**Brookline Community Church**

**November 20, 2022**

**Reign of Christ Sunday**

**Rev. Catherine A. Merrill**



**Prelude:** [*Gratitude* by Nichole Nordeman](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-PEzM-4VXdg)

# Call To Worship, Psalm 46, p. 450

To the leader. Of the Korahites. According to Alamoth. A Song.

Leader: God is our refuge and strength,

 a very present help in trouble.

**All: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,**

 **though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;**

**though its waters roar and foam,**

 **though the mountains tremble with its tumult.**

Leader: Selah

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

 the holy habitation of the Most High.

**All: God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;**

 **God will help it when the morning dawns.**

**The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;**

 **he utters his voice, the earth melts.**

Leader: The Lord of hosts is with us;

 the God of Jacob is our refuge.

 Selah

**All: Come, behold the works of the Lord;**

 **see what desolations he has brought on the earth.**

Leader: He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;

 he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;

 he burns the shields with fire.

**All: ‘Be still, and know that I am God!**

 **I am exalted among the nations,**

 **I am exalted in the earth.’**

**Leader:**  The Lord of hosts is with us;

 the God of Jacob is our refuge.

 Selah

# RESPONSE: [#820 Threefold Amen (Danish)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diaLpHBwdj8)

# Children’s Message: Five Finger Prayer

# Hymn: [*Thankful* by Shawna Belt Edwards](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTHDKxOL9cg)

# A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:

# Let us recite the Lord’s Prayer together:

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

[For next week, please feel free to send me your joys & concerns and I’ll include them in our prayers: minister@bccnh.org or call/text (857) 259-7269.]

# Hymn: [*We Gather Together* by Celebrating Holidays](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahjZhZygvOY)

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;

He chastens and hastens his will to make known;

The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing:

Sing praises to his name; he forgets not his own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,

Ordaining, maintaining his kingdom divine,

So from the beginning the fight we were winning:

Thou, Lord, were at our side; all glory be thine!

We all do extol thee, thou leader triumphant,

And pray that thou still our defender will be.

Let thy congregation escape tribulation:

Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

If you have a favorite hymn you’d like to include in our worship service, just send it along and I’ll look for a good place for it.

# Colossians 1:9-14, p. 956

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

# [RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diaLpHBwdj8)

# Reflection on the Scripture:

## \*Thanksgiving/Standing for Stewardship

## \*Gloria Patri

 **Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;**

 **as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,**

 **world without end. Amen. Amen**.

## \*Colossians 1:15-20, p. 956

**East: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;**

**West: for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created.**

**East: things visible**

**West: and invisible,**

**East: whether thrones or dominions**

**West: or rulers or powers**

**East: all things have been created through him and for him.**

**West: He himself is before all things,**

**East: and in him all things hold together.**

**West: He is the head of the body, the church;**

**East: he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,**

**West: so that he might come to have first place in everything.**

**East: For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,**

**West: and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things,**

**East: whether on earth**

**West: or in heaven,**

**All: by making peace through the blood of his cross.**

# [RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diaLpHBwdj8)

## Pastoral Prayer

# Hymn: [*A Mighty Fortress is Our God* by HeartSong](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vT6HQ1QaU4)

A mighty fortress is our God

A bulwark never failing

Our helper He amid the flood

Of mortal ills prevailing

For still our ancient foe

Doth seek to work us woe

His craft and pow'r are great

And armed with cruel hate

On earth is not his equal

If we in our own strength confide

Our striving would be losing

Were not the right Man on our side

The Man of God's own choosing

You ask who that may be

Christ Jesus it is He

The Lord of Hosts His name

From age to age the same

And He must win the battle

And tho' this world with devils filled

Should threaten to undo us

We will not fear for God hath willed

His truth to triumph thru us

And tho' this world with devils filled

Should threaten to undo us

We will not fear for God hath willed

His truth to triumph thru us

A Mighty Fortress is our God

His kingdom is forever

His kingdom is forever

If we in our own strength confide

Our striving would be losing

# MINISTRY OF SHARING

**\*DOXOLOGY: #809 “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.”**

# \*Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We’ve Been Given:

**Almighty God,**

**receive our offering for the sake of Christ our Lord.**

**Make us worthy stewards of your gifts**

**and generous citizens of the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ,**

**through whom we pray. Amen.**

# Announcements

# A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 46)

Leader: There is chaos in the world and it may freak us out. But God is in the world too.

**All: Everything may feel like it’s shaking apart, like the sky is going to fall, like everything is going to come crashing down.**

Leader: Good Lord. Remember that there is peace like a river in the heart of our life, as we walk towards the city of God.

