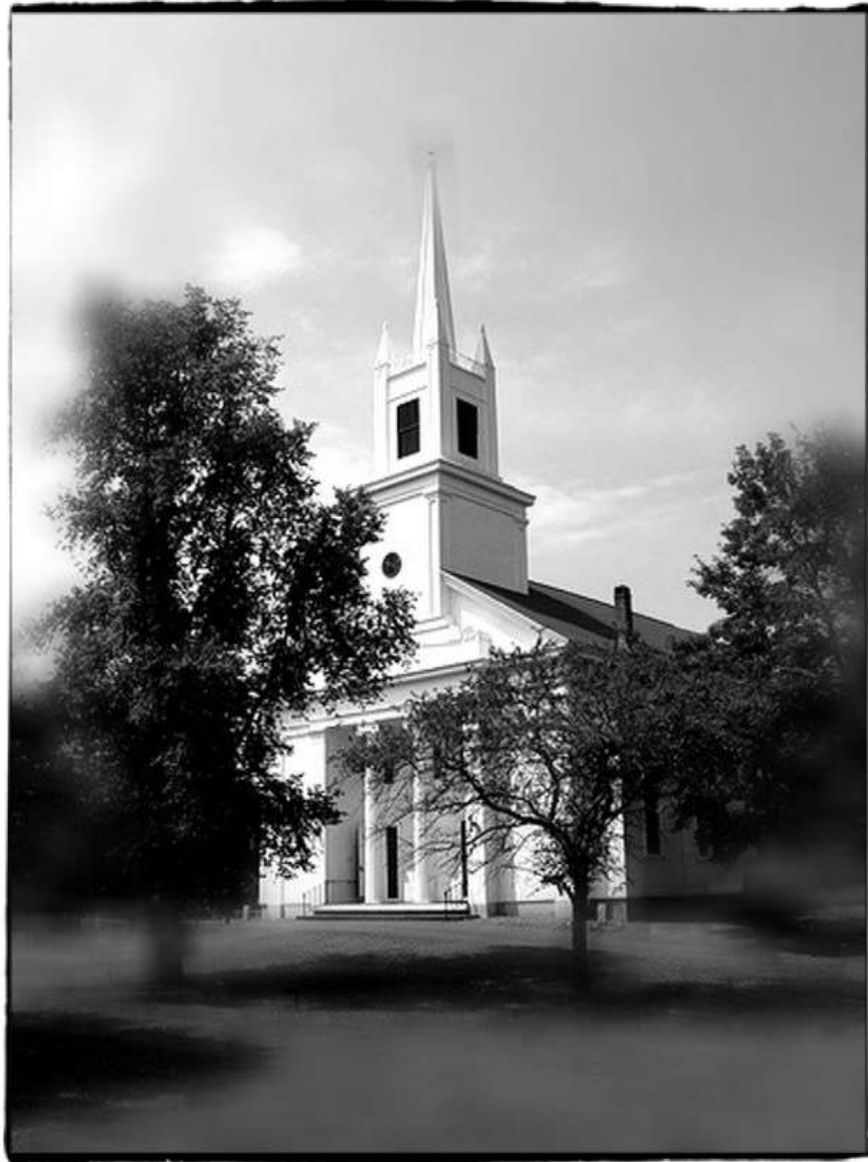


The Congregational Church *of* Topsfield

*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of
the United Church of Christ*



The Congregational Church of Topsfield, *An Open and Affirming Congregation of the UCC*
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**ORDER OF WORSHIP
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 1, 2024
9:30 am**

PRELUDE	“Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”	Elvey/Alford
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS		Rev. Martin Riekert
PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST		
SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION		
THE LIGHTING OF THE PROPHETS CANDLE		Werner and Conny Griesshammer
OPENING HYMN HYMN #714 (CH)	“For the Fruit of All Creation” View page 7, verses 1-3	AR HYD Y NOS
GATHERING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (UNISON):		Lay Reader, Jon Palace

Lord God, our Provider.

