

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  
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OLD FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

OCTOBER 8, 2023

**PRELUDE** *All Glory Be to God on High*  
- Andreas Nikolaus Vetter

**OPENING WORDS** (responsive)

Sing to the Lord a new song.

**Sing to the Lord, all the earth.**

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

**In the peace of this hour may God's word comfort us.**

**\*HYMN** *For the Beauty of the Earth* 473  
(verses 1-4)

The text's author was briefly a headmaster and literature teacher at a college in England, but an inheritance allowed him to spend the rest of his life traveling and writing. This text was originally written as a communion hymn to infuse a note of joy into the then otherwise solemn service. The tune's original author was choirmaster and organist at Stuttgart, and modified to be the setting of William Dix's "As With Gladness Men of Old."

**OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

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

**FIRST LESSON** Isaiah 5:1-7 p. 552

**\*HYMN** *I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes* 234

Here we go back to our singing roots and sing a Psalm. The text is a metrical setting of Psalm 121 from the 1912 hymnal, *The Psalter*, which was a joint work of nine U.S. and Canadian Reformed traditions. The tune is from the 1615 Scottish Psalter, *CL Hymns of David*.

**SECOND LESSON** Exodus 20:1-4; 7-9, 12-20 p. 58

**SERMON** Pleasant Planting

**\*HYMN** *O God of Earth and Space* 274

Both text and tune were written for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Concordia Lutheran Church, Kirkwood, Missouri.

**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 or hand it to an usher after the service.)

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** *All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*  
- Melchior Vulpius setting by Ludwig Lenel

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

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

**\*HYMN** *Wherever I May Wander* 294

*for Primary Children* (1963) by Westminster Press for the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The tune NEW ENGLAND is a folk melody from New England. The present arrangement was first published by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *Fugue* - Johann Pachelbel

**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 Sue Philpott. Ushers and greeters for today's service are Courtney Cowan and Evie Wild.

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

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

10/12: Deacon's meeting, 4:00 PM, Barn

10/18: Docent Wrap Up Meeting, 2:00 PM at the Church

10/22: Harvest Meal following worship (set up on Sat. at Noon)

10/24: Trustee Meeting, 5:30 PM, Parlor

10/27: Monumental Music at the Barn, 7:00 PM (see the BLOG insert for more info)

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

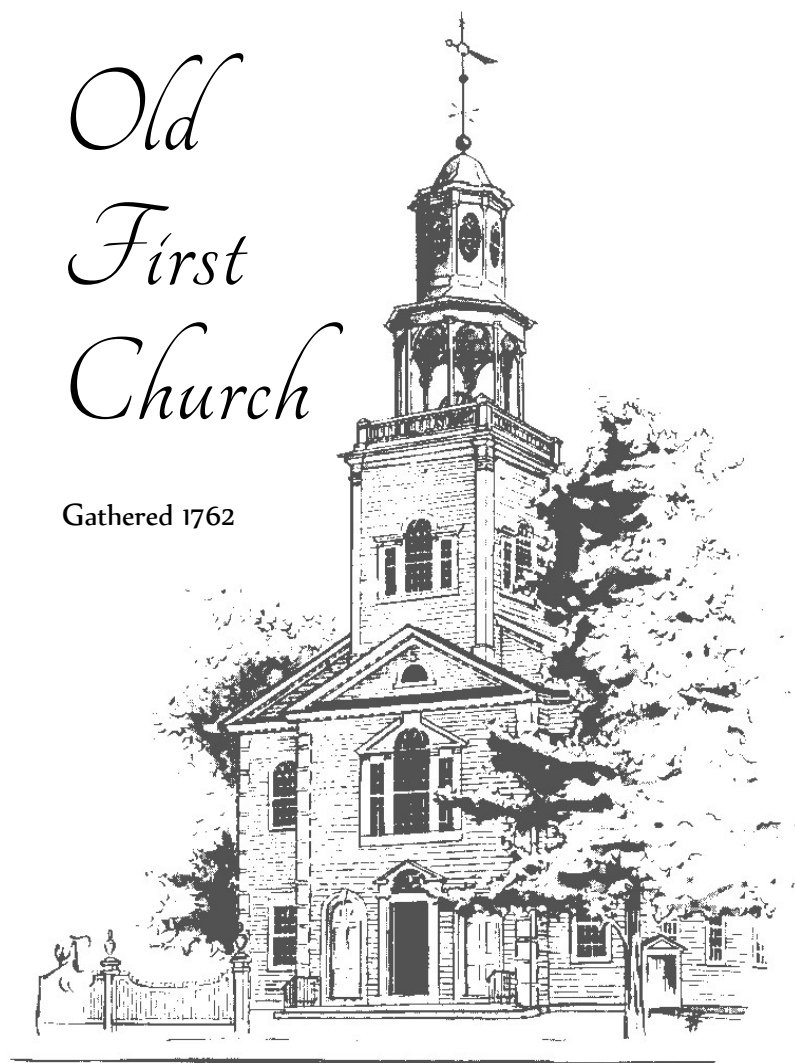
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# Old First Church

