

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

MAY 21, 2023

PRELUDE *Christ is the King* - setting by Paul Bouman

OPENING WORDS (responsive)

This is the day which the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

We gather to give thanks for all creation.

**We gather to serve and live in God's word.**

\*HYMN *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!* 142

Edward Perronet (author of verses 1-3) was an Anglican priest who supported the Methodist movement, then, breaking with Wesley over the administration of Communion, became a Congregational pastor. John Rippon (author and reviser of verses 2-4) was pastor of a Baptist Church, also in England. The composer, Oliver Holden, was a carpenter who helped rebuild Charleston, MA after it was burned by the British after the Battle of Bunker (or Breed's) Hill. He was also a realtor, conducted singing schools, and was a state representative. He wrote the tune for this text just after the birth of his first daughter.

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being, whose face is hidden from us by our sin, and whose mercy we forget: cleanse us from all offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires; that humbly we may draw near to thee, confessing our faults, confiding in thy grace, and finding in thee our refuge and our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND \*GLORIA PATRI (579)

FIRST LESSON Ephesians 1:15-23 p. 949

\*HYMN *To Bless the Earth* 200

This paraphrase of Psalm 65 first appeared in *The Psalter* (1912), a publication of a joint committee of nine churches representing the Reformed tradition in the U.S. and Canada. The tune is an old one, by Melchior Vulpius, in 1609. He was the leading German composer of his day, a schoolmaster and musicologist, composing over 200 motets and 400 hymns for Lutheran worship.

SECOND LESSON Luke 24:44-53 p. 861

SERMON The Eyes of Your Heart

\*HYMN *Crown Him with Many Crowns* 151

The text by Matthew Bridges was published in 1851. Bridges was brought up in the Church of England but became a Roman Catholic during the Oxford Movement, and spent much of his life in Quebec. The tune was written for this text by George Elvey in 1868 and named using the Greek word for crowns (*diademata*). Elvey was a prominent organist and composer and taught several members of the royal family.

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 *Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor*  
- setting by Walter L. Pelz

\*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 *Fantasia on Laudes Domini* - Edward G. Mead

**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 Sandy Bechtel and Pat Ross. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Fischer Gauthier and Jim Pullman.

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

Sunday School will resume next Sunday, May 28. For more information about our Sunday School program please contact our Christian Ed Advocate, Amber Langford at [aemc412@comcast.net](mailto:aemc412@comcast.net).

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

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

5/22: Trustee meeting, 5:30 PM, Church Parlor

6/4: Monumental Tag Sale kickoff luncheon, following worship

6/10: Monumental Tag Sale at the Barn 9 AM – 3 PM

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!

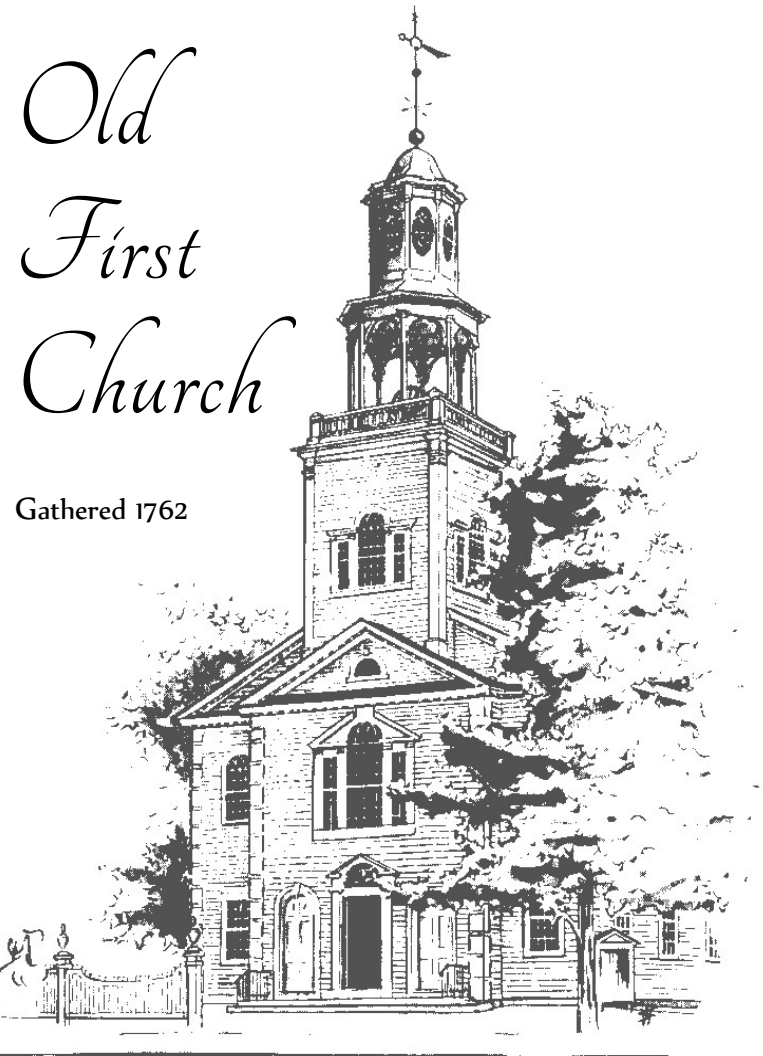
To maintain the healthiest standards for public gathering, indoor air is constantly being exchanged with fresh air with a LifeBreath circulation system operating during the service today.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

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

**MAILING ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

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### *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!*

All hail the power of Jesus' Name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all!  
Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown Him Lord of all!

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,  
Ye ransomed from the fall,  
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,  
And crown Him Lord of all!  
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,  
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe,  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To Him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown Him Lord of all!  
To Him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown Him Lord of all!

O that with yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown Him Lord of all!  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown Him Lord of all!

### **FIRST LESSON**

### **Ephesians 1:15-23**

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

### *To Bless the Earth*

To bless the earth, God sends us  
From heaven's abundant store  
The waters of the springtime,  
Enriching it once more.

The seed by God provided  
Is sown o'er hill and plain,  
And then come gentle showers  
To bless the springing grain.

God crowns the year with goodness,  
The earth God's mercy fills,  
The wilderness is fruitful,  
And joyful are the hills.

With grain the fields are covered,  
The flocks in pastures graze;  
All nature joins in singing  
A joyful song of praise.

### **SECOND LESSON**

### **Luke 24:44-53**

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

### *Crown Him with Many Crowns*

Crown Him with many crowns,  
The Lamb upon His throne;  
Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns  
all music but its own!  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
of Him who died for thee,  
and hail Him as thy matchless King  
through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of love;  
Behold His hands and side,  
Rich wounds yet visible above,  
In beauty glorified:  
No angel in the sky  
Can fully bear that sight,  
But downward bends his burning eye  
At mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of peace;  
Whose power a scepter sways  
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,  
Absorbed in prayer and praise:  
His reign shall know no end;  
And round His pierced feet  
Fair flowers of Paradise extend  
Their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown Him the Lord of years,  
The Potentate of time;  
Creator of the rolling spheres,  
Ineffably sublime.  
All hail, Redeemer, hail!  
For Thou hast died for me;  
Thy praise shall never, never ail  
Throughout eternity.

### *Oh, Give Us Pleasure in the Flowers Today*

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.