

First Congregational Church of Berlin

Berlin Corners, Vermont

An inclusive, open & affirming church

Rev. Simon Ruth de Voil, Guest Preacher

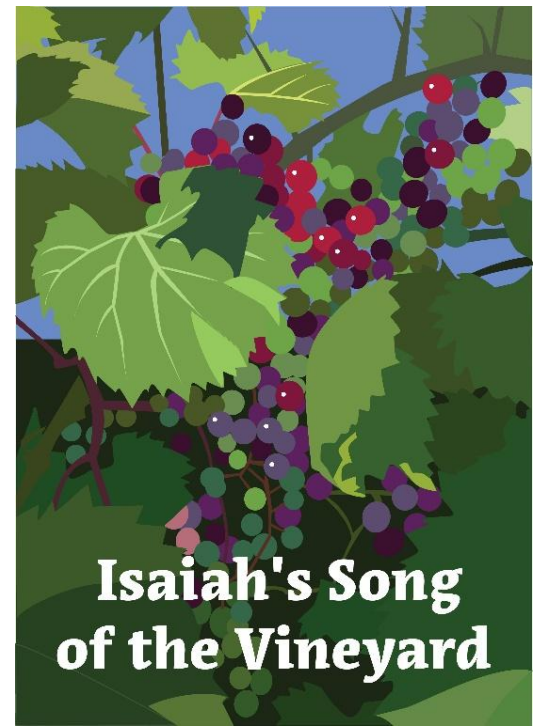
Christopher McWilliams, Music Director

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

August 17, 2025

What would love not do?

Today's Isaiah 5:1-7 reading pulls no punches when it declares that all kingdoms built on foundations of violence, exploitation, and bloodshed will in time become their own wasteland. Let's explore how Love works to refine us with both compassion and fire.



WE GATHER TOGETHER

*Indicates that you may stand

RINGING OF THE BELL

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

PRELUDE *Summer* by Herman Beeftink **Denise Ricker, flute**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER A Prayer from the Iona Community, shared by Rev. Simon
We have heard about you, God of all power. You made the world out of kindness, creating order out of confusion; you made each one of us in your own image; your fingerprint is on every soul. So we praise you.

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive) *(by Sir Francis Drake)*

Leader: When we are too well-pleased with ourselves when our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little, because we sailed too close to the shore.

All: Disturb us, O Lord

Leader: When with the abundance of things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the water of life when, having fallen in love with time, we have ceased to dream of

eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.

All: Stir us, O Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture into wider seas where storms show Thy mastery, where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars.

Leader: In the name of Christ who pushed back the horizons of our hopes and invited the brave to follow.

All: Amen

***HYMN** *God's Graceful Moment* (tune Picardy, words by Kathy Galloway)

**1 Morning opens wide before us
like a door into the light.
Just beyond, the day lies waiting
ready to throw off the night
and we stand upon its threshold
posed to turn and take its flight.**

**3 We receive God's graceful moment,
while the day is fresh and still,
ours to choose how we will greet it,
ours to make it what we will.
Here is given perfect freedom,
every hope in love to fulfill.**

**2 Now the earth in all its glory
springs to meet the rising sun,
warms to all who walk upon it,
cradling all that will be done.
All our labour, all our loving
mingle and become as one.**

**4 As we take the first step together,
passing through the door of the day,
may the love of Christ the Creator
give us peace in all that we say,
heart for all that lies before us,
grace to guide us on our way.**

MUSIC MINISTRY *Sentimentale* from *Bolling Suite No. 1* by Claude Bolling
Denise Ricker, flute

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

PSALM 139 (sung with Rev. Simon)

Oh God you search me and you know me by Bernadette Farrell

**1 O God you search me and you know
me, All my thoughts lie open to your
gaze. When I walk or lie down you
are before me: Ever the maker and
keeper of my days.**

**2 You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
And with love everlasting you besiege
me: In every moment of life and
death, you are.**

**3 Before a word is on my tongue,
Lord, You have known it's meaning
all the way through, You are with me
beyond my understanding: God of my
present, past and future, too.**

**4 Although your spirit is upon me,
Still I search for shelter from your
light. There is nowhere on earth I can**

**escape you: Even the darkness is
radiant in your sight.**

**5 For you created me and shaped me,
Gave me life within my mother's
womb. For the wonder of who I am I
praise you: Safe in your hands, all
creation is made new.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 5:1-7 Pew Bible p. 552

MESSAGE “*What would love not do?*” Rev. Simon Ruth de Voil

***HYMN *The Lord of All Hopefulness* TWC #369**

**1 Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all
joy, Whose trust, ever child-like,
No cares could destroy, Be there at
our waking, And give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, At
the break of the day.**

**2 Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all
faith, Whose strong hands were
skilled At the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours, And give us,
we pray, Your strength in our
hearts, Lord, At the noon of the day.**

**3 Lord of all kindness, Lord of all
grace, Your hands swift to welcome,
Your arms to embrace, Be there at
our homing, And give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, At the
eve of the day.**

**4 Lord of all gentleness Lord of all
calm Whose voice is contentment
Whose presence is balm Be there at
our sleeping And give us we pray
Your peace in our hearts Lord At
the end of the day**

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (sung) (TWC #632)

**Our Father, which 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, Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Intermezzo* by George Bizet Denise Ricker, flute

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

WE DEPART TO SERVE AS GOD'S PEOPLE

*HYMN *Day by Day and with Each Passing Moment* TWC #367

1 Day by day and with each passing moment, strength I find to meet my trials here; trusting in my Father's wise bestowment, I've no cause for worry or for fear. He whose heart is kind beyond all measure gives unto each day what he deems best— lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure, mingling toil with peace and rest.

2 Every day, the Lord himself is near me, with a special mercy for each hour; all my cares he wants to bear, to cheer me, he whose name is Counselor and Power. The

protection of his child and treasure is a charge that on himself he laid: "As your days, your strength shall be in measure," this the pledge to me he made.

3 Help me then in every tribulation so to trust thy promises, O Lord, that I lose not faith's sweet consolation offered me within thy holy Word. Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting, e'er to take, as from a father's hand, one by one, the days, the moments fleeting, till I reach the promised land.

BENEDICTION sung by Rev. Simon

POSTLUDE *Ecossaise No. 4* by Ludwig Van Beethoven

The vision of First Congregational Church of Berlin is to be a friendly, inviting spiritual home that practices the deep caring of Jesus within the congregation and in the wider community.

Announcements

- Bible Study meets on Thursdays at 6:00 pm at Ellen's house or on Zoom.
- Next Sunday, August 24 is our annual Worship & Potluck Picnic at Waterbury Center State Park at 11 am. Bring a dish to share, lawn chairs, and your own drink and tableware. Karen Foote will lead our brief worship time.
- August 31, the Council will lead worship and Nancy Fowler will give the Message.
- Sunday, September 7 will be a potluck coffee time to celebrate the start of Pastor Doug as our new settled pastor! Bring a dish to share and stay for some wonderful fellowship as we begin a new journey!

Stowe Community Church is hosting an Old Fashioned Hymn Sing on Sunday, August 31 at 7 pm.

The Barre Congregational Church invites all to the Service of Installation for Rev. James Semmelroth Darnell on Sunday, September 14 at 3 pm.



Pastor Doug intends to have regular office hours beginning in September, but if you wish to speak or meet with him before then, here's how you can contact him:
dougc9927@gmail.com
H: 802-276-3404 C: 802-356-0578