**All: God is in the heart of our life, helping us stay on our feet, helping us head in the right direction, no matter what obstacles fall in our paths.**

Leader: God is with us as God has always been with us. When we wandered and carried the Ark of the Covenant, when we wrestled with the angel through the night, God has always been with us. Sweet Lord.

**All: Come and see what God has done in our lives, what disastrous mistakes God has swept away.**

Leader: We can start wars; God can end them forever. God can bring changes that defeat all our weapons, that nullify our need for defenses.

**All: So we can settle down, knowing that we are human and God is God, and we don’t have to pretend we are more than we are.**

Leader: God is with us as God has always been with us. When we wandered and carried the Ark of the Covenant, when we wrestled with the angel through the night, God has always been with us. Sweet Lord, be with us still. Amen and

**All: Amen.**

[CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: *# 839 “God Be With You Till We Meet Again; by his counsels guide, uphold you, with his sheep securely fold you; God be with you till we meet again.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQTRoTkkz3g)

# Postlude: [*My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness* - Keith & Kristyn Getty](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qntf2Y_VNok)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

# Notes:

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

**Psalm 46**

The psalm begins with the affirmation that God is “our refuge and strength” and “help” in trouble and woe. This confession of faith opening the first stanza (vv.1-3) nourishes courage in the face of disturbances in “the earth.” In the ancient Near East, the mountains “in the heart of the sea” are the pillars of the earth that also hold the sky in place. The thought of those mountains tottering suggests that the Earth is about to collapse and the sky is about to fall. Chaos is seeking to reassert itself and destroy the order of creation. In the midst of such a threat of chaos, the psalm confesses that God is refuge and strength.

Verse 4 witnesses a remarkable transition at the beginning of the second stanza (vv. 4-7). The chaotic and destructive waters in the first stanza now become a nourishing stream, watering and nourishing Zion, the sacred place of divine presence. The mountains “in the heart of the sea” may totter, but God’s dwelling will stand. Verse 6 provides another picture of the opponent. It is now a historicized chaos that roars rather than threatening waters in the first stanza. “The nations” are now the makers of trouble. Zion as God’s dwelling will stand firm, but the kingdoms that attack Zion will “totter.”

The third stanza (vv. 8-11) begins with a call to behold the works of God in defeating the powers of chaos and disorder in “the earth.” This divine warrior ironically does battle to defeat war and the weapons of war – bow, spear, and shield. The call is not to a quiet spirituality and pietism but to see that God has destroyed war and trust in military solutions. This God is exalted over all the nations of war and over all the power of chaos and disorder in creation. The call is to see these “works of the Lord.” The psalm concludes with the refrain confessing again that the powerful God is help and refuge in the midst of world-shattering threats.

Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr. *Psalms, in New Cambridge Bible Commentary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 216-219.

# A black and white drawing of a person's face  Description automatically generated with medium confidencePRAYER LIST (11/20/22)

* Friends & family of Elly Austin, Patty Birner, Jesse Delrossi, Jane Jukes, Edith Corey, Sandy Garvin, Scott Higgins, Ed Krom.
* For the friends & families of those who have died alone
* For Luca, Amy’s nephew, whose treatments continue
* For those struggling with thoughts of suicide
* For Polly, John Panto’s sister, who has moved full time into a memory care facility
* For Mike Esposito, Miracle Mike, Stacey Haight’s friend, moving around with a walker, having a surgery to remove some of the hardware installed after his motorcycle accident
* For the friends and family of Ron, Alison Ferrell’s dad, that they may know the love that surrounds them at his passing.
* For Peter, Rev. Cath’s cousin, who is continuing to struggle in the ICU at the Mayo Clinic.
* For Carol, Candy’s aunt, still working through the medical diagnosis process to figure out what is causing what is clearly not right
* For Flora, Marjorie’s mom, who has recently moved into a memory care unit and is struggling because it’s not what she’s familiar with
* For Luke, Jessica’s family friend, who has entered hospice care
* For Donna’s dad, who fell and broke his shoulder
* For those who will be helped by the donations from our recent food drive, that their balancing act might become easier
* For the people of Ukraine, who fight on, even as the world looks elsewhere
* For the people of Taiwan, searching for peace in the face of hostility
* For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
* Individuals serving in our military & their families

# Household Prayer: Morning[[1]](#footnote-1)

Lord Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom and enable me to live today for the attainment of paradise, that as far as I am able I may be a sign of God’s kingdom. Amen.

# Household Prayer: Evening

Lord Jesus, if I have not honored you with all my heart, forgive me. If I have offended out of ignorance, pardon me. Let me sleep in peace and rise with a renewed dedication to serve you. Amen.

