

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  
ANASTASIA GAUTHIER, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST  
OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

FEBRUARY 26, 2023

**PRELUDE** *Jesus, I Will Ponder Now* - J. S. Bach

**OPENING WORDS** (responsive)

We gather in prayer and praise.

**God is our refuge and our strength.**

God's word calls to us.

**Open our hearts this hour.**

**\*HYMN** *O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!* 476

Robert Grant paraphrased Psalm 104 for this hymn. Born and died in India, he was a British member of Parliament who introduced a bill in 1833 emancipating the Jews. The text of verse two has been altered to be closer to the language of the Psalm ("chariots of wrath," which some may remember, isn't in the Psalm!) It is not certain that Johann Michael Haydn, Franz Joseph's brother, was the composer. A number of pieces by both contain the first line. Johann was a singer who supposedly had a range of three octaves.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Most 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; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

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

**FIRST LESSON** Genesis 2:15-17; 3: 1-7 p. 2

**\*HYMN** *O Lord, Make Haste to Hear My Cry* 249

The present text of this metrical setting of Psalm 141 first appeared as number 386 in The Psalter (1912). The present text is the first four stanzas of the original with the archaic language removed. The tune: CANNONS was composed by George Frederick Handel (c. 1750) and was originally used with Charles Wesley's text, "Sinners, Obey the Gospel Word." It is one of three tunes by Handel which were published as settings for Wesley's text by Samuel Wesley in 1826.

**SECOND LESSON** Matthew 4:1-11 p. 785

**SERMON** Keeping Things Right

**\*HYMN** *The Glory of These Forty Days* 87

This hymn is ascribed to one of the oldest authors in our hymnal, Gregory the Great (c. 540-604). A Roman senator, he became a Benedictine monk after his father's death and established six monasteries on his father's land. He became pope in 590. His Gregorian chant became a standard in the Western church. Some think the tune was by Martin Luther, with harmony by J. S. Bach, who based his Cantata 126 on 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** *Hymn of Compassion*  
- Getty and Townend arr. Courtney

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

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

**\*HYMN** *Come, Labor On* 415

The author was Jane Laurie Borthwick, a member of the Free Church of Scotland. Known primarily as a translator along with her sister, they published together four volumes titled *Hymns from the Land of Luther*. She published this text in 1857 in her book, *Thoughts for Thoughtful Hours*. The tune was written by Thomas Tertius Noble in 1918. He was a noted composer and organist in York, England and at St. Thomas Church, New York City.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *Sweet the Moments, Rich in Blessing*  
- Rudolf Moser

**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 Janet Van Derpoel-Andrea and Sue Philpott. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Wendy and Tom Schmitt.

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

Thank you to Wendy and Tom Schmitt for providing flowers for worship this morning.

**Special Collection:** Donations for earthquake relief in Turkey and Syria can be placed on the offering plate. Checks should be made payable to the church with "earthquake relief" in the memo. Cash donations should be in an envelope marked "earthquake relief".

We are still collecting new or gently used blankets for the homeless. Gently used blankets must be clean and no electric blankets please.

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!

