

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
KRISTIN ROESSNER, LAY READER
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

FEBRUARY 13, 2022

PRELUDE *St. Columba* - Michael Fontana

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

Lord, be with us as we gather here.

Be with us with the gift of your grace.

Be with us in understanding and love.

Comfort us and set us on the path of kindness.

***HYMN** *Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim* 477

The text was written by Charles Wesley as part of a hymn tract series issued for the Wesleys' class meetings. A caption to the hymn stated "To be sung in a tumult." The tract containing thirty-three hymns was titled *Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution* (1744).

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned against you

in thought, word, and deed,

by what we have done,

and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you

with our whole heart and mind and strength.

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

In your mercy forgive what we have been,

help us amend what we are,

and direct what we shall be,

so that we may delight in your will

and walk in your ways,

to the glory of your holy name.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND *GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Jeremiah 17:5-10 p. 628

***HYMN** *Why Are the Nations Raging* 159

Fred Anderson wrote this metrical setting for Psalm 104 in 1986. He is pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City and has been metering Psalms for 21 years.

SECOND LESSON Luke 6:17-26 p. 838

SERMON Not Anxious

***HYMN** *I Come with Joy* 507

Brian Wren wrote this hymn as a summary of a series of sermons to his congregation on the meaning of Communion. Wren is a minister in the United Reformed Church (formerly English Congregational) and has been called the most successful English hymn writer since Charles Wesley. The tune is an American folk melody, first published in 1854, and arranged in 1977 by Austin Lovelace, a prolific composer and professor of music at various seminaries and colleges.

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 *Communion Canon* - Ruth Elaine Schram

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

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (insert)

The congregation is invited to participate in the service as found in the insert included in this order of service. *(Please note that grape juice is on the outer circle only and wine inside. We partake together after all have been served.)*

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY

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

***HYMN** *God of Grace and God of Glory* 420

The text was written in 1930 for the opening of Riverside Church in New York City by the pastor, Harry Emerson Fosdick, when the congregation moved from Park Avenue to its new building. John Hughes, a deacon in the Salem Baptist Church in Wales, wrote the tune in 1907 for a Welsh singing festival. It's named for the principal coal town in Glamorganshire.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Nicea* - Robert M. Thompson

* Stand if able

We welcome all visitors and hope you will return! 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, ushers and communion servers for today's service are Beverly Cohen and Bill Gordon.

Please join us in the narthex after worship today for coffee hour provided by Kristin Roessner, Pat and Larry Ross.

Flowers for worship are in honor of Betsy Ehrenfreund's milestone birthday given by Nancy and Brad Andrews.

There are two soup pots in the entry of the church today for the annual **Souper Bowl of Caring** collection. Along with other churches across the country our church is participating in this fundraiser by collecting money for those who are hungry and hurting. All of the money collected at our church will be donated to the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services Kitchen Cupboard. Read more about the Souper Bowl of Caring collection on their website: <https://souperbowl.org/welcome>

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

Choir practice, Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM in the choir loft

2/15: Deacon's meeting, 4:30 PM in the church parlor and remote

2/15: Trustee's meeting, 5:30 PM in the church parlor and remote

2/27: Council meeting, following worship and coffee hour. Meeting in the church parlor and remote

