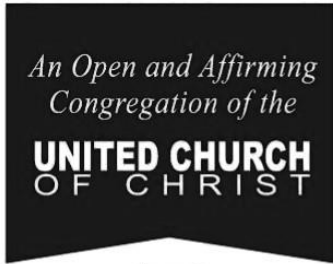




38 South Winooski Avenue  
Burlington, Vermont



firstchurchburlington.org

**June 18, 2023**

*Remembering the day that news of emancipation reached the last outpost of enslaved people in Texas, Juneteenth acknowledges God's sacred people of African descent. Sacred acknowledgment is recognition of birthplace—the cradle of civilization on the continent of Africa. Sacred acknowledgement is celebration of cultural expressions as first peoples, free people, multilingual, multiethnic, and multi-talented artisans, scientists, creators, builders, navigators, writers, thinkers, and orators. Sacred acknowledgement is remembering and honoring the generations of untold stories that are waiting to be revealed within these sacred bodies.*

*Amidst growing efforts to suppress the truths of our history, we affirm the celebration of Juneteenth and African and African American descendants — geniuses of spoken word and cultural oral traditions—revealing hidden histories so we might take up our roles in the unfolding story of God's liberating love.*

*– UCC Juneteenth resources*

**PRELUDE**

*B.B.'s Boogie*  
Ella Baker

*Bill Boyd*

*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**

Lou Rochford

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP AND INVOCATION**

The Baker Niles family

*From UCC and UMC Juneteenth resources*

**One:** The Lord is in this [...] journey or who you are in the Kindom of God. We are here to worship!

**Many: Hallelujah!**

**One:** Let us remember what God has done for the oppressed.

**Many: Let us not neglect to teach our children the greatness of God.**

One: Let us not forget our past and those who have gone before us.  
**Many: We remember our ancestors and our past; we name our future.**  
One: We are the kingdom of God!  
**All: Hallelujah!**  
One: Let us pray [...] Let all God's people shout "Victory!"  
**Many: Over Oppression!**  
One: Shout "Victory"  
**Many: Over Injustice!**  
One: Through Jesus the Christ,  
**Many: Working in us all.**  
**All: Amen.**

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*Lift Every Voice and Sing*

#593 NCH

**READING**

*A Juneteenth Reflection on "Lift Every Voice and Sing"*

Tony Hall & Susan Saunders

1 Using text adapted from "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938).

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**A LITANY ADAPTATION OF "LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"**

Celebration rises, up from the deep places,  
finding voice in the light and air no longer denied.

Lift every voice and sing, sing till earth and heaven ring,  
ring with the harmonies of liberty.

Celebration rises, not blind to the suffering, not blind to the sorrow.

Celebration comes at a cost.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
yet with a steady beat have not our weary feet  
come to the place for which our parents sighed.

Celebration rises, remembering the way we have come,  
the paths taken that have brought us here now to this place and time of celebration.

Celebration rises, up and up, full of remembering.

Remembering the ones led to freedom by Harriet;  
Remembering lives and freedom stolen

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;  
we have come treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
out from the gloomy past till now we stand at last where the white gleam

of our bright star is cast.  
Celebration rises, recognizing what has been done and left undone,  
knowing there is still and yet much to do, so much further to go.  
Celebration rises, naming the victories, recognizing the challenges yet ahead.  
Celebration rises on voices offering unfinished praise.  
Lest our feet stray from the places,  
our God where we met thee;  
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee;  
Celebration rises, resisting illusions,  
to be embraced by the real and abiding presence of God who breaks our chains,  
and sets us free for freedom, in power and love and joy.  
God of our weary years, God of our silent tears  
thou who hast brought us thus far on our way;  
thou who has by thy might led us into the light,  
keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Celebration rises, with the power of healing wings and promise to endure.  
Celebration rises, celebrating that by God's grace,  
I am because You are, You are because I am;  
Celebrating that the fullness of my humanity does not diminish yours  
and the fullness of your humanity does not diminish mine.  
Shadowed beneath thy hand may we forever stand, true to our God,  
true to our native land.  
True to who we are, True to who we have been and who we are becoming,  
thanks be to God.

