

First Congregational Church  
Burlington, VT UCC

# LOVE *thy* NEIGHBOR



*HOW DO WE DO JUSTICE, LOVE MERCY, AND  
WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER?*

**JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> 10AM**

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# WELCOME

## WE MEAN IT.

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 those in need, to an array of building users, and to a congregation of members, friends, and family—both the 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. That means YOU!

## VISITING?

**RESTROOMS** are located out the front left exit of the sanctuary, right down the hallway, and then on your left.

**KID BAGS + WIGGLE SEATS** are available at the front and rear of the sanctuary.

**HEARING ASSISTANCE** devices are available at the rear of the sanctuary. Ushers can assist you.

**CONNECT** with us by filling out a welcome card (in the pew) and dropping it in the offering plate.

## LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

**You've probably heard about the greatest commandment** - love the Lord thy God, and love thy neighbor as thyself - but in time when our society feels more divided than ever, what does that really mean for us as followers of Jesus?

**Who is our neighbor? What does it mean to love them? What does that love look like in action?**

In this five-week sermon series, we'll explore what it means to love our neighbor, *really*.

As Rev. Marcia McFee says, "the Golden Rule in scripture challenges us to engage in conversation and seek to create whatever common good we can with our relatives, friends, and neighbors who we might consider to be on the "other side". As we attempt to come together, the idea is not that we are obliterating either one or trying to change each other, but rather we discover the beauty that can be created when we work together to make the world a better place."

**What does it look like to have these conversations with kids?** From 11:30 am - 12:30 pm in the Dining Room, Dir. of Faith Formation, Hilah Clarke is leading a seminar on how to talk with kids about people experiencing challenges with housing and addiction. Even if you don't have children, all are welcome to learn how to develop empathy through what can be challenging conversations.

# SERVE. GROW. CONNECT.

*Call Sunday &  
Ecclesiastical  
Council*  
For Ava Bilton



## *Call Sunday and Congregational Meeting*

TODAY, Ava Bilton will have her Ecclesiastical Council (EC), the final step in the ordination process. As such, we finally get to call her into ordained ministry here at First Church! Ava is preaching in worship, to be followed by a congregational meeting and vote. After, you are encouraged to head down to the New Haven Church, UCC to support her at her EC, as the wider church gathers to recognize her call! Contact Lucy Samara about carpooling.

## *Make A Joyful Noise to God*

In conjunction with the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival, there will be a special worship on **Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>** featuring the Onion River Jazz band as well as our Sanctuary Choir and Austin Handbell choir. **Be sure to note the earlier time, music begins as 9:00 am, worship at 9:30 am.** All are welcome to an ice cream social on the lawn immediately following the service.

## *One Great Hour of Sharing - Be the Light*

Our Outreach Team invites your donation to One Great Hour of Sharing. This annual UCC offering empowers both emergency responses and development work globally. Learn more at [ucc.org](https://ucc.org), and give to OGHS online at <https://bit.ly/givefccbonline> - selecting the OGHS option or give by check to: First Congregational Church, Memo: OGHS.

One Great Hour of Sharing



June 8, 2025 at First Church

## *Who Is Our Neighbor?*

A prayer walk invites you to walk through a neighborhood with intentionality and care - looking for how God is moving in this community. In an effort to get to know our neighbors so we can better serve them, the Vitality Team invites you to a central Burlington prayer walk on **Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> 1:30-3:30**. Meet at the church! All you need is sneakers, sunscreen, and an open heart and mind.

*Prayer Walk*

## *First Church on the Waterfront this Summer!*

**Worship + Sailing** at the Community Sailing Center on June 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9:30-12:30. Worship followed by sailing, a community cookout, games, artistic activities, and more! **Dragonheart Race** paddling with the First Church Team on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. A great way to build community in and out of the church!

**Fellowship Breakfast** down on the waterfront the third Tuesday of June, July, and August at 7:30 AM.

*SAIL INTO  
SUMMER*

# GET INVOLVED

**CHILDREN AND KIDS PROGRAMMING** is available every Sunday during worship led by our exceptional staff of trained educators and volunteers. Questions? Email Director of Faith Formation, Hilah Clarke, [hclarke@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:hclarke@firstchurchburlington.org).

**YOUTH GROUP** is open to students in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade every Wednesday evening from 6-8pm in collaboration with College Street Congregational Church, UCC. Students share a meal, play games, and engage in discussions led by Youth Ministry Leader, Will Gunger. Questions? Email Will, [youthministry@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:youthministry@firstchurchburlington.org).

**CHOIR AND ENSEMBLE** opportunities are open for all ages through our children's, youth, and adult choirs as well as with our special ensembles. If you sing or play an instrument and want to get connected, email Choral Director, Becky Millard, [bmillard@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:bmillard@firstchurchburlington.org).

**GOOD NEIGHBOR CREW** helps make sure the church grounds and our surrounding neighborhood are kept clean, tidy, and safe for all to enjoy. Questions? Email Office Administrator, Will Gunger, [office@firstchurchburlington.org](mailto:office@firstchurchburlington.org).

**SILENT VIGIL FOR RACIAL JUSTICE** is THIS Sunday, June 1 from 11:30 to noon on the First Church north front yard. Signs supporting racial justice are available – pick one up in the Church Library (across from the office) after worship. **DONATIONS FOR ELMWOOD COMMUNITY SHELTER** of individually packaged snacks are invited in conjunction with the Silent Vigil. The donation box for the snacks is in the First Church Library (across from the Church Office).

**SUMMER WORSHIP** will move to 9:00 am beginning June 15<sup>th</sup>! We'll beat the heat and worship together in the sanctuary at 9:00 am throughout the summer months.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING WARNING** In accordance with Articles VII, VIII and X, Sections 3, 4 and 5, of the Bylaws of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Burlington, Vermont a Special Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday June 1, 2025, immediately after the 10:00 am worship, to consider a motion from the Trustees to call Ava Bilton to serve First Congregational Church as an ordained minister. -Karen Bushey, *Clerk*

## CHURCH STAFF

Elissa Johnk, *Lead Minister*  
Hilah Clarke, *Faith Formation Director*  
Lucy Samara, *Communications Coordinator*  
Will Gunger, *Office Admin & Youth Ministry Leader*  
Caroline Catlin, *Early Childhood Coordinator*  
Grace Raines, *Elementary Ministries Coordinator*  
Tyler Warren & Michelle Mraz, *Security Staff*  
Derik Breen, *Building & Grounds*

Ava Bilton, *Director of Congregational Life*  
Jeff Bryant, *Ensemble Director*  
Becky Millard, *Choral Director*  
Michael Dyke, *A/V Coordinator*  
Jennifer Coleman, *Bell Choir Director*  
Laura Elder-Connors, *Children's Choir Director*

*Ushers for today's service are Baki Nelson and Matt Bushey  
Lou Rochford is Digital Usher and Slide Creator*