**We worship you as the one who meets our needs,
who grants our daily bread,
who restores our humanity.**

**We worship you as the God who knows human need from experience,
who knows want, and thirst and humiliation.**

**And we worship you as your people,
in a world where wealth is mixed with poverty;
where we have all we need, but often don't know how to share.
Where want, and hunger and thirst and humiliation are frequently hidden
from those with the power to offer challenge and bring change.**

**So, open our eyes.
Not only that we learn sad facts about the world.
But open the eyes of our heart,
that we may feel our place in this world, as your people.
Where there is need,
teach us to learn where our wealth lies, and help us to give.
Where there is injustice,
teach us to learn the causes, and help us to fight.
Where there is brokenness,
teach us to learn of our own brokenness, and help us to bring wholeness.**

**Help us to look to you,
that we neither remain ignorant of the world,
nor lose ourselves in despair at its brokenness.**

**Show us how to worship you,
the crucified God,
the risen God,
the God who provides.**

**Help us to carry our cross,
to accept your gift of new life,
to bring that gift to others.**

~ From the **Baptist Union of Great Britain** website. Adapted by Martin Riekert

SHARING OUR GIFTS

THE OFFERTORY

“Kremser”

Dutch Traditional

†THE DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him* all creatures here below; praise Him* above,
ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost** Amen**

*You may substitute God/Her **You may substitute Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION PREPARATION OF THE ELEMENTS

Zoom and TV attendees: Participants will prepare and supply their own bread and cup. It is your choice if you want to physically break your own bread during communion or prepare it beforehand and eat and drink what you have prepared when asked to do so.

GUIDING WORDS

Rev. Martin Riekert

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Leader: We rejoice in the God of life,
who gives us bread:
the fruit of the earth worked with human hands.
and who makes it into the bread of life.

**All: We rejoice in the God of life
who gives us wine:
the fruit of the vine tended with daily care,
and puts the flavor of the new world into it.**

Leader: As the wheat and grapes are joined on this table in bread and wine –
into a visual symbol for us –

**All: May our church join together
into a visual symbol for the entire world.**

- From a liturgy for World Communion Sunday (World Council of Churches)

COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (UNISON):

God of love, we are deeply grateful for once more being drawn into community through this meal. Inspire us to live sacramentally, mediating your love with courage, compassion, and hope. Empower us anew to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. We pray in the Spirit of Chris. Amen

*Invitation and Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving by Brian Brandsmeier as adapted by Martin Riekert

COMMUNION HYMN Hymn #393 (CH)	“One Bread, One Body” View page 8, verse 2	ONE BREAD, ONE BODY
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STEWARDSHIP MOMENT		Board of Children and Youth
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SCRIPTURE	Matthew 5:1-12 View page 6	Lay Reader, Jon Palace
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SERMON	“Reliable Solidarity”	Rev. Martin Riekert
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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

- CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS
- SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION
- PASTORAL PRAYER
- THE LORD’S PRAYER (Debts)

Our Father*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

*You may substitute Creator/Mother/Maker, etc. as you choose in saying the prayer.

CLOSING HYMN Hymn #376 (NCH)	“God, We Thank You for Our People” View page 9, verses 1, 2 and 4	HOLY MANNA
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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE	“Count Your Blessings”	Oatman/Excell
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Scripture Reading:

Matthew 5:1-12 (NRSVUE)

5 When Jesus^[a] saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. **2** And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely^[b] on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

VERSES 1-3

For the Fruit of All Creation

714

1. For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God;
 2. In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done;
 3. For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God;

for good gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God; for the
 in the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will is done; in our
 for the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God; for the

plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
 world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,
 won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,

fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.
 most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

VERSE 2

393 One Bread, One Body

Refrain (Unison)

D7 G C G C G D Em B

One bread, one bod-y, one Lord of all,

Em D G Em A7 D7

one cup of bless-ing which we bless. And

G C G C G D Em B

we, though man-y through-out the earth,

Em D G Em A7 D7 G C (G) Fine

we are one bod-y in this one Lord.

