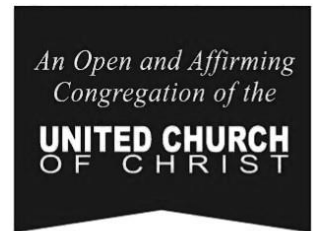




38 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont



firstchurchburlington.org

April 16, 2023
First Sunday of Easter

*"As I see it, the primary religious task these days is to try to think straight...
You can't think straight with a heart full of fear, for fear seeks safety, not truth.
If your heart's a stone, you can't have decent thoughts—
either about personal relations or about international ones.
A heart full of love, on the other hand, has a limbering effect on the mind."
– Rev. William Sloane Coffin*

PRELUDE

O Worship the Lord

arr. Hamilton

*Online worshipers (live stream) are invited to greet the congregation
by writing your name in the YouTube chat.*

*Please also submit any prayer requests via the YouTube chat –
prayer requests received prior to the sermon will be shared during "Prayers of the People."*

WORDS OF WELCOME

The Rev. Elissa Johnk

***CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Louise Brewster

by Kenneth Patton/Marianne Williamson, adapted

One: Let us reverence Life with our eyes, ears and fingertips.

All: Let us love the world through heart and mind and body.

One: We feed our eyes upon the mystery in the faces of our sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers, and children everywhere.

All: Let us be open to our full and emerging humanity.

One: We gather, not simply in bowing down, and not with closed eyes and stopped ears, but with the opening of all windows of our beings, with the full outstretching of our spirits.

All: Let us gather in meditation and singing, as those who have fallen in love with life.

One: We are born to make manifest the glory of the Sacred that is within us.

All: It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

One: As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

All: As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence liberates others.

One: Holiest God, may it be so, in this hour and beyond.

All: Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

The Day of Resurrection

#245 NCH

PASSING OF THE PEACE

GOSPEL READING

John 20: 19-31

Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." Then he showed them his hands and side. The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Jesus repeated his greeting: "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you." Then he took a deep

breath and breathed into them. "Receive the Holy Spirit," he said. "If you forgive someone's sins, they're gone for good. If you don't forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?"

But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We saw the Master." But he said, "Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won't believe it."

Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you."

Then he focused his attention on Thomas. "Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don't be unbelieving. Believe."

Thomas said, "My Master! My God!"

Jesus said, "So, you believe because you've seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing."

Jesus provided far more God-revealing signs than are written down in this book. These are written down so you will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and in the act of believing, have real and eternal life in the way he personally revealed it.

WORD OF GOD FOR (SM)ALL AGES

Hilah Clarke

READING

People in the Dark Always See, by Yehuda Amichai

SERMON

***HYMN OF THANKSGIVING**

These Things Did Thomas Count

#254 NCH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

This week's "Celebrations & Prayer's" list is available for you on the front page of our website - <https://firstchurchburlington.org/> - and among the links under the title of the YouTube live stream throughout this morning's live stream of the worship service.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF BLESSING

THE 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.**

MUSICAL MEDITATION

CALL TO THE OFFERING & OFFERTORY

*You are invited to offer monetary gifts
online using this link: <https://bit.ly/fccbonlinegiving>
(also under the video title on YouTube)
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**

Now the Green Blade Rises

#238 NCH

***BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

We Shall Go Out with Joy

arr. Sanz

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

Virtual Fellowship: Worship is followed by Fellowship at First Church – and remotely on [Zoom](#) - the link is: <https://bit.ly/fellowshipzoom> or <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82411411970>
Or join by phone - 1 646 876 9923 Meeting ID: 824 1141 1970

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!

The flowers on the pulpit this morning are given by Ann Vivian and Doug Viehmann, with love and thanksgiving, in memory of our mothers Elaine and Florence, and their birthdays this week.

Staff Directory

Elissa Johnk, *Lead Minister*

Caroline Catlin, *Office & Nursery Administrator*

Lucy Samara, *Communications Coordinator*

Jennifer Coleman, *Bell Choir Director*

Laura Elder-Connors, *Children's Choir Director*

Derik Breen, *Building & Grounds*

Amy Shortt, *Director of Music*

Hilah Clarke, *Faith Formation Director*

Max Johnson, *A/V Coordinator*

Jason Vanderlaan, *Youth Ministries*

Ian Rock-Jones, *Security Staff*

Jesse O'Gorman, *Security Staff*

Paul Hobbs, *Head Usher*

Jennifer Jorgenson and Amy Mellencamp, *Welcomers*

Lou Rochford, *Digital Usher*

www.firstchurchburlington.org info@firstchurchburlington.org 802.862.5010

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