

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - HOPE

Congregational responses are in **bold** and • means "please rise in body or spirit."

NOVEMBER 30, 2025 | ORDER OF WORSHIP



Prelude

Oren Varess (they/them)

Welcome

Deacon Martha Spencer (she/her)

Call to Worship

Led by Deacon Martha Spencer (she/her)

The world is changing. We see it everywhere. We feel it in our bones. It seems to
happen faster than it used to.

The world is changing.

The world needs to change. Children are hungry. Systems are unjust. People are afraid.
There are people on the streets who may not make it a day longer.

The world needs to change.

God longs for the world to become more like a holy commonwealth of just peace, where
all have what they need.

And we are the changemakers.

We are called to work alongside the Holy Spirit. We are called to follow the way of
Jesus.

May we be changed by this time of worship!

• **Hymn**

Let There Be Peace on Earth | Insert

We Pass the Peace of Christ

Pastor Spencer Law (he/him)

We Light the Candle of Hope

In a world full of fear, where do you see
hope?

**We see hope when we look to the next
generation.**

We feel hopeful when we gather together.

**We know hope, deep in our bones, when
we dream of a better world.**

You are right. Even in a fearful world,
hope is all around us.

Today we light the candle of hope as a
reminder of this good news.

May this
flicker of light help us remember that we
have reason to hope.

[the candle is lit]

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Anthem

Advent Song | Rebecca Fair
First Church Senior Choir

Celebration of Gratitude

“If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough.”

-Meister Eckhart

As we name the abundant blessings of our lives (anniversaries, birthdays, clean-and-sober milestones, and many more!), we offer a gratitude gift in any amount, so that the blessings we have received from God may be multiplied and shared with all who long to experience God's extravagant welcome in this church and beyond.

Please consider using a gratitude heart, located in the racks in the pews, if you choose to make a gratitude gift.

We Sound the Bell

A Message for all Children of God

Pastor Spencer Law (he/him)

Go now in peace, go now in peace
May the love of God surround you!
Everywhere, everywhere you may go

Sharing Our Sacred Story

Read by Deacon Martha Spencer (she/her)

Reader: Friends, hear what the Spirit is saying to the church today.

- Luke 1:5-13, 24-25

Inclusive Bible Translation

Reader: This is the story of life for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God

Sermon

“Holding onto Hope”

The Rev. Dr. Marvin Ellison

Prayers of the People and Responsive Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: Blessed are the changemakers.

Two: Blessed are you who are not asleep to the world's pain and suffering.

All: Blessed are you who lament for the way things are.

One: Blessed are you who know, to the depth of your bones, that this is not how things are meant to be.

Two: Blessed are you for not believing the lie that this is how they will always remain.

All: Blessed are you who know that things can change, who long for things to change.

One: Blessed are you whose life's ambition is to bring the change that is justice and mercy for all.

Two: Blessed are you who know that God has always engaged ordinary people to heal and change the world.

All: Blessed are you who know that it is a blessing to be changemakers and who keep hope alive.

The Lord's Prayer

from the New Zealand Anglican Prayer Book

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.

Amen

• **Words of Thanksgiving**

**Praise God, from whom blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that Love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

**Loving and Holy God, we ask that You would pour out Your blessing on this offering today.
Guide us in Your way and use these gifts to make our church and our world even more:**
We call out words like “joyful, kind, just” to bless our church and world

Benediction

Postlude

Oren Varess (they/them)

Service Credits:

Call to Worship and Litany of Thanksgiving are both part of The Changemakers worship series which was created and adapted from www.worshipdesignstudio.com/changemakers.