Em D Em D

1. Gen-tile or Jew, ser-vant or free,
2. Man-y the gifts, man-y the works,
3. Grain for the fields, scat-tered and grown,

Em F Am D7

wom-an or man, no more,
one in the Lord of all. One
gath-ered to one, for all.

VERSES 1, 2 and 4

God, We Thank You for Our People

376

Ruth Duck, 1986

1 God, we thank you for our peo-ple, roots dug deep with - in the soil,
 2 Thank you, God, for gen-tle plea-sure: les - sons learned and se-crets told,
 3 Still we must con-fess be - fore you, some-times, Sav - ior, we have failed;
 4 By your Spir - it of cre - a - tion keep us bold for risk-ing still,

har - dy spir - its, rich in lov - ing, strong for strug - gle, bold for toil.
 hopes and mem-ories saved as trea - sure, passed to young ones by the old,
 though we wor - ship and a - dore you, some-times love has not pre-ailed.
 ea - ger in an - ti - ci - pa - tion, ev - er strong to do your will.

Faith - ful Rock of gen - er - a - tions, you whom par - ents' par - ents praised:
 Pranks and glo-ries, songs and sto-ries, food by lov - ing hands pre - pared.
 Tem - pers rac - ing, dev - il chas - ing, hearts es - tranged by ice or flame
 Bind us close to one an - oth - er, shar - ing life and death and birth,

Here in hope as we re - mem - ber may our song to you be raised.
 God, we bless you for your pres - ence in our tears and laugh - ter shared.
 You trans - form by ways for - giv - ing. Grace a - maz - ing! Grace, your name!
 Wel - com - ing as sis - ter, broth - er, all your chil - dren on the earth.

Congregational Church of Topsfield

Parish Care Ministry

Prayer List Contact:

Kim Itz at prayerlisting@topsfeldchurch.org or 978 887-6567.

Healing Scripture:

"And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick" Matthew 14:14

Healing Prayer:

Dear Lord, I ask you to turn this weakness into strength, suffering into compassion, sorrow into joy, and pain into comfort for others. May your servant trust in your goodness and hope in your faithfulness, even in the middle of this suffering. Let him be filled with patience and joy in your presence as he waits for your healing touch.

Please Pray For:

Maria Cecilia Guerra - Sister of José Guerra
Eva - Friend of Irina Günzel-Guerra from Norway
Doug McIlvaine - Member of CCOT
Doug Gruber - Brother of Susan Gruber
Jane Moyer - Member of CCOT
Diana Titus - Member of CCOT
Sean Enos - Son of neighbor of Jane & Bruce Jones
Cheryl Hopkins - Member of CCOT
Trish Hudson - Former member of CCOT
David Muisse & Family- Family of Kim Itz
Jacob Itz - Son of Kim & Charlie Itz
Andrea Sommer & Family - Relatives of Irina Günzel Guerra
Joyce Talbot - Member of CCOT
Abby Bowling - Member of CCOT
Susan Gruber - Member of CCOT

Phil and Marilyn Knowles - Parents of Scott Knowles
GML - Friend of Judi & Gary Gosbee
Danielle Redding - Daughter of Christy & Jim Redding
Kevin Goldenbogen - Former Youth Leader at CCOT
Bobby Duchano - Friend of Charles Mathison
Dorcas Gordon - Grandmother of Rasheed Townes
Mark Gosbee - Son of Judi & Gary Gosbee
Scott Bortzfield - Son of Ruth Bortzfield
Jack Whelan - Brother of Steve Whelan
Steve Hoover - Son of Carol & Fred Hoover
Phil Sinaikin - Friend of Christa & Martin Riekert
Dennis Heslet- Member of CCOT
Jim Quinlivan- Dad of Julie Quinlivan