

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 9am-2pm; Wednesday 10am-Noon; Thursday 9am-2pm; Friday 10am-Noon.

Church Office Phone Number: 802-524-4555

Pastor Jessica's Office Hours: By Appointment

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: VALERIE WALDEN



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

APRIL 7, 2024

10AM

REV. JESSICA MOORE, PASTOR

DR. KEVIN DIRTH, MUSIC AND CHORAL DIRECTOR

STEPHAN CONRADY, ORGANIST

MONICA NEWTON, OFFICE MANAGER

27 CHURCH STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT 05478

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We Gather as God's People

CENTERING WORDS:

“When I say it’s you I like, I’m talking about that part of you that knows that life is far more than anything you can ever see or hear or touch. That deep part of you that allows you to stand for those things without which humankind cannot survive. Love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed.” — Fred Rogers

❖ BEGINNING OF SERVICE ❖**THE PREPARATION**

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

PRELUDE *Countdown*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORNING PRAYER¹ (Unison)

Resurrected Christ, you have taught us how the unbelievable can be possible. When there is so much to fear in the world, we can find peace in your presence. As we worship, breathe your Spirit on us, that we may carry it with us. Help us comfort our neighbors. Help us serve a world of need. We pray this with thanksgiving for your work among us. Amen.

HYMN* *“In The Bulb There Is a Flower”* NCH 433

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we confess that we too might be like Thomas. As we are overwhelmed by the world’s grief, it’s natural for us to be cynical. It’s hard to believe that hope is possible when hope is hard to find.

THE THANKSGIVING

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CHORAL CALL TO PRAYER:

HEAR OUR PRAYER, O LORD D. WELPTON

PASTORAL 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

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.***

THE DEPARTURE

HYMN* *“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”* NCH 472

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Music for the Eclipse*

❖ END OF SERVICE ❖

*Please Stand If You Are Able

¹Worship Ways, UCC; Rev. Ellis Arnold

Music, Copyright permissions: CCLI #4799426 and SJMP #14586

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.**

But when we stop believing in hope, we also stop believing liberation can be possible. When we stop working to tear down injustice and discrimination, we stop others from experiencing the peace we have found in you. Forgive our unbelief, calm our fears, and help us be instruments of your peace. Amen.

A moment for personal reflection

Words of Assurance

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Chauncey Jane Scates & Ira James Wilkens

One: Friends in Christ . . .

Questions to the Candidate(s)

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciples, to follow in the way Jesus showed us, to resist oppression, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Candidate(s): **I promise, with the help of God.**

One: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the Church, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidate(s): **I promise, with the help of God.**

One: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of the First Congregational Church of St. Albans, as it serves the community and the world?

Candidate(s): **I promise, with the help of God.**

One: Do you, the members of First Congregational Church, offer your love, support, and guidance as they become a part of this congregation?

Congregation: **We promise, with the help of God.**

Deacon: Let us, the members of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of St. Albans Vermont, express our welcome and affirm our common ministry in Christ.

Congregation: **We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and our prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love, and be witnesses of our risen Savior.**

Deacon: As an affirmation of our common ministry in Jesus Christ, let us read together the covenant of this congregation:

All: **Acknowledging Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and relying for wisdom upon the teachings of the Bible and communion with God in prayer, we do now, in the sight of God, solemnly covenant and agree with each other to associate ourselves to be a church of Jesus Christ. We will endeavor to follow the example of Jesus and strive to do God's will in all things. We agreed to walk together and serve one another in Christian love, submitting ourselves to the orderly administration of the affairs of this church. And we promise to labor together for the coming of God's Kingdom of righteousness and peace and love through the whole earth.**

Deacon: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of St. Albans, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the covenant membership of the church.

Presentation of Membership Certificates

Closing Prayer

Deacon: Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the body of Christ. WE thank you for your people gathered as this church, and we rejoice in those who have joined as new members this morning. Together may we live in the Spirit, building up one another in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world as faithful disciples of our Friend and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

GREETING NEW MEMBERS

THE MESSAGE

Anthem *This is My Song* Lyrics by Lloyd Stone

Scripture Reading Acts 4:32-35 & John 20:19-31

Morning Reflection "Doubtful"

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