

First Congregational Church of St. Albans (FCC) is a welcoming community of spiritual seekers, believers, and doubters.

Please know that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

To create an open and loving community that encourages a joyous exploration with God.

To work together to care for and nurture the wider community.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission as a community resource church is to provide a safe place for spiritual exploration and personal growth. To affirm the value of each person and to meet them where they are.

To connect to the community through personal service, giving, and pastoral care.

Please feel free to contact us:

Administrative Office: 8 AM to 11 AM weekdays.

Church Office Phone Number: 802-524-4555

Pastor Jessica's Office Hours: T-W-F, 9am-12pm

Email: pastorjessica@firstcongregationalstalbans.org

For urgent, pastoral matters outside of regular office hours, call Pastor Jessica at 207-632-5544.

OUR WORSHIP SERVICE IS BROADCAST OVER THE LOCAL PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL 1079 ON SUNDAYS AT 4 PM.

SCRIPTURE READER: Lane McElree



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

DECEMBER 18, 2022

10AM

REV. JESSICA MOORE, PASTOR

ERIN GRAINGER, MUSIC AND CHORAL DIRECTOR

STEPHAN CONRADY, ORGANIST

SUE POWERS, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

27 CHURCH STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT 05478

802-524-4555

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REFLECTING THE SACRED THIS ADVENT:

The shiny additions to our Advent and Christmas visuals remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

CENTERING WORDS:

"Behold, the dreamer cometh." – Genesis 37:19

THE PREPARATION

The beginning of the prelude is a call to enter into the spirit of prayer and community.

PRELUDE: *Oh Tannenbaum* German Christmas song

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD: GUIDED MEDITATION

SUNG CALL TO WORSHIP: CALL AND RESPONSE

Let your Spirit come, **Let your Spirit come**,
fall upon me now, **fall upon me now**.

Let your Spirit come, **Let your Spirit come**
fall upon us now, **fall upon us now**,

Let your rain fall down, **Let your rain fall down**
pour upon our souls, **pour upon our souls**
Come and wash us now, **Come and wash us now**,
come and make us whole, **come and make us whole**.

WELCOME TO ALL VISITORS: We are delighted that you chose to worship with us today and are strengthened by your participation in our service!

If you are new to First Congregational Church of St. Albans, please sign the guest book in the narthex (main entrance of the church).

If you would like more information about our church and its programs or would like to receive our Morning Reflections, and weekly e-newsletter, "From the Manse," please fill out a Welcome Card and place it in the Offering tray (be sure to include your email address).

**After the service please join us for fellowship,
conversation, coffee, and refreshments.**

*PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE

FROM WORSHIP DESIGN STUDIOS: REFLECTING ADVENT

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A Special Note of Gratitude From All of Us At FCC:

- Nancy Holland Thank You for volunteering in the Office on Mondays! It's wonderful to have such a welcoming presence for our tenants, and visitors.
- Judy Miller Thank You for organizing, collecting, setting up, counting, dividing, and distributing the warm woolies from the Mitten Tree. Thank you for keeping this important ministry going!
- Greg Beeman Thank You for organizing and promoting our Happy Holidays Open Mic!
- Erin Grainger Thank You for sharing Church Street Sounds of the Season with us this fall! All the concerts were amazing!

Music Notes: This Sunday's anthem honours the greatest of gifts coming in the smallest of packages: *"He chose the lowly, he chose the small; He chose the littlest one of them all. He chose the humblest of them all."*

Bible Study

Bible Study is on Christmas Break. We will not meet Dec. 21 and Dec. 28. We will return January 4th.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service:

Dec. 24th at 7pm

Please join First Congregational Church of St. Albans for a traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols.

All ages!

Everyone is welcome.

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE ADVENT CANDLE

MCÉLREE FAMILY

We pray for Peace this day.

We pray for Peace this day.

We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.
We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

We open to see our deepest selves
We open to see our deepest selves

as a gift of holy presence.
as a gift of holy presence.

This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,
This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,
lighting the way to peace.
lighting the way to peace.

REPEAT

Let your Spirit come, **Let your Spirit come,**
fall upon me now, **fall upon me now.**
Let your Spirit come, **Let your Spirit come**
fall upon us now, **fall upon us now,**

MORNING PRAYER (UNISON)

Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Peace,
we give you thanks for this holy sensing of your presence.
As we take in the peace you offer,
may we be a reflection of your light,
expanding the sacred knowing of "you are here for me"
into the sacred knowing of "you are present for all of us."
Amen.

HYMN*

"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"

PH 120

ENCOUNTERING THE SACRED

God, our shepherd – Restorer of our souls,
In a world full of hopelessness,
We have sometimes forgotten that you have shown your hope
in endless ways.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know
your hope.**

In the mired mess of the world,
We have sometimes neglected to lean into you peace that
transcends comprehension.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know
your peace.**

In a culture shrouded in doom and despair,
We have often forgotten how to fight for our joy.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know
your joy.**

In a moment when it is easier to hate others because they
believe differently,
Love differently, live differently, vote differently – we have
forgotten how to love beyond the bounds of what separates
us.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know
your love. Stimulate our memory, O divine Creator.
Remind us that even in our weakness, you are mighty.**

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE MESSAGE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE READING

ISAIAH 7:10-16

ANTHEM

The Humblest of Them All

Kelly Vaneman

MATTHEW 1:18-25

MORNING REFLECTION: “YOU MAY SAY I’M A DREAMER”

HYMN*

“IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR” (1, 2, 4) PH 129

THE THANKSGIVING

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CHORAL CALL TO PRAYER:

HEAR OUR PRAYER, O LORD D. WELPTON

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE ~

LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy
kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory,
forever, Amen**

CHORAL RESPONSE TO PRAYER

*“THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE, WHOSE MIND IS STAYED
ON THEE.” SCOTTISH PSALTER, 1615*

THE DEPARTURE

HYMN*

“LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH” BB 35

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *CREATOR OF THE STARS OF NIGHT*

Gregorian plainsong