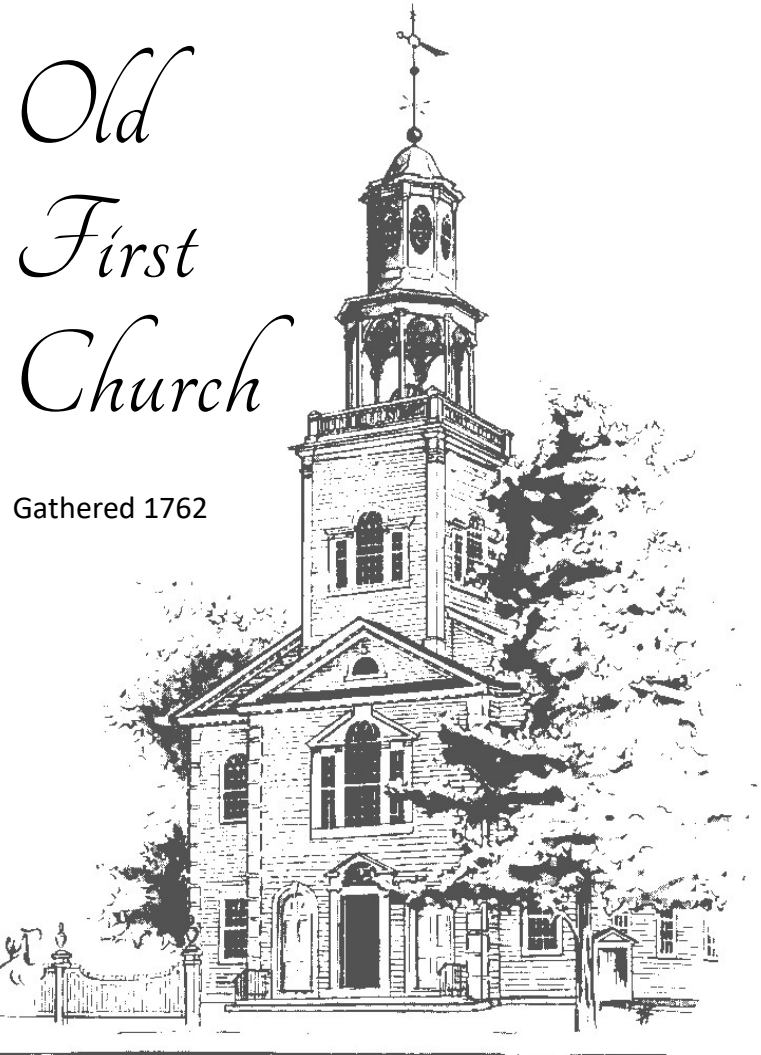
If you are interested in discussing matters of faith and want to inquire about Christian membership in the church, please contact Rev. Clarke. We welcome the chance to have you join us in our historic, but active-in-the-world, community of faith!

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

(OLD FIRST CHURCH)

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Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dew fall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

Come, All You Servants of the Lord

Come, all you servants of the Lord,
Who work and pray by night, by day,
Come, bless the Lord within this place;
With lifted hands your homage pay.

The Lord now bless from heaven above
And shine on you with radiant face;
The Lord who heaven and earth has made
Illumine you with peace and grace.

God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens

God, who stretched the spangled heavens
Infinite in time and place,
Flung the suns in burning radiance
Through the silent fields of space:
We, Your children in Your likeness,
Share inventive powers with You;
Great Creator, still creating,
Show us what we yet may do.

We have ventured worlds undreamed of
Since the childhood of our race;
Known the ecstasy of winging
Through untraveled realms of space;
Probed the secrets of the atom,
Yielding unimagined power,
Facing us with life's destruction
Or our most triumphant hour.

As each far horizon beckons,
May it challenge us anew:
Children of creative purpose,
Serving others, honoring You.
May our dreams prove rich with promise,
Each endeavor well begun;
Great Creator, give us guidance
Till our goals and Yours are one.

When in Our Music God Is Glorified

When in our music God is glorified,
And adoration laves no room for pride,
It is as though the whole creation cried: Alleluia!

How often, making music, we have found
A new dimension in the world of sound,
As worship moved us to a more profound Alleluia!

So has the church, in liturgy and song,
In faith and love, through centuries of wrong,
Borne witness to the truth in every tongue: Alleluia!

Let every instrument be tuned for praise!
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!
And may God give us faith to sing always: Alleluia! Amen.

Genesis 22:1-14

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.”

So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.” Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together. When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

Matthew 10:40-42

“Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”