

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  
REG JONES, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST  
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

**PRELUDE** *Overture and Trumpet Tune on Lobe den Herren*  
- Mark A. Radice

**OPENING WORDS** (responsive)

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**God watches over all creation.**

Let us give thanks to God for all good things this day.

**We praise God for our life and blessings.**

**\*HYMN** *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty* **482**

The text's author, Joachim Neander, took the Calvinist faith seriously but also lived a "rather unruly existence" before his pastor and others influenced him to make some changes in his life. In 1674 he became a grammar school headmaster. 66 of his hymn texts were published in 1691. The valley Neanderthal, where he took long walks, was named in his honor (and was where the famous skeleton was discovered 200 years later in 1856). The tune may have had secular origins but was used by J.S. Bach in three cantatas and an organ setting, as well as Neander's hymn.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Most holy and merciful God,

We confess to you and to one another,

that we have sinned against you

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 fully loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We have not always had in us the mind of Christ.

You alone know how often we have grieved you  
by wasting your gifts, by wandering from your ways.

Forgive us, we pray you, most merciful God;

And free us from our sin.

Renew in us the grace and strength of your Holy Spirit,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ your Son our Savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND \*GLORIA PATRI (579)

**FIRST LESSON** Jeremiah 8:18-9:1 p. 619

**\*HYMN** *Sing Praise Unto the Name of God* **226**

The paraphrase of Psalm 113 by Fred R. Anderson was originally set to the tune MELITA in *Singing Psalms of Joy and Praise* (1986). The text was somewhat altered in *A Psalm Sampler* (1986) and set to GENEVAN 36 (incorrectly titled GENEVAN 113) in that collection. Anderson was unhappy with what he considered "the sampler's distorted rhyme scheme which made the hymn almost unsingable" and agreed to rework the text for *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990) and set it to GENEVAN 36.

**SECOND LESSON** Luke 16:1-13 p. 851

**SERMON** Calculations

**\*HYMN** *O Word of God Incarnate* **327**

The text was written by William Walsham How. William How (1823-1897) was born in Shrewsbury, England and educated at Wadham College, Oxford and was ordained in 1846. He wrote all his hymns while in the parish of Whittington and was joint editor of several hymnals including *Psalms and Hymns* (1854), *Supplement to Psalms and Hymns* (1867), and *Church Hymns* (1871). He died while on vacation in Ireland.

**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** *The Heavens are Telling* - Beethoven

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

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

**\*HYMN** *I Walk the Unfrequented Road* **insert**

Frederick Lucian Hosmer was born at Framingham, Mass., in 1840, and educated at Harvard, where he graduated B.A. in 1869. Entering the Unitarian Ministry in 1872 he has held charges in Quincy, Ill.; Cleveland, Ohio; St. Louis; and Berkeley, CA. During his life he wrote many hymns which were published jointly by him and W.C. Gannett. Hosmer died in 1929.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *Fugue en Ut* - A. Van den Kerckhaven

**We extend a warm welcome to our guests and visitors and we are delighted to have you worship with us. 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 are Joyce Goeke and Sue Philpott. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Joyce Goeke and Mary Elizabeth Groupé.

Flowers for worship are provided by Joyce Goeke in memory of her husband George.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the foyer after the service. Our thanks to Sandy Bechtel, Joyce Goeke, Pat Guerrero, Jeannette Lesser, Darlene Munson, Marsha Pilachowski, Jim Pullman, Pat Ross and Amy Tronsen for providing coffee hour this morning.

**\*\*\*SPECIAL MEETING WARNING\*\*\*** A special meeting of the church will be held after worship today in the church sanctuary to vote on the proposed By-Law changes which can be found on the reverse side of the meeting agenda. All members are expected to attend.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:** *(All meetings are open to members of the church)*  
Choir practice, Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM in the choir loft  
9/19: Trustee meeting, 5:00 PM, church parlor

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!