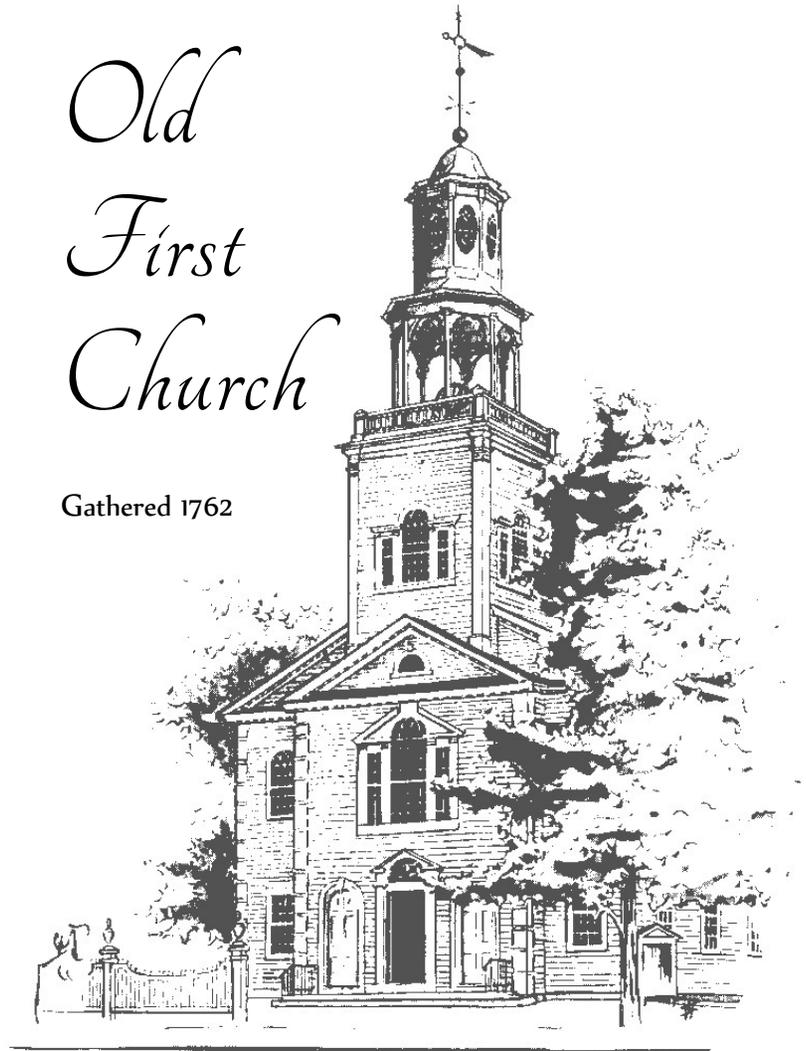
19TH ANNUAL LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET: Submissions for our *Meditations for Lent* booklet, by and for members and friends of Old First Church, are being accepted. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 2. The deadline for submissions is February 16th. Email is the best way to get it to the church office. The devotionals are printed on a half-sheet of 8 ½ x 11" paper so please keep your selections brief.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
(OLD FIRST CHURCH)

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Old First Church

Gathered 1762



Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad His wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious, He rules over all.

God ruleth in the height, almighty to save;
and still He is nigh – His presence we have;
the great congregation His triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus our King.

"Salvation to God, who sits on the throne,"
let all cry aloud, and honor the Son;
the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore, and give Him His right,
all glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honor and blessing, with angels above,
and thanks never ceasing, and infinite love.

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Thus says the LORD: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the LORD. They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is in the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—who can understand it? I the LORD test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

Why Are the Nations Raging

Why are nations raging
and conspiring plots in vain?
Rulers of the world rise up,
Weaving webs of death and pain.
Then against the Lord they cry,
And against God's holy Son,
"Let us tear their bonds from us
And with their control be done."

But the Lord has scorn on them,
Laughing and enthroned on high.
God brings wrath upon their work;
Filled with anger God replies:
"It is My own holy will
That the Christ on earth shall reign,
And on Zion's holy hill,
My anointed I'll maintain."

God's decree unto the King
Tells us what the Lord did say:
"You are My own holy child;
I've begotten You this day.
Ask of Me and I will make
All the nations Your own stay.
These possessions You shall rule,
Strong as Iron smashing clay."

Therefore, leaders of the earth,
Serve the Lord with holy fear;
Trembling come before the throne
Or God's anger will appear.
Kiss God's feet in trembling awe
Or the Lord will use the rod,
Making beggars of all the kings.
Blest are those who trust in God.

SECOND LESSON

Luke 6:17-26

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. "Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. "Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. "Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

I Come with Joy

1. I come with joy to meet my Lord,
Forgiven, loved, and free,
In awe and wonder to recall
His life laid down for me,
His life laid down for me.
2. I come with Christians far and near
To find, as all are fed,
The new community of love
In Christ's communion bread,
In Christ's communion bread.
3. As Christ breaks bread and bids us share,
Each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
And strangers now are friends,
And strangers now are friends.
4. And thus with joy we meet our Lord.
His presence, always near,
Is in such friendship better known:
We see and praise Him here,
We see and praise Him here.
5. Together met, together bound,
We'll go our different ways,
And as His people in the world,
We'll live and speak His praise,
We'll live and speak His praise.

God of Grace and God of Glory

God of grace and God of glory,
on Thy people pour Thy power.
Crown Thine ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn Thy Christ, assail Thy ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.

Cure Thy children's warring madness,
bend our pride to Thy control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal,
lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal.

Set our feet on lofty places;
gird our lives that they may be
armored with all Christ-like graces,
pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
that we fail not them nor Thee!
that we fail not them nor Thee!

Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
Let the gift of Thy salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving Thee whom we adore,
serving Thee whom we adore.