

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  
AUDREY PIETRUCHA, LAY READER  
GENE MARIE CALLAHAN, ORGANIST OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

FEBRUARY 5, 2023

**PRELUDE** *Wayfaring Stranger*  
- traditional American Spiritual arr. Mark Hayes

**OPENING WORDS** (responsive)

God creates anew each day.

**Let us worship in spirit and in truth.**

This is the day the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice in it.**

**\*HYMN** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* 464

The text was written in 1907 when Henry van Dyke was guest preacher at Williams College. He said it should be sung to this tune, from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Beethoven's original rhythm for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> measures has been restored in our hymnal.

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

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

**FIRST LESSON** Matthew 5:13-20 p. 786

**\*HYMN** *This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made* 230

This paraphrase of Psalm 118 by Isaac Watts was first published in *The Psalms of David* (1719), where he headed it "Hosanna; The Lord's Day; or Christ's Resurrection, and Our Salvation." Watts's intention was for it to be sung on Easter Day or on Sundays.

**SECOND LESSON** 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 p. 927

**SERMON** Lofty Words

**\*HYMN** *Guide My Feet* 354

Hebrews 12:1-1, "And let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" is the basis for this African-American spiritual. According to harmonizer Wendell Phillips Whalum, the Bible, more than any other source, formed the textual basis for Black hymnody. Whalum was a noted author and conductor, and head of the music department at Morehouse College, Atlanta.

**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** *Slow Down* - Edwin T. Childs

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

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

**\*HYMN** *Here I Am, Lord* 525

Daniel Shutte wrote the text and tune in 1981 for a diaconate ordination. He was a Roman Catholic priest in South Dakota but is now a layperson, and serves as music director of a Roman Catholic parish in Milwaukee.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*  
- James Denton

**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 Dave and Marsha Pilachowski.

Please join us after worship today for a hearty coffee hour provided by Janet Andrea, Sandy Bechtel, Betsy Ehrenfreund, Joyce Goeke, Susan Kachmar, Amber and Noah Langford, Jeannette Lesser, Darlene Munson, Marsha Pilachowski, Carol Poppe, Vicky Printz, Jim Pullman, Pat Ross and Wendy Schmitt.

**The Church's Annual Meeting follows worship today. All members of the church are expected to meet in the sanctuary after coffee hour.**

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

**20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET:** Submissions for our *Meditations for Lent* booklet, by and for members and friends of Old First Church, are being accepted. **The deadline for submissions is February 13.** 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. Copies will be available for pick up at the church on Sunday, February 19.

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

Choir practice, Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM in the choir loft  
2/16: Deacon Meeting, 4:00 PM at the Barn  
2/20: Trustee Meeting, 5:00 PM in the 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!

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

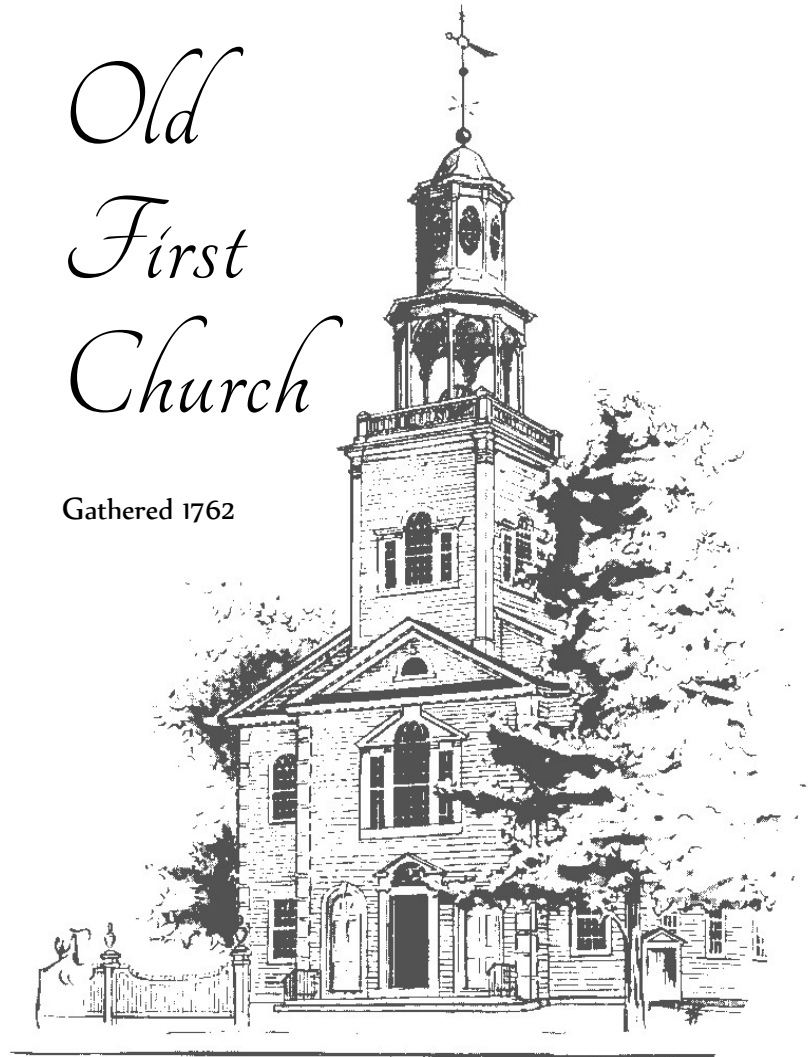
### MAILING ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION

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



## *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,  
Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;  
Drive the gloom of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
Fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,  
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,  
Stars and angels sing around Thee,  
Center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain,  
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

Mortals, join the happy chorus  
Which the morning stars began;  
Lord divine is reigning o'er us,  
Joining all in heaven's plan.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
Victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us sunward  
In the triumph song of life.

### **FIRST LESSON**

#### **Matthew 5:13-20**

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

## *This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 This is the day the Lord has made;<br>He calls the hours His own;<br>let heav'n rejoice, let earth be glad,<br>and praise surround the throne. | 3 Hosanna to th' anointed King,<br>to David's holy Son.<br>help us, O LORD, descend and bring<br>salvation from Your throne.        |
| 2 Today He rose and left the dead,<br>and Satan's empire fell;<br>today the saints His triumphs spread,<br>and all His wonders tell.             | 4 Blest be the Lord, who comes to us<br>with messages of grace;<br>who comes, in God His Father's name,<br>to save our sinful race. |

### **SECOND LESSON**

#### **1 Corinthians 2:1-16**

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual. Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny. “For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

## *Guide My Feet*

Guide my feet while I run this race,  
Guide my feet while I run this race,  
Guide my feet while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

Hold my hand while I run this race,  
Hold my hand while I run this race,  
Hold my hand while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

Stand by me while I run this race,  
Stand by me while I run this race,  
Stand by me while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

I'm Your child while I run this race,  
I'm Your child while I run this race,  
I'm Your child while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

Search my heart while I run this race,  
Search my heart while I run this race,  
Search my heart while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

Guide my feet while I run this race,  
Guide my feet while I run this race,  
Guide my feet while I run this race,  
For I don't want to run this race in vain!

## *Here I Am, Lord*

I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear My light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

### *Refrain:*

Here I am, Lord  
Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night  
I will go, Lord,  
If You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne My people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them,  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak My word to them.  
Whom shall I send? *[Refrain]*

I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them.  
Whom shall I send? *[Refrain]*