

First Congregational Church of Shelburne - April 25, 2021

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: As we gather, may we open our hearts to receive newness of life.

All: We come with hope for renewal.

One: In our time of worship, may we be inspired by God's wisdom.

All: We come seeking to learn and to draw closer to God.

One: Come, let us worship, as the beloved children of God.

INVOCATION

One: Cultivating God,
we come as your children to grow and learn,
because you are our divine vine grower.
God, we desire for you to abide within us,
and for your grace to be revealed anew daily.
As your branches, we ask you to nourish us
for continued growth.

May you transform our hearts and minds
as we hear your Word, sing your praises,
and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.

**ALL: May you help us to bear good fruit
through the vine of Jesus Christ.**

In Whose name we pray, Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: O God, giver of life,
We confess the times when we fail to
love our neighbors as we love ourselves.
God, forgive us when we ignore or
we fail to see our neighbors in need.
Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love
from others, and shut down completely.

As we confess the times when we did not
tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves
of your forgiveness and grace.

In our failures, we have refused
your invitation to grow closer to you.

**ALL: In our confession, O God, we pray your abiding love
be shown through the ways we love more fully. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

O God, hear your beloved community
as we repent and pray for your forgiveness.
Give to us your grace and restore to us
your love that is forgiven and fearless.
God, we desire for your loving Spirit
to renew and strengthen us daily. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING *Psalms 22: 24-31 John 15:1-8*

MESSAGE

Jesus teaches about God's cultivating garden of love that grows within, and among us all. As John 15:1-4, speaks to God's abiding love that calls upon us to connect to the vine Jesus Christ, as the vine of Jesus Christ connects to us. And in John 15:5-6, we are invited to be useful branches, and to daily examine our connectedness to Jesus Christ. Then, in John 15:7-8, God challenges the beloved, to be loved, and be love, by trusting in Christ's love. And by glorifying God, we will become transformed.

Conflicts arise as Jesus illustrates the responsibility of each disciple to be deeply connected to God's abiding love. As Jesus strips away the notion that they are alone. Jesus strips away the notion of an inactive faith. In that, Jesus invites the disciples to trust in the divine purpose and plan for their lives, so that the world might know of God's eternal and abiding love.

BENEDICTION

Let us go forth thankful that we have come.
Let us go forth renewed in God's abiding love.
And let us go forth rejoicing in the Good News,
of Jesus Christ, whose love will never let us go. Amen.