

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 - Friday 9am-2pm

Church Office Phone Number: 802-524-4555

info@firstcongregationalstalbans.org

Pastor Jessica's Office Hours: Friday 9:30am - Noon

Email: pastorjessica@firstcongregationalstalbans.org

Pastor Jessica takes her Sabbath on Mondays.

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: Louise Haynes

Acolytes: Mykala Pryor, Ada Sanders, and Kaia Newton



"WE WELCOME YOU AND SERVE ALL THROUGH FAITH."

WORSHIP WITH US:

MARCH 23, 2025

10 AM

REV. JESSICA MOORE, PASTOR

BAILEY BROWN, CHOIR & MUSIC DIRECTOR

STEPHAN CONRADY, ORGANIST

STEPHEN McLAUGHLIN, OFFICE MANAGER

27 CHURCH STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT 05478

802-524-4555

WWW.FIRSTCONGREGATIONALSTALBANS.ORG

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

CENTERING WORDS:

Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else.

— Fred Rogers

THE PREPARATION

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

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNG CALL TO WORSHIP Bless the Lord, My Soul (Taizé)

***Bless the Lord, my soul
and Bless God's Holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul
who leads me into life.***

MORNING PRAYER¹ (Unison)

Worship is a place to rest.

We breathe deeply here. We still our aching bones. We sit in the quiet. We surround ourselves with music.

Worship is a place to rest.

Worship is a place to grow.

We listen for God's word. We invite it to challenge us. We lean in with curiosity. We ask questions.

Worship is a place to grow.

So come into this space. Come rest and grow here. For where two or more are gathered, God is always there. Let us worship our gracious God.

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

¹A SANCTIFIED ARTS

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Walking the Walk Nugget: This Lent FCC member, psychologist, and communication expert, Doug Klette will be giving us communication “Nuggets”—practical steps to help us better love our neighbor.

AVOIDING POWER STRUGGLES

Most Christians buy into notion of God’s unconditional love. Still, we are often at a loss of how to conduct God’s word, especially when confronted with challenging situations.

Much interpersonal tension exists in both the public and private sectors: red vs blue politics, relationship tension between partners, tension between workers and management, and child rearing are only a few examples. There is no shortage of disagreement that manifests itself in open arguments or sullen resentment.

Psychologists call this condition, getting caught in a **POWER STRUGGLE**, where frustration and anger multiply in such a way that no one wins. It does not have to be this way. There is much one can do to in an effort to prevent getting caught up in the fight.

Believe it or not, a power struggle is a perfect example of cooperation. It takes two people (or groups) willing to do battle (physical or emotional). You can never control what the other person brings to you, but God gives us the **FREE WILL** to decide how we will choose to respond!

So, what are a few action steps that can be helpful:

1. Learn to see the Power Struggle coming. Just because you are being invited into a conflict does not mean you must accept the **INVITATION**.
2. Recognize that anger is a **SECONDARY EMOTION**, which often covers up **SADNESS** and **FEAR**. (Though they are yelling at you, often you aren’t the problem at all!)
3. **PEOPLE IN PAIN** are hungry to be understood. Avoiding the **ROADBLOCKS** and applying **REFLECTIVE LISTENING** can be quite powerful in promoting respectful dialogue instead of hate filled argument. Once an angry person feels understood and respected miracles can happen!

In truth, **DEFUSING** a power struggle is difficult work (the kind of work we practice done in Walk the Walk). Still, no matter how hard it gets, remember, you are offering God’s Unconditional Love.

HYMN*

In the Bulb There Is a Flower NCH 433

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION¹ (LITANY)

ONE: Holy God, There are days when we fail to rest.

ALL: We stretch ourselves too thin. We say “yes” to every invitation. We run a million miles a minute. We ignore your command to rest.

ONE: There are also days when we fail to act.

ALL: We wait for someone else. We take the easy road. We find excuses and justify our inaction.

ONE: God, forgive our imbalance.

ALL: Remind us that birds rest, and they also fly. Show us how to do the same. Amen.

PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE MESSAGE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

ANTHEM *Da Pachem, Domine* by Melchoir Franck

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 13:6-9

CONTEMPORARY READING *Slow Growth* Sarah Speed

MORNING REFLECTION

Compost

HYMN*

Great Is Your Faithfulness NCH 423

THE THANKSGIVING

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CHORAL CALL TO PRAYER

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord

D. Welpton

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

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

Go Now in Peace

***Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will be with you each hour of every day***

***Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true
Know he will guide you in all you do.***

***Go now in love, and show you believe
Reach out to others so all the world can see***

***God will be there, watching from above
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.***

Amen. Amen. Amen

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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

- Thank You, Everyone Who Helps make this Church a place of Welcome!

April 3

6:30-8:00PM

Migrant Justice Training in the FCC Sanctuary more details to come.

Please invite your friends but we ask that you do **not** share this event on social media.

Zoom Bible Study: Companionship on the Road

Wednesdays 7:00-8:00pm

March 26

Luke 15:1-7

Contact Pastor Jessica for the link

Online Giving:

Wi-Fi:

Fellowship Hall
fellowship123

