

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: Monday: 2pm-4pm; Tuesday 8am-2pm; Wednesday 9am-Noon; Thursday 8am-2pm; Friday 10am-Noon.

Church Office Phone Number: 802-524-4555

Pastor Jessica's Office Hours: Tues. & Wed, 9am-12pm, and by appt.

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: Valarie Walden



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

JANUARY 7, 2024

10 AM

REV. JESSICA MOORE, PASTOR

STEPHAN CONRADY, ORGANIST

MONICA NEWTON, OFFICE MANAGER

27 CHURCH STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT 05478

802-524-4555

INFO@FIRSTCONGREGATIONALSTALBANS.ORG

WWW.FIRSTCONGREGATIONALSTALBANS.ORG

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

CENTERING WORDS:

"I decided it is better to scream. Silence is the real crime against humanity." — Nadezhda Mandelstam

❖ BEGINNING OF SERVICE ❖**THE PREPARATION**

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

PRELUDE *Auld Lang Syne* arr. Conrady Unknown

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORNING PRAYER (UNISON)

**Creating and sustaining God,
In your presence there is life.
Living Water springs up,
And deserts blossom where you pass.
Seeking the life that comes from you,
We have gathered before you.
Our hearts are ready, O God.
Delight us with your presence,
And prepare us for your service in the world.
Amen**

HYMN*

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past" (1,2,4) NCH 25

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:**

- ★ Sandy Cristman -Thank You for organizing, setting the tables up, and lots of cooking for the Breakfast Church, we'd be lost without you!
- ★ Mara Vijups- Thank You for the beautiful flower arrangements for Breakfast Church, they were beautiful!

Flowers

In honor, and in loving memory of, Doris Hughes. It will be 9 years on Jan 9 since she passed.

Undecorating

We are undecorating the church today after service.

Ladies Breakfast

Ladies breakfast will be held on January 13th, 2024 @9am. The breakfast will be at the Maple City Diner. RSVP to Sue at (802)527-6336.

Martha's Kitchen Food Drive

We are collecting the following items for Martha's Kitchen to be delivered in February:

Ground Coffee
Iced Tea Mix
Sugar
Powdered Creamer

Zoom Bible Study

January 10; 7-8pm
Scripture: John 1:43-51

Open Mic

January 20
7-9pm
Everyone is welcome!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION¹ (Unison)

Righteous God, we confess our need of you in every aspect of our lives. Lift us from the valleys of despair and hopelessness. Free us from the societal norms, pressures, and conventions that conflict with or diminish your kin-dom. Remind us of our baptismal promises and commitment. Release us from shame and fortify us with grace for transformation and new life. Amen.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE MESSAGE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

ANTHEM

SPECIAL MUSIC

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MARK 1: 4-11

MORNING REFLECTION

Wilderness Beginnings

HYMN*

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

NCH 330

THE COMMUNION

One: The invitation is simple: come and eat of the feast. Not a meal to nourish the body, but to feed the soul. We receive the bread and juice connected to the ages: to the saint of old who felt unworthy, to the seeker eager to know God, to the one who wonders what it's all about, to the one who eats with unburdened faith. Woven into this time are the hopes and tears of generations. There is great joy here. No one is turned away for God is the host! May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Pause

All: Loving God, recalling Christ's gracious life and death, and proclaiming the resurrection, we offer this bread and cup. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts, that they may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and being built up by this precious sacrament of grace, we may receive the gift of eternal life in the blessed and heavenly realm.

One: We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, praying the prayer taught to the disciples:

All: *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.*

One: Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said, "This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat."

And Jesus took the juice and said, "This is my blood, spilled out for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Distribution of the Bread and Cup: please hold your cup until we serve all, so that all may drink together.

One: Let us pray.

All: Gracious God, we thank you for refreshing us at your table. May we who share Christ's bread live his risen life.

May we who drink Christ's cup bring abundant life to others. May the Holy Spirit who lights the world also enlighten our lives. Strengthen in us the hope you set before us, so that we and all your children shall be free, and so that the whole earth may live to praise your name. Amen.

THE THANKSGIVING

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CHORAL CALL TO PRAYER:

HEAR OUR PRAYER, O LORD D. WELPTON

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE ~

CHORAL RESPONSE TO PRAYER

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

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

*Praise God from whom all blessing flow
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, all heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

THE DEPARTURE

HYMN*

"Go Tell It on the Mountain" NCH 154

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE THE APPROACH (FROM "FOLLOW THAT STAR")
S. CONRADY