**TIME OF UNBURDENING AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Rev. Elissa Johnk

SANKOFA The West African spiritual proverb and teaching reminds us to "Go back and fetch it". Taking hold of our past, our history in such a way that it becomes nourishment and guidance for journeying into our future.

God, we acknowledge you as our source, our Creator, the giver of Life.

2 Pouring: we acknowledge our ancestors, the great cloud of witnesses now one with God.

3 Pouring: we acknowledge the generations that fought died trying to lead us to freedom, from slavery persecution, Jim Crow laws, inequitable access to rights and resources in this society .

4 Pouring: to acknowledge, the generations who fought against that freedom, many from within your holy church.

5 pouring: those who are challenging us, leading us in a struggle for freedom even now. We name them with our voices and in our hearts as we pour thanking God.

- Justice movements for migrants, for Black liberation and equity, for trans and LGBTQ youth

Sixth Pouring: to acknowledge our children and our children's children. The generations whose hope and promise entrusted to us by the Grace of God.

We pour in thanksgiving and in Hope.

Seventh Pouring: May we be part of that hope. May we shed from our very skin the need for security, normalcy that keeps others bound.

Last: May we, with everything we do, acknowledge God our Source, Our redeemer Jesus the Christ, Our Sustainer and Counsel and Comforter the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Faith Neil

**WORD OF GOD FOR SM(ALL) AGES**

Hilah Clarke

*Children of all ages are always welcome in worship, but they are also welcome to attend Church School, directly following this portion of the service.*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Matthew 9:35 – 10:8

Bobbi Holzel

**REFLECTION**

Kelsy Bryson & Donal Dugan

Cyndy Hall, *Moderator*

**\*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING**

*Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*

#454 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**

Loving and Merciful God,  
our thoughts and prayers today are turned toward our fathers.

For those whose fathers have increased the joy in their families' lives,  
we give You thanks.

For those good men who sustain and support us in our living,

who love us no matter what,  
we give You thanks.

For those whose fathers have been a source of hurt and pain,  
may their wounds be healed  
and may they find in You, in us, in others,  
the nurturing love that is needed for their well-being.  
We also pray that these fathers find forgiveness.

For those fathers who are separated from their children,  
give them the insight and perseverance  
to parent in whatever ways are open to them.  
Give them the courage to make the decisions  
that allow their children to thrive.

For those fathers whose relationships with their children  
have been difficult or disappointing, we pray.  
We pray, too, for those fathers who have lost a child.  
We turn to You, most holy God, for consolation  
where consolation seems impossible.  
For single fathers who struggle to be both parents to their children,  
may they find the strength and wisdom for their task.

For those who have recently lost  
or who are facing the imminent loss of their fathers,  
may they find comfort in the love  
that their fathers have given them.

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

*Ode to Joy*  
Abby Baker

*Beethoven*

*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**

#562 NCH V3

*Take what-ev-er I can of-fer, gifts that I have yet to find,  
skills that I am slow to sharp-en, tal-ents of the hand and mind,  
things made beau-ti-ful for oth-ers in the place where I must be:  
take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

*Wade in the Water*

**\*BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

*Adoration*

*Florence Price*

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

**NOTES ON TODAY'S SERVICE**

**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

Elissa Johnk, *Lead Minister*

Caroline Catlin, *Office & Nursery Administrator*

Amy Shortt, *Director of Music*

Hilah Clarke, *Faith Formation Director*

Lucy Samara, *Communications Coordinator*  
Jennifer Coleman, *Bell Choir Director*  
Laura Elder-Connors, *Children's Choir Director*  
Derik Breen, *Building & Grounds*

Max Johnson, *A/V Coordinator*  
Jason Vanderlaan, *Youth Ministries*  
Jesse O'Gorman, *Security Staff*  
Noah Sullivan, *Security Staff*

Paul Hobbs, *Head Usher*  
Dawn Plante and Sara Wilcoxson, *Welcomer*  
Lou Rochford, *Digital Usher*

 [www.firstchurchburlington.org](http://www.firstchurchburlington.org)  [info@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:info@firstchurchburlington.org)  802.862.5010

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