

*Welcoming All.
Seeking Justice.
Finding God.*

38 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont



*An Open and Affirming
Congregation of the*

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



firstchurchburlington.org

December 19, 2021

10 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Advent (Love)

*During the four weeks of Advent, the seasonal color in the Church is blue
– deep blue like the color of the waters of creation, the sky just before dawn,
the time between night and day, between already and not yet.*

*As one year closes and another begins, this blue is a reminder
to reflect upon the already and not yet of our own lives:
what has been, and what could be.*

*In this special space and time we invite you to move a little more quietly,
to speak a little more softly – we are listening for God!*

PRELUDE

Awake! Hear the Call

Marcel Dupre

In Thee is Joy

The Holy Child Shall Be My Consolation

Abide with Us

Joel Ramseyer, organ

WORDS OF WELCOME

The Rev. Elissa Johnk

*Remote worshipers are invited to submit prayer requests via YouTube chat –
prayer requests received prior to the sermon will be shared during “Prayers of the People.”*

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liz Royer

One: We are seeking—
deeper faith, a place to belong,
the feeling that God is here in this room.

All: **We are seeking—
joy that overflows, the movement of the Spirit,
a hand to hold, when alone in the dark.**

One: We are seeking—
the freedom to be, the courage to love,
the conviction to act in the face of injustice.

All: We are seeking, but here in this space, we are found.

One: Take a deep breath. This is your sanctuary.

All: God is here. We are found.

One: Let us pray:

***HYMN** *Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn* #107 NCH, Vv 2-4

FIRST GOSPEL READING Luke 1:39-45 Bobbi Holzel

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE The Remick family
Hilah Clarke, Louise Brewster, Carol Schoonmaker

WORD OF GOD FOR (SM) ALL AGES Hilah Clarke

ORDER FOR THE RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

(Scroll down for new member bios)

Friends, these people have found nurture and support in the midst of this family of Christ. Through study and prayer, they have been led to join in covenant with us, for service to Christ and to the world.

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

QUESTIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

Before you stand God's people, God's gift to you, as you are to them. Will you welcome them with open hearts? Will you confirm the promises made to them at the time of baptism, offering them the love and support of the Christian church? And will you welcome the new challenges, questions, gifts and insights they bring, as together we grow in faith?

We will, with the help of God.

WELCOME AND RECEPTION

Deacon: Let us, the members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Burlington, United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ. Since with them we are changed in body, we reunite ourselves by reciting our church's historic covenant together:

(UNISON) We covenant with the Lord and with one another to respond to God's call that we be people of God in the name of Jesus Christ. We take this to be our Church, promising to walk with our fellow members in faithfulness and Christian

love. We accept as our responsibility the worship of God, the fellowship of this community, and the witness of our church. We claim as our mission the promotion of justice, human dignity and peace, and participation in meeting the unfolding needs of God's people. We bind ourselves to follow the leadings of God's spirit as God reveals them to us.

Deacon: On behalf of this congregation, here are certificates of membership.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

SPECIAL MUSIC *Twas in the Moon of Wintertime* Arr. C Moglebust
Austin Chimers Handbell Choir, Simon and Asa Jorgenson, *percussion*

SECOND GOSPEL READING Luke 1:46-55

SERMON

***HYMN OF THANKSGIVING** *We Hail You God's Anointed* #104 NCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SILENT PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *In the Bleak Midwinter* Harold Drake
Cameron Brownell, *soloist*

During this time, you are invited to offer your monetary gifts.

You can give online using this link

which is also under the video title on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/fccbongiving>

or by texting FCCBUCC to 73256

or mail a check payable to:

First Congregational Church at 38 South Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

***DOXOLOGY**

#780 NCH

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***CLOSING HYMN** *Of the Parent's Heart Begotten* #118 NCH Vv 1, 3-4

***BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION**

CHORAL BENEDICTION *Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light* J.S. Bach

POSTLUDE *Noel-Gabor* Lehotka

Those who are observing physical distancing are encouraged to leave immediately following the benediction. Those who are not are encouraged to stay for a portion of the postlude to facilitate their departure.

**Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit.*

FELLOWSHIP ON ZOOM: All worshipping remotely are invited to a virtual time in fellowship – on Zoom – following worship. The link is in the YouTube description for this morning's live stream and on the front page of the First Church website: www.firstchurchburlington.org

NOTES ON TODAY'S SERVICE:

Many thanks to all our musicians who are helping out while we wait for our new Music Director, Amy Shortt to arrive in mid-February!

JOINING TODAY: Tim, Paul and Diane, and Justin participated in "First Church 101" this fall with the Rev. Elissa Johnk and Hannah Sachs, Director of Creative Ministries. Welcome to First Church Tim, Paul, Dianne, and Justin!



Tim Berger: Currently a special educator for the Winooski School District, I retired from a teaching career in special education and moved to Vermont from Indiana with my wife Emy in July 2021. My late father was my Pastor at St. Lucas Lutheran Church (Toledo, OH). He and my mom taught me about Jesus as I grew up. On July 11, 1993, I became Born Again – as I surrendered my trust to The Lord. But I strayed a bit from my devotion to Christ until Nov. 29, 2009, when the Lord showed me a miracle. I put that sin behind me, and although I am still a human, with faults, I no longer depend on that sinful way. I have enjoyed playing the trumpet in worship and am looking forward to joining First Church.



