



October 23, 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

October 23, 2022

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

MH=Methodist Hymnal; PH=Pilgrim Hymnal

“Centering Prayer is not about developing concentration, attaining clear mind, conscious presence, a strong witnessing ‘I,’ some desired state. In Centering Prayer you merely practice and practice the core kenotic motion: ‘let go, make space, unclench’—thought by thought by thought.... Slowly, steadily, Centering Prayer patterns into its practitioners what I would call the quintessential Jesus response: the meeting of any and all life situations by the complete, free giving of oneself.... the touchstone throughout all his teaching: Let go! Don’t cling! Don’t hoard! Don’t assert your importance! Don’t fret.... In time this...will gradually establish that ‘mind of Christ’ within you as your own authentic self.” *Cynthia Bourgeault, The Heart of Centering Prayer: Nondual Christianity in Theory and Practice*

Gathering Music

Becky Bailey

Silent Prayer of Invocation

Pastor Tom Kinder

Prelude

Blessing and Lighting the Candles

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

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Responsive Reading *from Psalm 84* John Echeverria, Reader

Leader: How lovely is your dwelling place,
O God my hope and strength!

People: **My soul longs, indeed it faints for your courts;
my heart and my flesh
sing for joy to the living God.**

Leader: Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young, at your altars.

People: **Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise.**

Leader: Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

People: **As they go through the desolate valley
they make it a place of springs.**

Leader: They go from strength to strength.

People: **For a day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.**

Leader: I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God
than live in the tents of wickedness.

People: **O God of hope and strength,
happy is everyone who trusts in you
and dwells in your love.**

***Hymn** How Lovely Is Your Dwelling *hymn folder*

Children's Time and Lord's Prayer

Anthem

Scripture Philippians 2:3-9a; Luke 18:9-14

Sermon Dwelling in the Spirit

***Hymn** PH #92 I Look to Thee in Every Need

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Sharing of Joys, Concerns, Prayer Requests and Reflections

Reflection Questions: "I look to thee in every need... I feel thy strong and tender love.... But let me only think of thee and then new heart springs up in me.... Thy calmness bends serene above.... Thy presence fills my solitude... turns all to good.... Thy hand in all things I behold and all things in thy hand; Thou leadest me by unsought ways and turn'st my mourning into praise." Have you experienced any of these gifts of the Spirit in your life, or seen them in others? What helps you find these gifts when you need them?

Time of Prayer

Call to Offering

***Benediction**

***Hymn** PH #543 God Be in My Head

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

Postlude

Video recorded services, bulletins and newsletters are available
on our website 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

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

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Covid Precautions at Church We continue to require that everyone wear an effective mask while in the church building, but we take them off when we gather outside. Thank you for helping the church be a safe and healthy place for all! *from The Steering Committee*

Spiritual Exploration and Childcare for the Children We 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). We are exploring what kinds of spiritual exploration programs for children could work in the coming months.

Heartfulness Contemplative Training Circle gathers 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.

- November 18th "960" Sonatas by Schubert etc, Annemieke McLane, pianist
- December 2nd "Noel" 5th year! Music for Advent Soprano Julie Ness, Bagpiper Timothy Cummings, Accordionist Jeremiah McLane, Pianist Annemieke McLane

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Fulfilling Our Vision The Fulfilling Our Vision committee depends on people joining in when they are interested in specific projects. We are continuing our focus on anti-racism and becoming officially Open to and Affirming of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Climate and other environmental issues have also consistently been part of our concern. The vision we are fulfilling is our Future Directions Statement that you can find on the pew card or Welcome page of our website. Please consider participating! We meet the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM. For more information, please speak with Kate Reimanis or email her at kreimanis@gmail.com.

Mission Committee Update: Supporting Children Near and Far! The Mission Committee gave its annual donation to the Health Hub that helps to support Strafford children with services such as dental check-ups, physical exams, lab work, prescriptions, mental health counseling and immunizations. We are proud to play a part in helping to keep Strafford children healthy and happy! In the near future, our friends David and Ingrid Webb will be traveling to work in the Life School in Panajachel, Guatemala. We are proud of them and are happy to send them off with a donation from our church for school supplies for the children. Safe travels, dear Ingrid and David! Please let us know if you have ideas for mission work! With love and gratitude, Danette Harris, Maggie Hooker and Cameron Speth

Food Shelf Support Our church delivered 28 pounds of food to the Sharon Food Shelf last month and thanks to a special donation we will deliver cases of soup soon! We thank you and ask that you kindly continue to fill that white basket in the back of the church with non-perishable foods such as hearty soups, hygiene and baby products, non-perishable snacks, cereal and juices. Thank you!

Haiku by Mel Goertz:

A flurry of chickadees
and titmice asking for seed
from my hand.

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