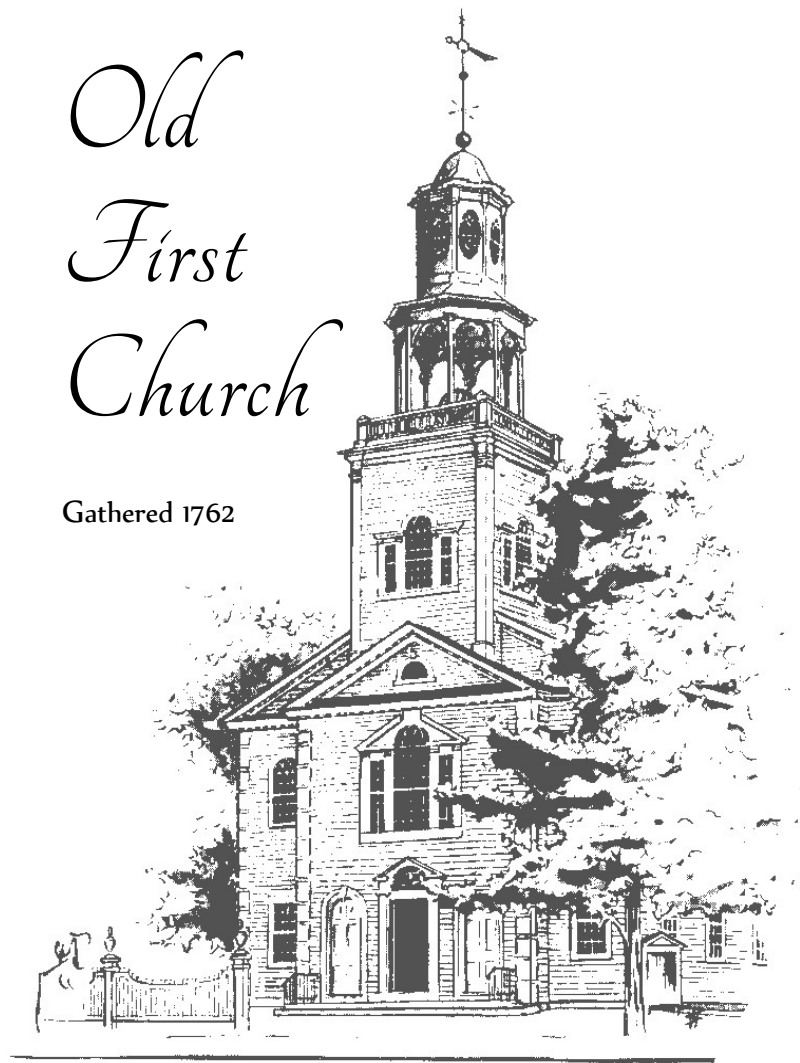
Health note: Indoor air is constantly exchanged with fresh air with a LifeBreath circulation system operating during the service to maintain the healthiest standards for public gathering.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
(OLD FIRST CHURCH)  
VT RTE. 9 AND MONUMENT AVENUE  
OLD BENNINGTON, VERMONT

MAILING ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION  
1 MONUMENT CIRCLE • BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201 • (802) 447-1223  
[office@oldfirst.comcastbiz.net](mailto:office@oldfirst.comcastbiz.net) • [www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org](http://www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org)

# Old First Church

Gathered 1762



### *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*

Praise ye the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;  
join me in glad adoration!

Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,  
shelters thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!  
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been  
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!  
Let the amen sound from His people again;  
gladly for aye we adore Him.

### **FIRST LESSON**

### **Jeremiah 8:18-9:1**

My joy is gone, grief is upon me, my heart is sick. Hark, the cry of my poor people from far and wide in the land: "Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not in her?" ("Why have they provoked me to anger with their images, with their foreign idols?") "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?

O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people!

### *Sing Praise Unto the Name of God*

Sing praise unto the name of God.  
Come, servants, now and offer laud.  
Blest is Your name, O living Lord.  
From this time forth and evermore,  
O'er all the world from shore to shore,  
O may Your name be long adored.  
You, Lord, are ruler of all lands;  
The works of states are in Your hands.  
There is no other like You, God;  
Your power is great, Your love is broad.  
All people live with in Your power.  
Sing praise in this and every hour.

You help the needy in distress,  
And give them life that conquers death,  
The great and small for You are one.  
You grant the homeless sheltered space,  
And empty people feel Your grace,  
That in all times Your will is done.  
I'll praise the Lord with all my breath,  
And trust my Maker unto death.  
Praise to the one who brings us life,  
And holds us safe in every strife.  
For God has conquered and is King;  
Eternal One, to You we sing.

### **SECOND LESSON**

### **Luke 16:1-13**

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' And his master

commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes. “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

### *O Word of God Incarnate*

O Word of God incarnate,  
O Wisdom from on high,  
O Truth unchanged, unchanging,  
O Light of our dark sky:  
We praise You for the radiance  
That from the hallowed page,  
A lantern to our footsteps,  
Shines on from age to age.

The church from You, dear Savior,  
Received this Gift divine,  
And still that light is lifted  
On all the earth to shine.  
It is the chart and compass  
That, all life's voyage through,  
Amid the rocks and quick-sands,  
Still guides, O Christ, to You.

O make Your church, dear Savior,  
A lamp of purest gold  
To bear before the nations  
Your true light, as of old;  
O teach Your wandering pilgrims  
By this our path to trace,  
Till, clouds and storms thus ended,  
We see You face to face.

### *I Walk the Unfrequented Road*

I walk the unfrequented road  
with open eye and ear;  
I watch a field the farmer load  
the bounty of the year.

I filch the fruit of no man's toil —  
no trespasser am I—  
and yet I reap from every soil  
and from the unmeasured sky

I gather where I did not sow,  
and bind the mystic sheaf,  
the amber air, the river's flow,  
the rustle of the leaf.

A beauty springtime never knew  
haunts all the quiet ways,  
and sweeter shines the landscape through  
its veil of autumn haze.

I face the hills, the streams, the wood,  
and feel with all akin;  
my heart expands, their fortitude  
and peace and joy flow in.