



May 19, 2024
Morning Worship and Children's Programs at 10:00

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 19, 2024

Pentecost Part I

MH=Methodist Hymnal; PH=Pilgrim Hymnal

“Somewhere today someone is being a friend instead of fighting....
Somewhere today someone is reading a book about peace
and thinking about making the world a better place.”

Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace, by Shelley Moore Thomas

Gathering Music

Erik Reimanis

Prelude “Imagine” John Lennon

Introduction, Welcome and Announcements Joey Hawkins

Blessing and Lighting the Peace Candle

Leader: In Christ 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.

Anthem

Children and families are now invited to come to the front.

Children's Story Time *Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace*
by Shelley Moore Thomas, read by Beth Randall

Congregational Song “I've Got Peace Like a River”

1. *Peace like a river*
2. *Joy like a fountain*
3. *Strength like a mountain*
4. *Love like the sunshine*

Children go to the Parish Hall for further discussion and activities.
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Unison Reading *The 23rd Psalm, King James Version*

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Meditation “Brothers in the Beloved Community: The Friendship of Martin Luther King Jr. and Thich Nhat Hahn.” Dr. Ray Chin

John Green, Reader

Unison Reading Five Daily Contemplations of the Buddha

1. I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old.
2. I am of the nature to have ill health. There is no way to escape having ill health.
3. I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death.
4. All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them.
5. My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand.

Sharing of Joys, Concerns, Prayer Requests and Reflections**Five Minutes of Silent Reflection and Meditation****Call to Offering**

***Hymn** When Peace Like a River (It Is Well) *hymn folder*

***Benediction**

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

Postlude “The Sphere” Peter Gutteridge

**Those who are comfortably able may stand.*

*We are an Open and Affirming Congregation.
Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Past sermons are available on the back table.

Video recorded services, sermon texts and bulletins 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

Fulfilling Our Vision Committee You can find the Future Directions Vision and the Open and Affirming Covenant we are working to fulfill on our website. FOV usually meets the first Tuesday of every month but in May we will meet on the 21st at 7:00 PM. Please contact Kate Reimanis with any questions or ideas.

Daily Meditation Sessions Our **Heartfulness Circle** offers an informal meditation gathering on Zoom every evening from 7:30 to 8:10 PM. On Thursdays we have an extended session starting at 7:00 PM. See our website Welcome page for the Zoom link and details.

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Combined Seeking Spirit and Story Sunday May 19th We are excited for another Seeking Spirit and Story Sunday! The **Seeking Spirit** portion: Dr. Ray Chin is a therapist who has worked with children in many local schools and private practice. He specializes in neurodevelopmental disorders, cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma, and mindfulness. He will speak to us on “Brothers in the Beloved Community: The Friendship of Martin Luther King and Thich Nhat Hahn.” The **Story Sunday** portion: Beth Randall will share a book with the children, *Somewhere Today, a Book of Peace*, by Shelley Moore Thomas then two of us will go with them to the Parish Hall for discussion, fun activities, and a snack. We welcome all to join us and look forward to seeing you. With love, Danette Harris, Joey Hawkins, Beth Randall and Christina Robinson

Pastoral Care: Pastor Tom Kinder is available and eager to talk with you. Please speak with him after worship to set up a time, or email rev.thomas.cary.kinder@gmail.com or call him at 333-9967.

Volunteer or Paid Opportunities Please consider helping out with the streaming and recording of worship services, and with administrative tasks like copying bulletins. These positions could be volunteer or paid. If you are interested in possibly helping with any of this, please be in touch with Tom.

Next Concerts here by pianist Annemieke McLane. Admission by donation, 20% goes to the church's Manheim Fund for the Arts.

Friday evening at 7:00 PM:

June 21 “Summertime”

Church Calendar:

Sun. May 19	Seeking Spirit and Story Sunday*
Tues. May 21	Fulfilling Our Vision meeting 7:00 PM*
Thurs. May 23	Heartfulness Circle 7:00 PM Meditation*
Sun. May 26	Celebration of Pentecost
Sat. June 8	Bushnell Memorial Service 11:00 AM
Sun. June 9	Seeking Spirit and Story Sunday*

**see the announcement about this*

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Open and Affirming Covenant
Adopted unanimously at Annual Meeting
on September 17, 2023
after a well-informed, careful process
open to our entire church family.

We, the members of the United Church of Strafford, Vermont, regard all people as beloved children of God. We give thanks for the many and diverse gifts of God among us.

We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation. We welcome and accept into full participation, membership and leadership, people of every sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, faith background, political affiliation, age, marital status and family structure, physical or mental abilities, education and economic status. We acknowledge with humility that this list is not exhaustive and that the terms are in some cases harmful and evolving social constructs. We honor the worth and dignity of all people. We affirm all relationships founded on the principles of love, justice, the Golden Rule and treating others as they wish to be treated.

We commit ourselves to integrate the spirit of this covenant into all aspects of our church life. We pledge to work to end oppression, discrimination and hateful behaviors whenever we encounter them, and, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to help create the beloved community of God's realm on earth.

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

Haiku by Mel Goertz
Walk slowly.
There's so much to see.
Breathe deeply the scent of every tree.

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