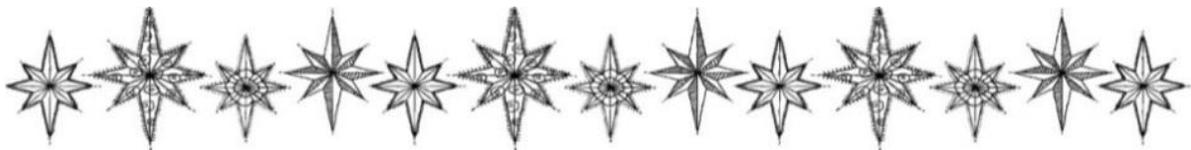
Paul Bloomhardt: I grew up in Burlington, attended Edmunds Jr. High and Burlington High School and was actually confirmed as a member of First Congregational Church in 1965! After college I spent 25 years as a TV producer in Pittsburgh and Boston, returning to Vermont in 1994, where I worked in media and at Johnson State College. Since retiring in 2013 I have pursued a hobby of international travel, visiting over 25 countries before Covid hit. I live in Shelburne and have two adult children, one in Boston and one in Washington, DC. I am looking forward to rejoining the First Church congregation.



Dianne Griffiths: With family roots in Vermont, I moved here from Connecticut in January 2020 after retiring from an engineering career in energy efficiency and sustainability. I enjoy outdoor activities, sports, and following my two adult children.



Justin Hudson: I grew up in Waterbury, Vermont with a love of the outdoors and spending time with family and friends, but most of all a love of books and reading. I attended the Waterbury Congregational Church and am looking forward to becoming a member of First Congregational Church to further my faith, fellowship, and service.



THE POINSETTIA AND MISSION OFFERING

Our Poinsettia & Mission Offering provides funds to decorate the Sanctuary and to a mission selected by our Outreach Team. The Mission Offering is given this year to the New Alpha Missionary Baptist Church to support their time of transition following the unexpected, tragic death of their Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Christopher Von Cockrell.

POINSETTIAS DECORATING THE CHURCH WERE GIVEN

by Theresa Mazza-Anthony

A DONATION WAS MADE

by the Worden Family

DONATIONS WERE MADE IN HONOR OF

Susan Saunders by the Carter Family · In gratitude for the leadership of this church, present and past by Elliot Douglas & Nancy McClellan · Our grandchildren by Cyndy and Tony Hall · My parents, Kay and Richard Ryder by Allison Ryder

DONATIONS WERE MADE IN MEMORY OF

Linda Backus and Barbara Backus McCorkle by Robert Backus · George Passage by his sisters, Bev & Liz · Rose Bloomhardt by Paul Bloomhardt · In loving Memory of Janet Brown-Wolff by The Brown Family · Margaret and Robert Shaw by the Carter Family · Jean Bing by Susan Ellwood · Ronald Carter by his Family · Charles and Kathleen Church Sr; Ralph and Analda Griswold by Charlie Church Jr. and Pat Heise · Our parents by Carl and Carlanne Herzog · Our parents by Mary & Steve Hyde · Rev. Bob Lee by Donna Lee · Ashley S. Boyd by Bill & Faith Neil · Our parents, Mary & George Passage Sr. by Beverly Peronace & Elizabeth Miles · Pat Phillips by Bob Phillips & Family · Lora Gray by Bob Phillips & Family · Arlene; Josephine & Fred; Cynthia & Bill by Michael & Lucy Samara · Marjorie and Frederick Smith & Virginia and James Mellencamp by The Amy Mellencamp and Charlie Smith Family · Betty, Oatman, Stephen, Douglas, and Jessica Saunders by Susan Saunders · Nancy & David Whitaker by Bethany Whitaker · Rev. Bob Lee by Judy and Bill Whitman

The wreaths that decorate the front doors of our Sanctuary were given:

"In honor of singers past and present."

WELCOME VISITORS!

Welcome to First Congregational Church in Burlington. Our faith is over 2,000 years old, but our thinking is not! First Church opens its doors to the Greater Burlington area, to seekers, to tourists from near and far, to those in need, to an array of building users, and to a congregation (of members, friends, and family—both curious and the committed) who call our faith community their church home.

We celebrate the sacred worth of all persons as unique individuals made in the image of God. Whatever your age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, or physical, cognitive, or emotional ability, we invite you to find a safe and nurturing spiritual home with us. All are welcome to participate, fully and without reservation, in the life, leadership, ministry and mission of this church as we seek to grow together in a community of faith.

The First Congregational Church of Burlington is an Open & Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ. This means everyone – **everyone** – is welcome. Including YOU!

Staff Directory

Rev. Elissa Johnk, *Lead Minister*

Hannah Sachs, *Director of Creative Ministries*

Caroline Catlin, *Office & Nursery Administrator*
Lucy Samara, *Communications Coordinator*
Max Johnson, *A/V Coordinator*
Jennifer Coleman, *Bell Choir Director*
Laura Elder-Connors, *Children's Choir Director*
Derik Breen, *Building & Grounds Staff*

and *Youth Ministries*
Hilah Clarke, *Faith Formation Director*
Ana Ruesink, *Youth Choir Director*
Ann Vivian, *Fall Music Coordinator*
Ian Rock-Jones, *Security Staff*

Baki Nelson, *Usher* • Jennifer Jorgenson, Dawn Plante, and
Patty Thomas, *Welcomers* • Lou Daniel Rochford, *Digital Usher*

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