Gathered 1762



### ***For the Beauty of the Earth***

For the beauty of the earth,  
For the glory of the skies,  
For the love which from our birth  
Over and around us lies.

*Refrain:* Lord of all to Thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour,  
Of the day and of the night,  
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,  
Sun and moon, and stars of light. (*Refrain*)

For the joy of ear and eye,  
For the heart and mind's delight,  
For the mystic harmony  
Linking sense to sound and sight, (*Refrain*)

For the joy of human love,  
Brother, sister, parent, child,  
Friends on earth and friends above,  
For all gentle thoughts and mild. (*Refrain*)

### **FIRST LESSON**

#### **Isaiah 5:1-7**

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

### ***I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes***

I to the hills will lift my eyes;  
From whence shall come my aid?  
My help is from the Lord alone,  
who heaven and earth has made.

God will not let your foot be moved,  
your guardian never sleeps;  
God's watchful and un-slumbering care  
protects and safely keeps.

Your faithful keeper is the Lord,  
your shelter and your shade;  
'Neath sun or moon, by day or night,  
you shall not be afraid.

From evil God will keep you safe,  
provide for all you need;  
Your going out, your coming in,  
God will forever lead.

### **SECOND LESSON**

#### **Exodus 20:1-4; 7-9, 12-20**

Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do

not let God speak to us, or we will die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.”

### *O God of Earth and Space*

O God of earth and space,  
Of sea and fire and air,  
Your providence surrounds us here  
And everywhere.  
In fruit and grain and tree,  
In shelter from the cold,  
In cooling breezes, flowing wells,  
Now as of old.

Where faithfulness is shown,  
Where love and truth abound,  
Where beauty graces human life,  
There You are found.  
Inspirer of all thought!  
Creative force of art!  
The melody on every tongue,  
In every heart!

Wherever freedom reigns,  
Where sin is overthrown,  
Where justice fused with mercy rules,  
There You are known.  
Give us the courage clear  
To make the earth a home  
For all to live in harmony  
In Christ's shalom.

Your word commands response  
And summons us to life.  
We follow, strengthened by Your grace,  
In calm or strife.  
Our ever-present help,  
Our challenge and our prod,  
We praise You now and to life's end  
Eternal God.

### *Wherever I May Wander*

Wherever I may wander,  
Wherever I may be,  
I'm certain of my Maker's love;  
God's care is over me.  
God made the great high mountains,  
And made the wide blue sea;  
God made the sky where airplanes fly;  
God made the world, and me.

Throughout the whole creation  
I see God's loving care  
For everyone in every land,  
God's children everywhere.  
Wherever I may wander,  
Wherever I may be,  
I'm certain of my Maker's love  
God's care is over me.