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

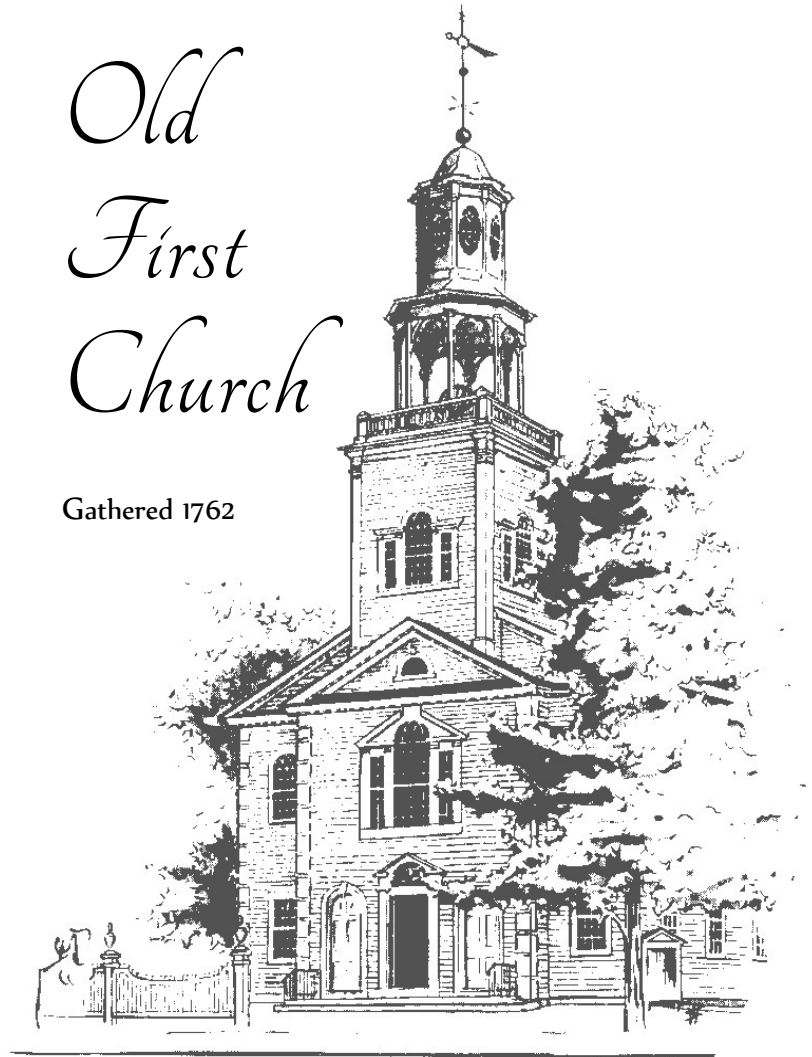
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# Old First Church

Gathered 1762



## *O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!*

O worship the King, all-glorious above! O gratefully sing God's power and God's love; our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

O tell of God's might, O sing of God's grace, whose robe is the light, whose canopy space. The chariots of heaven the deep thunderclouds form, and bright is God's path on the wings of the storm.

The earth with its store of wonders untold, almighty, Thy power hath founded of old; hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree, and round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light; it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, in Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail; Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end, our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.

## *O Lord, Make Haste to Hear My Cry*

O Lord, make haste to hear my cry.  
To You I call, on You rely.  
Incline to me a gracious ear,  
And when I call, in mercy hear.

When in the morning unto You  
I call in supplication new,  
Then let my prayer as incense rise  
To God enthroned above the skies.

When unto You I look and pray  
With lifted hands at close of day,  
Then as the evening sacrifice  
Let my request accepted rise.

O guard my thoughts, I now implore,  
And of my lips O keep the door;  
Nor leave my sinful heart to stray  
Where evil footsteps lead the way.

## **FIRST LESSON**

### **Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7**

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

## **SECOND LESSON**

### **Matthew 4:1-11**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

### *The Glory of These Forty Days*

The glory of these forty days  
We celebrate with songs of praise;  
For Christ, by whom all things were made,  
Himself has fasted and has prayed.

Alone and fasting, Moses saw  
The loving God who gave the law;  
And to Elijah, fasting, came  
The steeds and chariots of flame.

So Daniel trained his mystic sight,  
Delivered from the lion's might;  
And John, the Bridegroom's friend, became  
The herald of Messiah's name.

Then grant that we like them be true,  
Consumed in fast and prayer with You;  
Our spirits strengthen with Your grace,  
And give us joy to see Your face.

### *Come, Labor On*

Come, labor on.  
Who dares stand idle on the harvest plain  
while all around us waves the golden grain?  
And to each servant does the Master say,  
"Go work today."

Come, labor on.  
Claim the high calling angels cannot share;  
to young and old the gospel gladness bear.  
Redeem the time; its hours too swiftly fly.  
The night draws nigh.

Come, labor on.  
Away with gloomy doubts and faithless fear!  
No arm so weak but may do service here.  
Though feeble agents, may we all fulfill  
God's righteous will.

Come, labor on.  
No time for rest, till glows the western sky,  
till the long shadows o'er our pathway lie,  
and a glad sound comes with the setting sun,  
"Well done, well done!"