

Readings for November 19, 2023

United Church of Strafford Hybrid In-person and Zoom Service

Responsive Reading *adapted from Psalm 95*

Leader: O come, let us sing to our Creator;
let us make a joyful noise
to the rock we turn to
when lost or in danger.

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

Leader: For this creative force 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 loving one
who created it, to the holy 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 brought us to this time and place.**

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

Galatians 5:22, 25-26, 6:6

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things, no reason why we should not bear this fruit.... If we were created by the Spirit and live by the grace of the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit every moment, every step of the way. Let us not become proud or resentful, let us not compete against one another, or envy one another.... My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should forgive and restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted to stray from the Spirit's way. Bear one another's burdens, and you will fulfill the law of the Spirit of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:4-7

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Christ; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who

activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

Acts 2:17-18; 44-47

“In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon the most oppressed, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy....”

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Spirit added to their number.