



November 20, 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***

November 20, 2022

Twenty-fourth and Last Sunday after Pentecost

Thanksgiving Sunday, Reign of Christ Sunday

MH=Methodist Hymnal; PH=Pilgrim Hymnal

“A felt sense of wonder, thankfulness and appreciation for life’ is how the renowned psychologist Robert Emmons defines gratitude. If you’re feeling low, it might seem like a stretch to focus on something so positive. Yet recognizing the gifts in your life is profoundly strengthening. By savoring these gifts, you add to your psychological buoyancy, which helps you maintain your balance and poise when entering rougher waters...Gratitude enhances our resilience, strengthening us to face disturbing information.... While gratitude leads to increased happiness and life satisfaction, materialism has the opposite effect.” Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone, from *Active Hope*

**Gathering Music**

Emerson Gale

**Silent Prayer of Invocation**

Pastor Tom Kinder

**Prelude** “Blessings for Breath” by Emerson Gale

**Lighting of the Peace Candle**

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

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.**

**\*Hymn** MH #694 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come  
verses 1, 2 and 4 only

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

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**Responsive Reading** *adapted from Psalm 95* Jane Prescott

Leader: O come, let us sing to our Creator;  
let us make a joyful noise  
to the rock of our salvation.

**People: Let us come into its presence everywhere  
with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise with songs of praise!**

Leader: For the creative force in the universe  
is the greatest force, a great God above all gods.

**People: In its Spirit's hands are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains, also.**

Leader: The sea belongs to the holy one  
who created it, to the vast hands  
that formed the dry land.

**People: O come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel humbly before the Spirit  
that sparked life into being and nurtured it,  
that evolved human beings, and made us.**

**All: For that is our God,  
our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,  
and we are the people of their pasture,  
the sheep of their hand.**

**\*Hymn** MH #131 We Gather Together

**Children's Time and Lord's Prayer**

**\*Hymn** For the Fruit of All Creation *hymn folder*

**Scripture Readings** Philippians 4:4-9; Matthew 6:19-33

**Sermon** Gratitude and Hope

**\*Hymn** Now Is the Time Approaching *hymn folder*

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

What fills you with gratitude, hope or joy? *page two*

**Time of Prayer**

**Call to Offering**

**\*Benediction**

**\*Hymn** PH #460 We Plow the Fields and Scatter

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

**Postlude** "Thankfulness" by Emerson Gale  
*\* Those who are comfortably able may stand.*

**Past sermons** are available on the back table.

**Video recorded services, sermon texts and bulletins**  
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)

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

**Thank you, Emerson Gale**, for providing music today! Emerson enjoys performing and teaching a variety of instruments from his music studio in Strafford and throughout the Upper Valley. He also serves on the boards of the Seven Stars Arts Center, Upper Valley Young Professionals and the Vermont Fiddle Orchestra. To learn more, you can visit: [www.emersongale.com](http://www.emersongale.com)

**Covid Precautions at Church** We continue to require masks while in the church building. Thank you for helping the church be a safe and healthy place for all! *from The Steering Committee*

**Lord's Acre 2022** Bidding will run from November 18-28, just in time for unique holiday shopping (and supporting the church).

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### **Upcoming Special Services & Events Calendar**

**Sun. Nov. 20 Thanksgiving Sunday** 10:00 AM in worship here with cherished hymns and music provided by Emerson Gale.

**Thurs. Nov. 24 Strafford Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**

10:00 AM in our sanctuary again this year. Bring a poem, story or song and abundant gratitude to share.

**Sun. Nov. 27 First Sunday of Advent**

Advent begins with the beautiful rituals of bringing in the greens and lighting the Advent candle of Hope, plus beloved Advent hymns and other music provided by The Cantornote Church Musicians.

**Fri. Dec. 2 "Noël" Concert** 7:00 PM with Julie Ness, Timothy Cummings, Jeremiah McLane and Annemieke McLane

**Sun. Dec. 4 Second Sunday of Advent** The candle of Peace.

**Fri. Dec. 9 7:00 PM Thetford Chamber Singers concert** here

**Sun. Dec. 11 Third Sunday of Advent and Pageant Sunday**

During the 10:00 AM service Rachel Guaraldi will present a puppet pageant with an opportunity for children to participate and for the congregation to sing carols. Afterward, Tom will lead a brief Advent service and we will light the candle of Joy.

**Sun. Dec. 18 Fourth Sunday of Advent, Mary Sunday**

Lighting the candle of Love and celebrating Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the model she serves for our spiritual lives.

**Tues. Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service 5:30 PM**

Picture excited and awe-filled children, a sanctuary lit entirely by candles, beloved lessons and carols and gorgeous instrumental music provided by The Cantornote Church Musicians, in a service timed to allow you to have all your other Christmas Eve traditions as well.

**Sun. Dec. 25 Christmas Day, 10:00 AM Zoom-only gathering**

On Christmas morning we will gather by Zoom to read aloud a beloved Christmas story for all ages and to say Merry Christmas to one another.

**Sun. Jan. 1 Epiphany Sunday Zoom-only Worship Service** The Magi follow the star...

**Sun. Jan. 8 Story Sunday**

**Sun. Jan. 15 Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday**

**Pastoral Care:** Rev. Deadra Ashton, who has been providing valuable pastoral care for the past year, finds that she needs to step away from this position. Currently, the church council is looking for someone to fill that important position.

**Mission Committee Update: Bountiful Food for Our Neighbors from Our Church....Thank you!** This week, the Mission

Committee delivered 24 pounds of food from the basket in the back of our church. Thank you all so much for this kind generosity. Some of the food promptly went right home with food shelf guests. We ask that you continue to open your hearts and keep that basket (which is empty now!) in mind as we head into winter. Hearty soups are particularly in high demand right now. Thank you, thank you! With love and gratitude, Danette Harris, Maggie Hooker and Cameron Speth

**Childcare** 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.

**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. See our website Welcome page for details.

**Next Concert** Friday, December 2, 7:00 PM "Noel" 5th year! Music for Advent Soprano Julie Ness, Bagpiper Timothy Cummings, Accordionist Jeremiah McLane, Pianist Annemieke McLane

**Haiku by Herbert A. Goertz:**

The geese fly in V's.  
Honking their way south dreaming  
Of snow-free green leas.