

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: 10am- 12pm, Tuesday-Friday 9am-2pm

Church Office Phone Number: 802-524-4555

Pastor Jessica's Office Hours: Friday, 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.

Deacons: Mary Bostwick, Sandy Cristman, Valerie Odrechowski, Jenny Parke, and Susan Powers, Hadley Shannon

Musicians: Mara Vijups, Stephen McLaughlin

Videographer: Greg Beeman

Memorial: A generous offering and flowers provided by Joan and Jack Hungerford in memory of Merrill and Mimi Hungerford.



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

DECEMBER 24, 2024

7PM

REV. JESSICA MOORE, PASTOR

BAILEY BROWN, MUSIC AND CHORAL DIRECTOR

STEPHAN CONRADY, ORGANIST

STEPHEN McLAUGHLIN, OFFICE MANAGER

27 CHURCH STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT 05478

802-524-4555

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WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

CENTERING WORDS:

Christ is born whenever human love appears in the ordinary lives of ordinary people. The child of Bethlehem is born whenever unexpected grace and kindness and joy break in.

~ Rev. John M. Buchanan

❖ BEGINNING OF SERVICE ❖**THE PREPARATION**

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

PRELUDE: *Music for Christmas*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENING PRAYER

ONE: *This night is one of profound mystery,*

ALL: a night for unusual sounds and sights in the heavens.

ONE: *This night is one of wonderful clarity,*

ALL: a night for the blessed event of our Savior's birth into this world.

ONE: *This night is one of far-reaching complexity,*

ALL: a night for strangers crowding into a stable and kings starting on a journey.

ONE: *This night is one of touching simplicity,*

ALL: a night for receiving a gift and cradling God's love in our hearts. We gather to worship on this best of all nights!

HYMN*

"What Child Is This, Who Laid to Rest" Pilgrim Hymnal 140

Joy To The World! The Lord Is Come

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King;

let every heart prepare him room

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!

Let men their songs employ,

while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,

repeat the sounding joy,

repeat the sounding joy,

repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace

and makes the nations prove

the glories of his righteousness

and wonders of his love,

and wonders of his love,

and wonders, wonders of his love.

❖ END OF SERVICE ❖

As you leave, we ask that you deposit your service candle and the holder in the basket provided. Thank you.

*PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE

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

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE: "New Beginnings in a Broken World"

ANTHEM *O Holy Night*

OFFERTORY

Welcome Home Initiative Rich Guzman

DOXOLOGY Old Hundredth

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God above, all heavenly hosts:

Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

SHARING THE LIGHT WITH THE WORLD

HYMN* ***"Silent Night, Holy Night"*** Pilgrim Hymnal 138

The Ushers will bring the light of Christ to those seated on the aisle. Please hold candles upright. Tip your unlit candle towards your neighbor's light.

(Please supervise children who are holding candles.)

BENEDICTION John 1:1-5, 14 The Light Shines in the Darkness

POSTLUDE

"Joy To The World! The Lord Is Come" Back Inside Cover
(Pilgrim Hymnal 130)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Boomhover Family

One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again?

Where do we start?

All: Let us begin with hope. Let us begin with peace. Let us begin with joy. Let us begin with love.

One: Yes, let us begin with love, for surely love knows your name. Today, in addition to the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, we light the Christ Candle. For surely God is in this place. Surely the Spirit is near. Surely love knows our name.

All: May we rest in that good news. Unto us a child is born. A light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. Glory to God in the highest heaven! Amen.

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

FIRST LESSON: *Messiah's Birth Foretold*

ISAIAH 9:2-7

Nancy Holland

FIRST CAROL ***"O Come, All Ye Faithful"*** Pilgrim Hymnal 132

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come and behold him, born the King of angels.

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

SECOND LESSON: *Gabriel Visits Mary*

LUKE 1:26-38

Valerie Odrechowski

SECOND CAROL **“Lo How A Rose”** (Pilgrim Hymnal 131)

***Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright, Amid the cold of winter
When half-gone was the night.***

***Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright She bore to men a Savior
When half-gone was the night.***

THIRD LESSON : Jesus is Born

LUKE 2:1-7

Alan Shannon

THIRD CAROL **“Away in a Manger”** (Pilgrim Hymnal 137)

***Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.***

***The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.***

FOURTH LESSON *Angels and Shepherds Adore Jesus*

LUKE 2:8-16

Sandy Cristman

FOURTH CAROL

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

(Pilgrim Hymnal 116)

***Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the
plains
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains***

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

***Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels
sing
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn
King.***

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

FIFTH LESSON : *The Magi Honor Jesus*

MATTHEW 2:1-12

Stephen McLaughlin

FIFTH CAROL **“We Three Kings of Orient Are”**

(Pilgrim Hymnal 143)

***We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder
star.***

***O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty
bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect
light.***

***Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies.***

***O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty
bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect
light.***