

Readings for June 16, 2024

United Church of Strafford In Person and Zoom Service

Responsive Reading from *Psalm 92*

Leader: It is good to give thanks to God,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

People: **To declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,**

Leader: To the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

People: **For you, O God, have made us glad by your work;
at the works of your hands we sing for joy.**

Leader: The righteous flourish like the palm tree,
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

People: **They are planted in the house of God;
they flourish in your courts, O God.**

Leader: In old age they still produce fruit;
they are always green and full of sap,

People: **Showing that you are upright;
you are our rock,
and there is no unrighteousness in you.**

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Thus says our God: I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar; I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain height of your land I will plant it, in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind. All the trees of the field shall know that I am their God. I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree; I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I have spoken; I will accomplish it.

Mark 4:26-32

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is as if people would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, they do not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once they go in with their sickle, because the harvest has come.” He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”