

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: Tuesday and Thursday 8-11am.

Wednesday and Friday 9am- 12pm

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: NANCY HOLLAND



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

MARCH 26, 2023

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

INFO@FIRSTCONGREGATIONALSTALBANS.ORG

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WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

CENTERING WORDS:

“Letting go gives us freedom, and freedom is the only condition for happiness. If, in our heart, we still cling to anything - anger, anxiety, or possessions - we cannot be free.”

— *Thich Nhat Hanh*

THE PREPARATION

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

PRELUDE *Something Beautiful*

W. Gaither

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNG CALL TO WORSHIP

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**.

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**.

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

¹FROM UCC WORSHIP WAYS

MUSIC, COPYRIGHT PERMISSIONS: CCLI #4799426 AND SJMP #14586

Welcome to Special Guest:

Rev. Bill Neil

We are pleased to welcome the Rev, Bill Neil back to the pulpit here at FCC! In February Rev. Neil started us on our Lenten Forgiveness journey and today he concludes our study.

Rev Neil is a recently retired UCC (and United Methodist) minister. He has done extensive work on Forgiveness – both academically and personally. This Lent we will be following the five-step path to Forgiveness that Rev Neil created and walked during his last Sabbatical from ministry.

From Rev. Neil's bio:

I grew up in a mainline Protestant, white collar home. I had a variety of spiritual experiences and developed a strong social conscience.

To paraphrase Teilhard de Chardin, I believe we are spiritual beings having a human experience. Our lives offer opportunities to grow toward the full maturity of Christ. Such a life is characterized by sacrificial love, active compassion, advocacy and action for social and economic justice and spiritual practices that form in us the very mind of Christ. I strongly believe in life after death and in doing all that can be done to make God's love real on this precious planet.

MORNING PRAYER¹ (UNISON)

Life Giver, come and revive us again. Indwell us with your spirit and let our souls awake to joy. We come boldly that you might breathe on us. May what we experience with you today change us forever and for the better. Amen

HYMN*

"Praise to the Living God" (1, 2, 4) NCH 8

PRAYER OF CONFESSION¹ (UNISON)

Mender of Hearts, we confess that sometimes in our brokenness, we cause brokenness in others. Sometimes in our woundedness, we wound others. In these despairing moments, we need healing and restoration. We give thanks that we are never beyond your reach or grace. Amen.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

FORGIVENESS PRAYER WORD SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

THE MESSAGE

ANTHEM Dry Bones James Weldon Johnson

SCRIPTURE READING

EZEKIEL 37:1-14

MATTHEW 18:15-20

MORNING REFLECTION: **REV. BILL NEIL**

HYMN*

"On a Hill Far Away" (1, 3, 4) NCH 195

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*

"Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness" (1, 3, 4) NCH 286

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *It Only Takes a Spark* K. Kaiser

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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

- Nancy Holland Thank You for volunteering to work in the Church Office on Mondays, especially during this time of transition in the office.

Bible Study

Our next Bible Study will meet on March 29
Fellowship 6:45pm; Bible Study 7:00- 8:00pm
Text: Matthew 21:1-11

Game Night

Friday March 31st Beginning at 6:00pm

Bring your favorite game or play one of ours! Donations accepted for the pizza fund.
Warning: Hilarity and good times expected!

Free Open Mic and Coffee House

Saturday, April 15th 7:00-9:00pm

Theme: Love Your Mother!

In honor of Earth Day we'll celebrate with song, story, refreshments and fellowship!
Everyone is welcome: beginners, experts and everyone in between. For information, call Greg at 802-324-0308

Music Notes: The composer of this morning's anthem is James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938), who was an American author, educator, lawyer, diplomat, songwriter, and civil rights activist. In 1934 he was the first African-American professor to be hired at New York University, and later he was a professor of creative literature and writing at Fisk University. This spiritual was first recorded by The Famous Myers Jubilee Singers in 1928. The lyrics are inspired by Ezekiel 37:1–14, where the prophet Ezekiel visits the Valley of Dry Bones.