

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

JANUARY 24, 2021
Fifth Sunday after Christmas Day

PRELUDE On a theme of Gustav Holst "Thaxted" - Charles Callahan

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

The Lord is my light and salvation.

Whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life

Of whom shall I be afraid?

HYMN *O God of Earth and Space* 274

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

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

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Lord God, your love for humankind
present in the beginning of all things,
extends throughout history
and touches all life.

Your love sees failings
and forgives.

Your love feels pain
and wipes away our tears.

Your love knows grief
and comforts the sorrowful.

Forgive us when we fail to live
lives that reflect your love.

Forgive us the many times
when we take for granted
all that you have done for us.

Transform us, through your Spirit,
and empower us to serve you,

this day and all days. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Jonah 3:1-5, 10 p. 753

HYMN *My Soul in Silence Waits for God* 197

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

According to the author, Fred R. Anderson, this metrical version of Psalm 62 is a reworking of number 161 in *The Psalter* (1912). While the images are similar, the language has been extensively changed for the contemporary church. Anderson began the work at the request of the Psalter Task Force of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The hymn is published here for the first time.

SECOND LESSON Mark 1:14-20 p. 812

SERMON Our Work, Our Call

HYMN *Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore* 377

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

Cesáreo Gabaráin wrote the text and tune of this hymn in 1979 after traveling to Galilee and being moved by being at the seaside where Jesus called some of the disciples to follow him. Gabaráin was a Spanish Roman Catholic priest in Madrid, and the Spanish chaplain to Pope Paul VI. Some of his hymns have been translated into over 40 languages. The harmony is by Skinner Chávez-Melo, who taught at music schools in Manhattan and edited hymnals for the Episcopal Church and the United Church of Christ. When he died he was working on a Spanish Methodist hymnal.

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 *For God is Love* - James Southbridge

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

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

HYMN *They Cast Their Nets in Galilee*

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

William Alexander Percy (May 14, 1885 – January 21, 1942) was a lawyer, planter, and poet from Greenville, Mississippi. His father [LeRoy Percy](#) was the last [United States Senator](#) from Mississippi elected by the legislature. In a largely [Protestant](#) state, the younger Percy championed the [Roman Catholicism](#) of his French mother. Percy's most well-known work is his memoir, *Lanterns on the Levee: Recollections of a Planter's Son* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1941). His other works include the text of "They Cast Their Nets in Galilee," which is included in the *Episcopal Hymnal* (1982) and the *Collected Poems* (Knopf 1943).

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Spirit of God* - Franklin Ritter

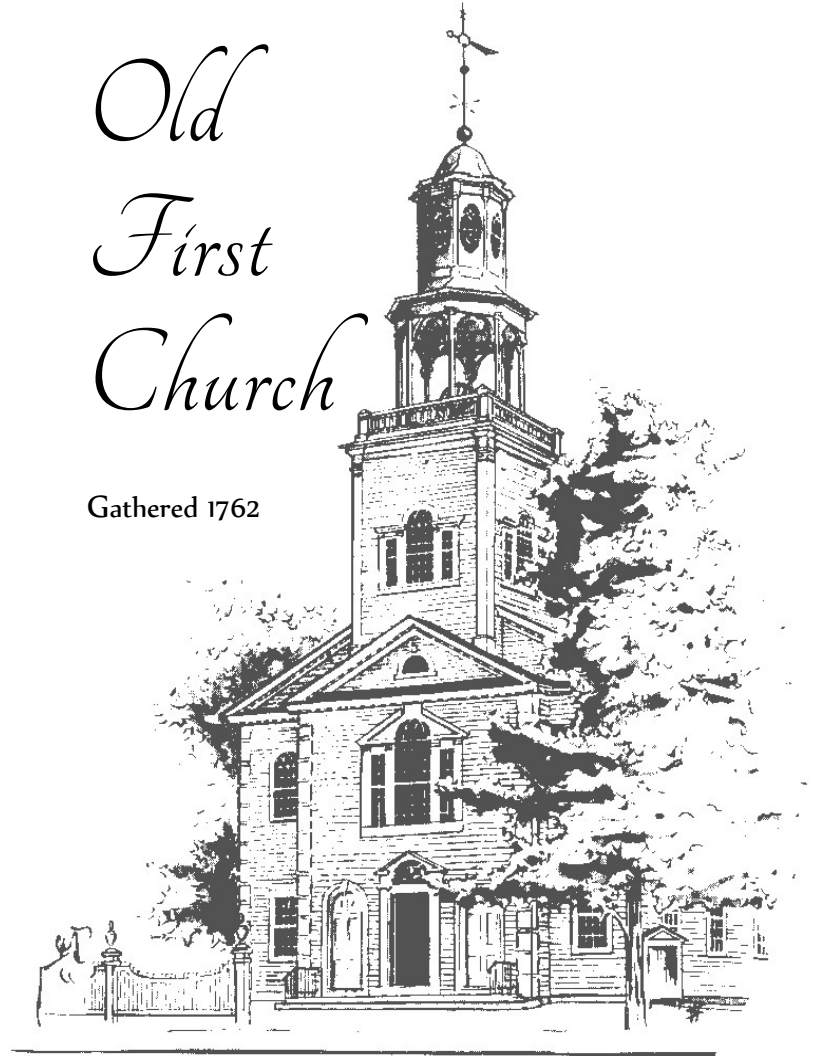
Deacons on call this month are Sandy Bechtel and Laurel Varker.

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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O God of Earth and Space

1. 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.
2. 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!
3. 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.
4. 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.

My Soul in Silence Waits for God

1. My soul in silence waits for God,
Who my own hope has proved.
A rock and stronghold is my God,
I never shall be moved.
2. In God alone my honor rests,
Who brings deliverance sure;
My rock of strength is found in God,
My refuge most secure.
3. All people are but vanity,
The best of us a lie;
Both high and low-estate combined
Are lighter than a sigh.
4. In your own strength, then, place no hope,
For riches, have no lust;
Though for a moment they appeal,
They are not worth your trust.
5. For truly God has spoken once,
And twice to me made known:
That strength and power belong to God,
And unto God alone.
6. For so it is that sovereign grace
Belongs to You, O Lord;
For You according to our work
Shall everyone reward.

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

You have come up to the lakeshore,
Looking neither for wise nor for wealthy.
You only wanted that I should follow.

Refrain:

O Lord, with Your eyes You have searched me,
And, while smiling, have called out my name.
Now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me,
Now with You I will seek other seas.

You know that I own so little
In my boat there's no money nor weapons,
You'll only find there my nets and labor. *[Refrain]*

You need the caring of my hands.
Through my tiredness, may others find resting.
You need a love that just goes on loving. *[Refrain]*

You, who have fished other oceans,
Ever longed for by souls that are waiting,
My dear and good friend, as thus You call me. *[Refrain]*

They Cast Their Nets in Galilee

They cast their nets in Galilee
Just off the hills of brown;
Such happy, simple fisherfolk,
Before the Lord came down.

Contented, peaceful fishermen,
Before they ever knew
The peace of God That filled their hearts
Brimful, and broke them too.

Young John, who trimmed the flapping sail,
Homeless in Patmos died.
Peter, who hauled the teeming net,
Head-down was crucified.

The peace of God, it is no peace,
But strife closed in the sod.
Yet, brothers, pray for but one thing—
The marvelous peace of God.

JONAH 3:1-5, 10

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

MARK 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.” As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.