

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  
AMBER LANGFORD, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST  
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

MAY 15, 2022

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**PRELUDE** *Festive Praise* - George Blake

**OPENING WORDS** (responsive)

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

**Let us worship the Lord with gladness.**

For the Lord is good, God's love endures forever.

**God's Spirit is in all times and generations.**

**\*HYMN** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise* 263

The author of the text, Walter Chalmers Smith (1824-1908), was a minister in the Free Church of Scotland and was its Moderator in 1893. He published several books, his last one being *A Heretic and Other Poems*. The tune is a Welsh folk melody from the early 19th century.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Lord, let us not dwell in the past, nor worry about the future. We cannot undo what is done. We cannot foresee what will come. Let us instead dwell in your peace, love and be loved, heal and be healed. We give the past to you and rest in your forgiveness. We give the future to you and rest in your love. We live in your light, open our eyes that we may see. We live in your love, let your love flow through us, to the fulfillment of your kingdom. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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

**FIRST LESSON** Revelation 21:1-6 p. 1007

**\*HYMN** *Let the Whole Creation Cry* 256

This hymn is based on Psalm 148. The liberal views of the author, Stopford Brooke, a priest in Ireland and London, led him to leave the Anglican church in 1880. Jacob Hintze, town musician of Barnam, Germany, may have written the tune, first published in 1678. J. S. Bach harmonized it.

**SECOND LESSON** John 13:31-35 p. 877

**SERMON** New Creation

**\*HYMN** *Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak* 426

Frances Ridley Havergal, 19<sup>th</sup> century poet, musician, linguist and Bible student in England, wrote the text and published three volumes of hymns. Robert Schumann (1810-56), concert pianist and composer for solo voice, chorus, strings, orchestra, piano and organ in Saxony, wrote the tune.

**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** *Spring Has Now Unwrapped the Flowers*  
arr. Ernest MacMillan

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

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

**\*HYMN** *Oh, Give Us Pleasure in the Flowers Today* insert

Robert Frost (1875- 1963) was a New England poet of simple, colloquial verse. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for New Hampshire in 1924, for *Collected Poems* in 1931, and for *A Further Range* in 1937. He served as professor of poetry at Amherst College for many years, and also taught at Harvard. This text comes from Frost's first collection of poems, *A Boy's Will*, 1913.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *Creation's Praise* - Dennis Eliot

**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.**

Deacon on call this month is Jeannette Lesser. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Dave and Laurel Varker.

Please join us in the narthex after worship today for coffee hour provided by Anastasia and Fischer Gauthier, set up by Pat and Larry Ross.

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

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

5/15: Deacons to meet with a prospective new member after worship

5/16: Deacon's meeting, 4:00 PM, Barn

5/16: Trustee's meeting, 5:30 PM, Church Parlor

5/22: Council meeting, following worship, Church Parlor

6/5: Tag Sale Kickoff luncheon, following worship, Barn

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)

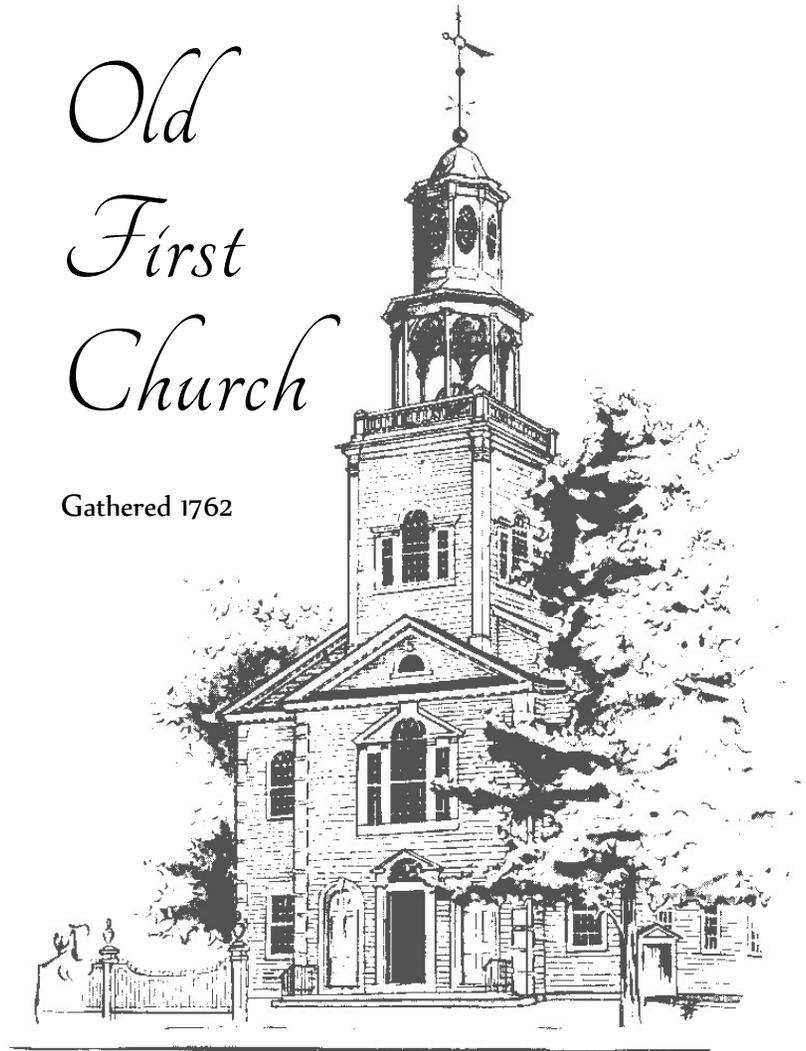
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Health note: Indoor air is constantly exchanged with fresh air with a LifeBreath circulation system operating during the service to maintain the healthiest standards for public gathering.

*Old  
First  
Church*

Gathered 1762



## *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above  
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;  
in all life Thou livest, the true life of all;  
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,  
then wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.

Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,  
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we would render; O help us to see  
“Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!

## *Let the Whole Creation Cry*

Let the whole creation cry,  
"Glory to the Lord on high."  
Heaven and earth, awake and sing,  
"God is our eternal King."  
Praise God, all ye hosts above,  
ever shining forth in love;  
sun and moon, uplift your voice;  
night and stars, in God rejoice!

Men and women, young and old,  
raise the anthem manifold;  
join with children's song of praise  
worship God through length of days.  
From the north to southern pole  
let the mighty chorus roll:  
“Holy, holy, holy One,  
glory be to God alone!”

## **FIRST LESSON**

### **Revelation 21:1-6**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

## **SECOND LESSON**

### **John 13:31-35**

When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

*Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak  
In living echoes of Thy tone;  
As Thou have sought, so let me seek  
Thine erring children lost and lone.

O lead me, Lord, that I may lead  
The wandering and the wavering feet;  
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed  
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach  
The precious things Thou dost impart;  
And wing my words, that they may reach  
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O fill me with Thy fullness, Lord,  
Until my very hearts o'erflow  
In kindling thought and glowing word,  
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

O use me, Lord, use even me,  
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;  
Until Thy blessed face I see,  
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers today;  
And give us not to think so far away  
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here  
All simply in the springing of the year.

Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white  
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;  
And make us happy in the happy bees,  
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.

And make us happy in the darting bird  
That suddenly above the bees is heard,  
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,  
And off a blossom in mid-air stands still.

For this is love and nothing else is love,  
The which it is reserved for God above  
To sanctify to what far ends he will,  
But which it only needs that we fulfill.