First Church Ministry Leaders

Ministers

All of Us

Senior Pastor

Rev. Emily C. Goodnow (*she/her*)

Minister for Intergenerat'l Innovation

Pastor Spencer Law (*he/him*)

C.E. Coordinator

Sandy Wissmann (*she/her*)

Music Director

Deborah Owen (*she/her*)

Organist & Pianist

Oren Varess (*they/them*)

Youth Choir Director

Cassie Cooper-Ricci (*they/them*)

Office Manager

Kylie Morel (*she/her*)

Co-Moderators

Rosemary Wiser (*she/her*)

Marita Wiser (*she/her*)

Treasurer - Asst. Treasurer

Peter Clark (*he/him*)

Gail McBride (*she/her*)

Trustee of the Week

Dave Welbourn (*he/him*)

Deacon of the Week

Martha Spencer (*she/her*)

Greeters-Hospitality

Jan Yindra, Arch Owen, Martha Clark

C.E. Leaders

Edna & Jessica Engstrom, Marcia

Uhl, Heather & Ben Moreau

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

This Sunday, November 30

- Worship, 10 am, with guest preacher Rev. Marvin Ellison, Ph.D
- Conversation with Rev. Dr. Ellison, "Rethinking Christian Sexual Ethics"
- Snack & Chat, 11:30 am
- Missions Greens Workshop, 12-4 pm

Tuesday, December 2

- Jeanette's Closet, 9-11 am
- Tiny Tots, 9 - 10 am
- Staff Meeting, 10:30 am
- Prayer Group via Zoom, 1:30 pm

Wednesday, December 3

- Bible Study with Pastor Emily leading, parlor, 10 am

Thursday, December 4

- Senior Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm

Friday, December 5

- Bible Study, parlor, 2 pm
- Snowflake Shop Set-up, 4 pm

Saturday, December 6

- Snowflake Shop, 9:30 am - 1 pm

Next Sunday, December 7

- Worship, 10 am, with Pastor Spencer preaching
- Snack & Chat Potluck, 11:30 am
- Grant Advisory Team Meeting, 12:15 pm

Church office is open 9 am - 12 pm, Mon-Fri

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office@bridgtonucc.org

Announcements

"Rethinking Christian Sexual Ethics": What if a Christian sexual ethic focused not on rules and prohibitions, but rather on relational integrity and pursuing love and justice in all our connections? Would that raise or lower the moral bar?

Snowflake Shop!

Our Snowflake Shop will take place on **Saturday, December 6th**. This is an opportunity for kids to shop (in secret!) for the perfect gift for mom, dad, grandparents, and siblings! Children should bring their nickels, quarters, and dimes to purchase new or gently used gifts for the people they love. The Snowflake Shop is by appointment only; if you'd like to sign up your child(ren) to shop please see the weekly email. Interested in helping out with the shop? Volunteers are still needed for setup Friday, December 5th and to help wrap and host Saturday, December 6th. Please see Sandy Wissmann or Laura Cleveland to learn more!

The Guild's Annual Cookie Walk

The Guild's Cookie Walk is coming up on **Saturday, December 13** at 9 am, and we are looking for volunteers to provide a batch of cookies. This fundraiser, along with our popular Pie Sale, enables the Guild to make a substantial pledge to the church, sustain the Judy Pelletier Camper's Scholarship, support the Bridgton Food Pantry, and the fuel fund at the Community Center. Please think about baking a batch of cookies so that we have a good showing of goodies for our customers. Please contact Jane Talbot with any questions. Thank you for your support!

Christmas Eve Poinsettias

The Flower Committee is coordinating the sale of poinsettias from Warren's Florist to decorate our sanctuary on Christmas Eve. The cost is \$12 per plant. Plants can be taken home after the service. (You may want to bring a plastic bag to cover your plant(s) from the cold.) To place your order, fill out a paper form or see the weekly email for the online form! Orders will be taken until December 15th.

Let There Be Peace on Earth



Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with me.



Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be. With



God our cre - a - tor, fam - 'ly all are we.



Let us walk with each oth - er in per-fect har-mo - ny.



Let peace be - gin with me; let this be the mo-ment now.



With ev - 'ry step I take, let this be my sol-emn vow: To



take each mo-ment, and live each mo-ment in peace e - ter-nal - ly!



Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with me.