



December 1, 2024

The first Sunday in Advent marks the first Sunday in the church calendar year. The color of Advent is deep blue, like the sky just before dawn, the time between night and day, between already and not yet. So, 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.

Today, the first Sunday of the month, is a Communion Sunday. All ages, every person, is welcome to the Communion Table at First Congregational Church. Before worship, gather a candle and elements to participate in Communion – any form of juice and bread that you have readily available.

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 – to be shared during “Prayers of the People.”

PRELUDE Marcy Greenfield

CALL TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF INVOCATION The Hobbs’ Family

Inspired by Isaiah 43:1-4 and Luke 1:26-29

One: God says,

All: “Do not be afraid.”

One: God says,

All: “I will be with you.”

One: God says,

All: “You are precious and honored in my sight.”

One: At the beginning of this season,

All: at the start of this week,

One: at the top of this hour,

All: may we wrap ourselves in these words.

May we begin again.

One: Let us worship the Holy God! Let us pray:

***OPENING HYMN** *My Heart Sings Out With Joyful Praise* #106 NCH

WORDS OF WELCOME Ava Bilton

REFLECTION ON HOPE AND LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE The Hobbs’ Family

HEBREW BIBLE READING Isaiah 43:1-7 Caroline Crawford

***PASSING THE PEACE**

WORD OF GOD FOR (SM)ALL AGES

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 • SILENT PRAYER • 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.

***HYMN OF THANKSGIVING** *In Case No One Ever Told You* See Insert

CALL TO THE OFFERING

***OFFERTORY** *O Come Redeemer of the Earth* B. L. Hanson

The Sanctuary Choir

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

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

***SONG OF PRAISE**

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Praise God for gifts of hope and peace, for gifts of joy and love.

Praise God for sending Christ to dwell on earth, Emmanuel.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 1:26-38

SERMON

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

We believe this is God's table, not ours, so all are welcome at this table, regardless of age or faith. The cup is unfermented grape juice, and gluten-free bread is available.

***HYMN OF PREPARATION** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Lundblad adapt.

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and with thy captive people dwell;
who mourn in lonely exile here, Until the Child of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go. *Refrain*

INVITATION • WORDS OF INSTITUTION • PRAYER OF BLESSING

Please join in singing the refrain

SUNG THANKSGIVING

O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer / our spirits by your ad-vent here;
Love stir with-in the wo-omb of night, / and death's own shadows put to flight.
Refrain.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS AND PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

CLOSING VERSE

O come, Desire of nations, bind / all peoples in one heart and mind;
Make envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heavenly peace.
Refrain.

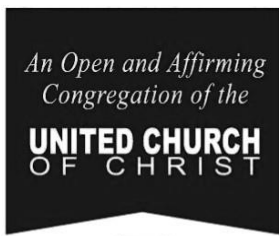
***BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

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



38 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont



firstchurchburlington.org

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* Ava Bilton, *Director of Congregational Life*
Hilah Clarke, *Faith Formation Director* Lucy Samara, *Communications Coordinator*
Will Gunger, *Office Admin. & Youth Ministry Leader* In Search, *Director of Music*
Caroline Catlin, *Early Childhood Coordinator* Jesse O'Gorman, *Security Staff*
Grace Raines, *Elementary Ministries Coordinator* Derik Breen, *Building & Grounds*
Laura Elder-Connors, *Children's Choir Director* Jennifer Coleman, *Bell Choir Director*

Baki Nelson and Alanabeth Cadence, *Ushers*

Lou Rochford, *Digital Usher*

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