First Congregational Church of Berlin
Berlin Corners, Vermont
An inclusive, open & affirming church
Mary Bonhag, Guest Leader
Christopher McWilliams, Music Director

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

November 15, 2026



15th century window from Mulbarton Church, Norfolk, England

The one who had received the one talent dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Matthew 25:18

WE GATHER TOGETHER

RINGING OF THE BELL / LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

PRELUDE *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la Solitude* (excerpt) by Franz Liszt

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT *Spirit of the Living God* by Daniel Iverson **FCCB Choir**

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive) by Rev. Leslie Penrose
One: At God's table of justice, everyone has a place and none are turned away.
All: Here strangers are welcomed as friends, the poor sit alongside the rich, and the upside-down kin-dom of God is revealed.
One: At God's table of abundance, a banquet of righteousness and liberation is set for all.
All: Here the powerless are heard; the outcast are showered with honor, and the inside-out kin-dom of God is revealed.
One: At God's table of life, all peoples know peace and creation flourishes.
All: Here the hopeless are nourished with possibility, the complacent are transformed into advocates for change. Here in our very midst the kin-dom of God is revealed.

***HYMN** *Be Now My Vision* **NCH #451**

INVOCATION (unison) by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A Lindsay
Present God, we worship you and honor your name. Open our hearts with thanksgiving, awe, and possibility. Make your word be written on our hearts and your purpose ignite a

fire within our souls. As we gather as a community, may our faith be renewed, our trust strengthened, and our courage increased. Be glorified in our midst, O God. Amen.

ANTHEM *Songbird* by Sarah Quartel **FCCB Choir**

WE LISTEN TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE READING
Matthew 25: 14-30 **(Pew Bible p. 807)**

***HYMN** *Let Justice Flow Like Streams* **NCH #588**

MESSAGE "The Parable of the Talents" Mary Bonhag

WE RESPOND TOGETHER

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER in song (TWC #632)
Our Father, which 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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC *What does the Lord Require?* by Jim Strathdee

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

WE DEPART TO SERVE TOGETHER

***HYMN** *I Am the Light of the World* **NCH #584**

BENEDICTION .

POSTLUDE *My Lord, What a Morning* Spiritual, arr. Glenda Austin

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Pastor Doug's Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10-2; also available to visit in homes.
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Announcements

- FCCB Council meets after coffee time today
- Choir rehearses on Wednesdays, 1-2 pm
- Bible Study group meets Thursdays on Zoom at 6pm; all welcome!
- "String Star" Quilt Raffle (in Narthex) – tickets available until December 20

Join us on Zoom for Sunday worship OR Thursday Bible Study:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89101553827
Meeting ID: 891 0155 3827 Passcode: 1808 1-646-558-8656

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Joys: our service led by the FCCB Council and Jordan, looking forward to having Mary Bonhag lead us soon, Ginger's daughter Holly is safely in Germany, the outcomes of the recent elections

For FCCB family & friends: Sally C. resting after a fall, Rev. Sami McRae (back surgery), Roger K., Vince G., Paul, Thanna A. with recent health issues, Kathleen (hospitalized for Covid), Stewart C. (pneumonia), Joni V. (shoulder surgery), Steve (friend of Maggie), Cathy (brain injury), Maureen (awaiting diagnosis), Barbara C. (recuperating from hip surgery), Jack, Pastor Doug & Donna's daughter-in-law Jess & husband Scott, Michael B., Donna T. (has entered hospice) & Peter H., Cheryl P.'s aunt, Rob G., Serena W., the Richardson family, Lexi C.'s grandfathers, Xavier T, David in his last days, Beth C.'s mother-in-law, Andy L., Gary I. (and Linda), Eldora (nearing end of life), Pastor Doug's brother Michael, Sue D., Dot F., Mara in San Antonio Grande, Paul, Sue R., Ian L., Pastor Doug's sister Lori, Matthew A-B, Marilyn, Lesley, Eli, Logan C., Ray and Cindy C., Jordan's son, Jeanine K.

For the loss of a loved one, the families of: Don Foote, Pastor Kevin, Jim Barrett, Joel Fielder, Cassie Major, Tim Sargent, Gloria Askew, Steve Dodson, Lou (Maggie S.'s brother), Brenda Clark, Carol Day

For our members and friends in residential and independent care facilities: Chuck, Jamin, Elaine, Anita, Sandy, Ann, Renata, Marvie, Toni, Sue

For our World: the financial situation for those in the military, those affected by the September nor'easter storm, homeless communities as colder weather approaches, those affected by wildfires, and those fighting those fires, those serving our country, farm workers with no employment rights, families under economic stress, innocent victims, prayers for PEACE: in the Middle East, for our leaders, our country and Constitution, those who fought/still fight for racial justice, victims of mass shootings, food shelves & support services, storms that surround our country and world, Gaza, Ukraine, all those battling cancer, mental illness, domestic violence and substance abuse.

The vision of First Congregational Church of Berlin is to be a friendly, inviting spiritual home that practices the deep caring of Jesus within the congregation and in the wider community.

Tatum's Totes 2026 Holiday Gift Drive

Our Advent mission drive again this year is to partner with The Green Mountain United Way (GMUW) and Tatum's Totes to provide gifts for 28 children in Vermont's foster care program to receive at Christmas.

- Please visit the Advent Owl wall hanging located in the Narthex to select a child. Please feel free to take more than one child if you wish. ***I should have the tags and Advent Owl ready for Nov 15.***
- Write your name next to the child(ren) you choose on the Master List spreadsheet hanging near the Advent Owl. **The tag # is the second printed line on the tag (example GMUW#: B1)**
- The pocket numbers on the Advent Owl don't necessarily match the number assigned by GMUW. I have used a blue and pink highlighter in the upper left corner of the tags to designate if the tag is for a boy or girl.
- **Please don't lose the child's tag, you will need to attach it to the bag that you place the items in in order for GMUW to identify each child's bag of gifts.**
- **Please also attach a separate piece of paper with the value of the gifts so we can accurately give a total gifts value to GMUW.**
- In order to sponsor a child, we are asking that donors provide age-appropriate gifts from the child's interest and needs list on the tag. The Tag we provide will include details about the child's age, gender, interests and needs. Some include favorite color and preferred clothing style.
- **PLEASE don't wrap the gifts**, instead place in gift bags with the Tatum's Totes Gift Tag stapled to the outside of the bag. If you don't have access to a gift bag you may use a different type of bag as long as the items are not wrapped and the tag is on the bag.
- All items will need to be dropped off at the church by Sunday December 6, 2026. Please contact Joni Verchereau (javo968@ymail.com) with questions.

First Congregational Church of Berlin
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"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." ✞ That they may all be one. ~John 17:21

*Those who are able may stand