



May 1, 2022

*Morning Worship and Children's Programs at 10:00 AM*

***United Church of Strafford***

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***Our Church Covenant***

*We gather together with freedom of conscience  
in a community of love and inquiry.*

*All are welcome, without exception.*

*We practice Christianity with faith and compassion.*

*We covenant with one another to embody the love of Christ,  
to nurture contemplation and action,  
and to offer our gifts, talents and energies as we are able.*

***United Church of Strafford, Vermont***

May 1, 2022

Third Sunday of Easter

*MH=Methodist Hymnal; PH=Pilgrim Hymnal*

“If there is such a thing as human perfection, it seems to emerge precisely from how we handle the imperfection that is everywhere, especially our own. What a clever place for God to hide holiness, so that only the humble and earnest will find it! A ‘perfect’ person ends up being one who can consciously forgive and include imperfection rather than one who thinks he or she is totally above and beyond imperfection.... We grow spiritually much more by doing it wrong than by doing it right.” *Richard Rohr, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*

**Gathering Music**

Annemieke McLane

**Silent Prayer of Invocation**

Pastor Tom Kinder

**Prelude** French Suite VI: Gavotte J.S. Bach

**Blessing and Lighting the Peace Candle**

**Leader:** In him was life, and the life was the light of the world.

**People:** **The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness does not overcome it.**

**Leader:** Let us pray for peace and the things that make for peace  
as we light the peace candle.

**Introit** “Spirit song” J. Wimber

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

**Responsive Reading from Psalm 30**

Joey Hawkins

**Leader:** I will extol you, O God, for you have drawn me up,  
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

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**People: O God, my God, I cried to you for help,  
and you have healed me.**

Leader: O God, you brought up my soul from Sheol,  
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

**People: Sing praises to God, O you his faithful ones,  
and give thanks to God's holy name.**

Leader: For God's anger is but for a moment;  
God's favor is for a lifetime.  
Weeping may linger for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning.

**People: As for me, I said in my prosperity,  
"I shall never be moved."**

Leader: By your favor, O God,  
you had established me as a strong mountain;  
you hid your face; I was dismayed.

**People: To you, O God, I cried,  
and to you I made supplication:**

Leader: "What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit?  
Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness?"

**People: Hear, O God, and be gracious to me!  
O God, be my helper!"**

Leader: You have turned my mourning into dancing;  
you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

**People: So that my soul may praise you and not be silent.  
O God, my God, I will give thanks to you forever.**

**\*Hymn** PH #362 Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve

**Children's Time and Lord's Prayer** *from John 21:1-19*

**Anthem** "We Are Called" D. Haas

**Scripture Reading** Acts 9:1-20

**Sermon** Second Acts

**\*Hymn** MH #114 Many Gifts, One Spirit

**Sharing of Joys, Concerns, Prayer Requests and Reflections**

*Reflection Questions:* Have you witnessed or experienced a "second act" transformation? Have you seen forgiveness and acceptance open the door to a new life for yourself or someone else? Are there stories of this happening that give you hope for the world?

**Time of Prayer**

**Call to Offering**

**\*Benediction**

**\*Sung Benediction Response**

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart;

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart;

In my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be more loving in my heart.

Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart;

Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart;

In my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

**Silent Prayer** *We invite you to end the service in a spirit of prayer.*

**Postlude** French Suite VI: Polonaise J.S. Bach

**Video recorded services, bulletins and newsletters** are available  
on our website [unitedchurchofstrafford.com](http://unitedchurchofstrafford.com).

See us on **Facebook** at United Church of Strafford

Sign up for **weekly emails** about upcoming worship and other news  
at [unitedchurchofstrafford@gmail.com](mailto:unitedchurchofstrafford@gmail.com)

### **Spiritual Exploration and Childcare for the Children**

The Spiritual Exploration time for children is over for the year, but we still welcome children of all ages to the United Church of Strafford! Childcare is available during the church service, provided by teens and adults for children second grade and younger. Older children are welcome to stay with their families during the service itself (as are youngers, if they prefer).

### **Mission Committee Good News and THANK YOU!**

Thank you so much for all of the generous donations to World Central Kitchen which is helping to feed Ukrainian refugees and citizens still in Ukraine. We sent a total of \$3,015 from our church and community to help with World Central Kitchen's heroic efforts. Many thanks to all!

**Pastoral Care** The Rev. Deadra Ashton is now our Pastoral Care Provider. If you are in need of spiritual direction or of individual, couples or family pastoral counseling, please be in touch with Deadra at revdeadra@gmail.com or by leaving a message on the church phone at 765-4585.

**Heartfulness Contemplative Training Circle** gathers weekly on Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM in person and by Zoom and offers an informal meditation all other evenings at 7:30 PM. You are invited to be part of the circle anytime. Please see our website Welcome page for details and the different Zoom links for the two standing events.

**Next Concerts** Held on Fridays (except where noted), 7:00-8:15 PM. Admission by donation, 20% goes to the church's Manheim Fund for the Arts.

May 13<sup>th</sup> Cassotto Duo (Jeremiah & Annemieke McLane)

June 17<sup>th</sup> Hanover Highschool talents Ian Goldberg, clarinet,  
Miriam Herron, cello

August 12<sup>th</sup> Jack Langdon, organ recital

**Update on Mask Wearing at Church** The Steering Committee keeps an eye on what is happening with Covid numbers in our community and area. Unfortunately, the numbers are still ticking up in the latest surge. We feel we need to be cautious, so we recommended to the church Council to **continue the mask requirement in church for the time being**. Every other pew will continue to be roped off for now. We also recommended that we resume having **refreshments outside after church** as we did last summer and fall, weather permitting! *from The Steering Committee*

**Fulfilling Our Vision** The Fulfilling Our Vision committee depends on additional people joining in when they are interested in specific projects. We are resuming our focus on anti-racism and becoming officially Open to and Affirming of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Please speak with Tom if you are interested. The vision we are fulfilling is our Future Directions Statement that you can find on the pew card or Welcome page of our website. It says in part, "The United Church of Strafford aspires to be a community of open hearts and minds embracing differences and diverse traditions, extending faithful Christ-like love and support to all, reaching out especially to those in need. We intend to be a force, not merely a presence, effecting positive social change for peace, justice and the care of God's creation."

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here!*

### **Haiku by Mel Goertz:**

Once again the deer  
are grazing on green grass.  
Perhaps the snow has passed.

