

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
THE REV. CHARLES W. FOX, GUEST MINISTER
MARSHA PILACHOWSKI, LAY READER
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

PRELUDE *St. Columba* - Michael Fontana

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 *When Morning Gilds the Skies* 487

The text first appeared in *Katholisches Gesangbuch* (1828), entitled "A Christian Greeting." It had fourteen stanzas but no author's name. The translator was an Anglican priest who became a Roman Catholic priest after the death of his wife during the Oxford movement in the mid-19th century. The tune was composed for this text by a chorister, organist and conductor of the Royal Choral Society.

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 Psalm 103 p. 482

SECOND LESSON Psalm 46 p. 450

SERMON Re-Thinking God in the Stress of our Times

*HYMN *The God of Abraham Praise* 488

The text in our hymnal is quite close to one in *The Union Hymnal* edited by the Central Conference of American Rabbis. The 1885 translation is based on a Jewish creedal statement by Moses Maimonides (1130-1205) and set to meter by Daniel ben Judah (14th century). Maimonides wrote the 13 articles of the Jewish creed known as the *Yigdal*. The tune, LEONI (a.k.a. YIGDAL) was introduced into Christian worship around 1770. Thomas Olivers, a Wesleyan minister, heard cantor Meyer Lyon sing the *Yigdal* at Great Duke's Synagogue, Alegate, London. Lyon transcribed the melody for Olivers, who named the tune LEONI.

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 *Give Thanks to the Lord*
- Ken Parker and Debi Parker

*DOXOLOGY (592) AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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

*HYMN *Holy God, We Praise Your Name* 460

The original German versification of the *Te Deum Laudamus* was by Ignaz Franz of Austria about 1774. The English translation by Clarence Walworth was first published in the *Catholic Psalmist*, 1858. Walworth was born in Plattsburgh, NY, graduated in law from Union College, went to seminary, studied for Episcopal ministry but became a Roman Catholic priest and was rector of St. Mary's Church in Albany. The tune, in German practice, got its name from the first line of this text, with which it's been associated since 1774.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Voluntary* - Samuel Wesley

**We extend a warm welcome to our guests and visitors and we
are delighted to have you worship with us.**

Deacons on call this month are Joyce Goeke and Sue Philpott. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Ellen Knapp and Sue Philpott.

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the foyer after the service. Our thanks to Larry and Pat Ross for providing coffee hour this morning.

Flowers for worship are provided by Joyce Goeke.

It is a delight to welcome back the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Fox as our guest minister today. Rev. Fox served as minister here at Old First Church from 1977 – 1991. Rev. Fox retired from professorship in Cultural Studies with the State University of NY in 2007 and continues to live in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

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!

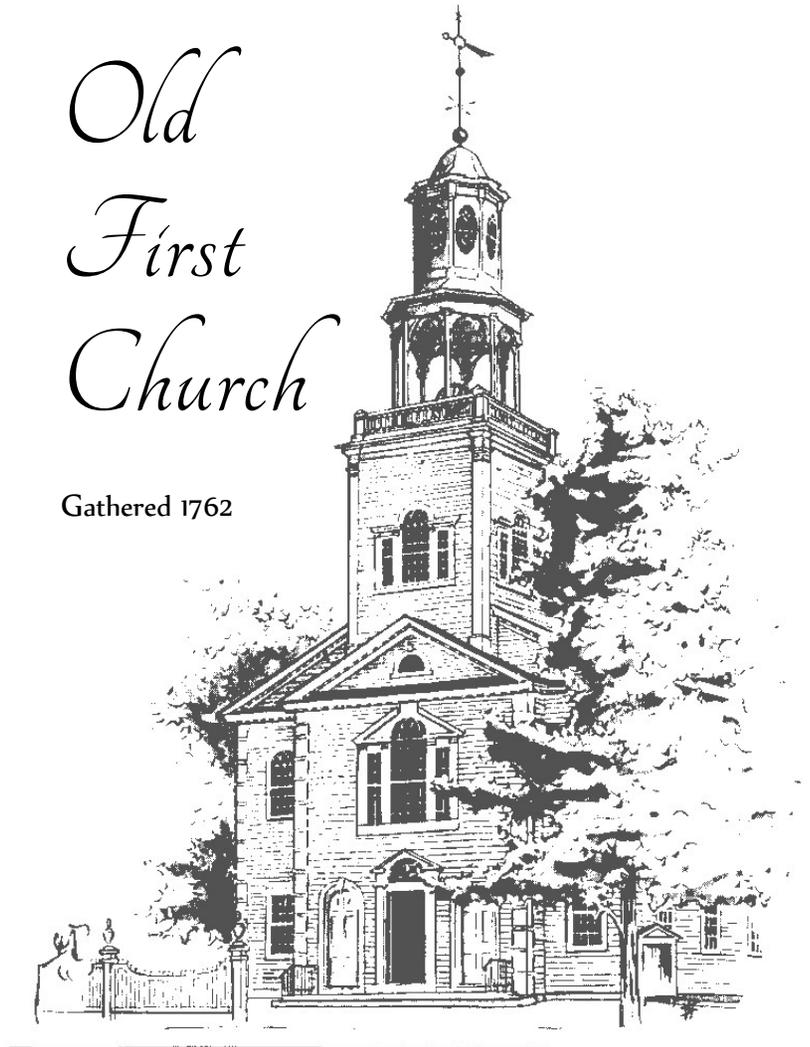
Health note: Indoor air is constantly exchanged with fresh air with a LifeBreath circulation system operating during the service to maintain the healthiest standards for public gathering.

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 • www.oldfirstchurchbenn.org

Old First Church

Gathered 1762



When Morning Gilds the Skies

When morning gilds the skies,
My heart awaking cries:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Alike at work and prayer
To Jesus I repair:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Does sadness fill my mind?
A solace here I find:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Or fades my earthly bliss?
My comfort still is this:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Let earth's wide circle round
In joyful notes resound:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let air and sea and sky
From depth to height reply:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Be this, while life is mine,
My canticle divine:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this the eternal song
Through all the ages long:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 103

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—

who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field;

for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children,

to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word.

Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will.

Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul.

SECOND LESSON

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. Selah

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

“Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.”

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

The God of Abraham Praise

The God of Abraham praise, who reigns enthroned above;
The ancient of eternal days, the God of love!
The Lord, the great I Am, by earth and heaven confessed,
We bow before Your holy name, forever blest.

Your spirit still flows free, high surging where it will;
In prophet's word You spoke of old and You speak still.
Established is Your law, and changeless it shall stand,
Deep writ upon the human heart, on sea, or land.

You have eternal life implanted in the soul;
Your love shall be our strength and stay, while ages roll.
We praise You, living God! We praise Your holy name;
The first, the last, beyond all thought, and still the same!

Holy God, We Praise Your Name

1. Holy God, we praise Your name;
Lord of all, we bow before You;
All on earth Your scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore You.
Infinite Your vast domain,
Everlasting is Your reign.
2. Hark, the glad celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord.
3. All apostles join the strain
As Your sacred name they hallow;
Prophets swell the glad refrain,
And the blessed martyrs follow,
And from morn to set of sun,
Through the church the song goes on.
4. Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit: Three we name You,
While in essence only One;
Undivided God we claim You,
And adoring bend the knee
While we own the mystery.