



March 24, 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

March 24, 2024

Palm Sunday, Passion Sunday & Sixth Sunday in Lent

MH=Methodist Hymnal; PH=Pilgrim Hymnal

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. *Philippians 2:5-8*

Gathering Music

Annemieke McLane

Silent Prayer of Invocation

Pastor Tom Kinder

Prelude “Papillons” F. Couperin

Blessing and Lighting the Candles

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.

Introit “Spirit Song” J. Wimber

Welcome and Announcements, Joys and Concerns

First Reading Luke 19:29-42 Danette Harris, Reader

Anthem “Mantos y Palmas/Hosanna” Rubén Ruiz Avila

Children's Time and Lord's Prayer

Hymn PH #155 All Glory, Laud, and Honor *verses 1 & 3 only*

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Words of Transition to the Passion

Second Reading Luke 21:37-22:23, 39-46 Beth Randall, Reader

Prayer of Confession

Jesus, we confess that our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak. We want to stay awake, we want to stay by your side, but instead, we sleep. We sleep through times when you need our love and help. You deserve far better from us. Please forgive us. Please send your Holy Spirit to wake us up and strengthen us. Help us to face our times of trial, help us to sacrifice ourselves, in the faith that God will make all things right, even our dark Gethsemanes, even our crucifixions, if we surrender to God's will, and love as you love all.

Assurance of Pardon and Grace

***Hymn** MH #292 What Wondrous Love Is This *verse 1 only*

Third Reading Luke 22:47-54a; 22:66-23:12 Joey Hawkins, Reader

Responsive Reading *from Matthew 27:15-26*

Leader: Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"

People: Barabbas! Barabbas!

Leader: Then what should I do with Jesus?

People: Crucify him! Crucify him!

Leader: Why? What evil has he done?

People: Crucify him! Crucify him!

Leader: Pilate took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." He released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

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Fourth Reading Luke 23:26-56 Becky Bailey, Reader

***Hymn** PH #170 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded *vv. 1 & 3 only*

Reflection Holding On and Letting Go, Part I

***Hymn** PH #177 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross *vv. 1, 2 & 3*

Time of Prayer

Call to Offering

***Benediction and Sung Response** Tune: PH#177

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Silent Prayer

Please be seated to end the service in a spirit of prayer

Postlude Pavane F. Poulenc

**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

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New Children's Story Program Starting Easter Sunday During the Children's Time in the Easter service, we will read aloud a story to the children. Then, we will go with the children to the Parish Hall and do some activities to extend the meaning of the story. We plan to plant some seeds and to make Easter/spring cards for neighbors who could use a boost, followed by a special snack and an egg hunt.

For the months of April, May and June, we are planning to read aloud a carefully chosen story during the Children's Time in the service, one Sunday a month. (Stay tuned for the exact dates!) Then, the children will go back to the Parish Hall with at least two of us to further explore the story, and for activities and a snack.

We warmly invite ALL children of all ages to join us on Easter and during the new story Sundays this spring! With love,
Danette Harris, Joey Hawkins, Beth Randall and Christina Robinson

New Members Group If you are interested in becoming an official member of this congregation, please speak with Pastor Tom Kinder. The process involves reflecting on your spiritual journey and learning about the history, structure and mission of this church.

Pastoral Care Those in need can reach out to Deacons Becky Bailey (rbailey@sover.net), Debby Richie (dc.richie@hotmail.com), and Cameron Speth (cece@speth.com) or call the church number.

Fulfilling Our Vision Committee Meeting You can find the Future Directions Vision and the Open and Affirming Covenant we are working to fulfill on our website. Our Native American Reparations Fund has been established, with a generous start-up donation from a member of our congregation. FOV usually meets the first Tuesday evening of every month. Please contact Kate Reimanis with any questions or ideas.

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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.

Mission Committee Update: Supporting "Peace Action" and "Standing Together" It is hard not to feel overwhelmed by all that is happening in the world right now. One thing that we, as a church, can do is to support organizations that are working hard to promote peace and love for our neighbors. We have recently supported two such organizations: **Peace Action** "is the nation's largest grassroots peace network with chapters and affiliates in states across the country." **Standing Together** "is a grassroots movement mobilizing Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel.... The future that we want — peace and independence for Israelis and Palestinians, full equality for all citizens, and true social, economic, and environmental justice — is possible." Please let us know if you have any suggestions for mission work. Thank you. With love and gratitude, Danette Harris, Maggie Hooker and Cameron Speth

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:

April 5th, with poet, Jim Schley

May 10th, with Jeremiah McLane

Church Calendar:

Sun. March 31 Easter 10:00 AM Service

(Sunrise Service to be posted online)

Fri. April 5 Annemieke McLane & Jim Schley 7:00 PM*

** there is an announcement about this on this insert*

Haiku by Mel Goertz:

The deer are back. Bear are
roaming. Geese flying overhead.

Where is Spring?

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