# Questions for Reflection

Jesus asks God to forgive those who crucified him, saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” What does it mean to offer forgiveness to others before they are aware of their offense?

# Daily Awareness Reflection[[2]](#footnote-2)

At the end of the day, I’ve been asking myself the following questions. I jot down the answers and ask them again the next evening. I’ve found it helps me to remain centered as well as increasing my awareness of God in my life. It takes about 10 minutes.

1. Slow down. Stop. Prepare yourself to pray by becoming aware of the love with which God looks on you …
2. Note the gifts God has given you today. Give thanks to God for them …
3. Ask God that this be a time of special grace and revelation …
4. With God, review the day. Look at the stirrings of your heart, your thoughts, and your choices as the day progressed. Which have been of God? Which have not? What does God want to say to you about both? …
5. Ask for forgiveness for failures/omissions, for healing from their effects …
6. Look forward to the following day, and plan concretely with God how to live it according to God’s desire for your life …

# Announcements

The church’s financial obligations continue. If you are able, please mail your offering to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ActualIncome | ActualExpenses | Income vs.Expenses +/- |
| October | $78,268 | $75,200 | $3,068 |

Please shop smile.amazon.com and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

There are several ways to send your offering.

**1.** Text “GIVE” to 603-506-4455for your first time. Click “Sign In”then “Register for an Account**”**

**2.** Scan the QR code

**3.** Mail to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

## Gifts for SHARE families due by December 11th

This Christmas our church will be helping to make the holiday merrier for area families by participating in the SHARE gift-giving project. This year, we have adopted two families with eight kids between them.

Please help by choosing a gift tag (or two) from the wreath located in the lower front entryway of the church. Instructions are located in the folder on the wall next to the wreath.

Please have gifts in the church on or before Sunday, Dec. 11th

## Fantastic Fall Food Drive: Many, many thanks

Outreach would like to thank the Congregation, THM Customers, Senior Luncheon attendees and the communities of Brookline & Hollis for the overwhelming donations we received from our October Food Drive. We were able to distribute **2,320 food items and $600 in gift cards** to the Brookline Food Pantry and the Share Food Pantry in Milford. Many families are having to make difficult decisions with the rising costs of food, rent and basic utilities and everything we can do makes a difference in people's lives. Please pray for these families as we head into the holidays and the upcoming cold winter months.

## Serving the church on one of our committees

We have openings on several church committees.  We like to have people rotate on and off our committees so everyone has a chance to serve and to rest.  Most are three-year terms, but we can certainly be flexible about how the roles are filled.  We are looking for folks for Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Trustees, Finance Committee, Stewardship, Deacons and Pastoral Relations.   If you're interested in learning more, please let Ann ([moderator@bccnh.org](file:///G%3A%5CMy%20Drive%5CWorship%5CCovid~19%20Worship%20Services%5Cmoderator%40bccnh.org)) or Rev. Cath ([minister@bccnh.org](file:///G%3A%5CMy%20Drive%5CWorship%5CCovid~19%20Worship%20Services%5Cminister%40bccnh.org)) know.

## Ploughing for the Winter

If you know of anyone who would be interested in ploughing and sanding the church parking lot this winter, Susan Haight (sdlhaight@gmail.com) would love to speak with them.

## The Christmas Raffle committee is looking for donations

* High Spirits (various bottles of alcohol, like vodka, gin, whiskey, etc),
* Family Time (games, puzzles, books, etc) We have an Uno card game so far,
* Sugar Rush! (Any candy)

Thank you for any contributions! We are off to a great start! Contact Donna Bretschneider for info/questions. (603) 860-5291 or [dbret@charter.net](file:///G%3A%5CMy%20Drive%5CWorship%5CCovid~19%20Worship%20Services%5Cdbret%40charter.net).

## Christian Education Coming up on Dec. 4 8:30-9:30am

We’ll be continuing our Christian Education program (for both kids and adults) on December 4 (a busy day in the church!). Coming up: Jan. 1 (start the year with Jesus!), Feb. 5, Mar. 5, Mar. 26 (Palm Sunday is Apr. 2, so we’ll meet a week early), May 7, Jun. 4.

## Take Home Meal for December: Chicken Pot Pies!

We’ll be cooking on Friday, December 2nd, having pickup during the Christmas Faire on Sunday, December 4th.

## Donate Homemade Christmas Cookies for a jolly Take Home Meal Extra!

We’re looking for donations of homemade Christmas cookies to arrive no later than Friday, Dec. 2nd. We’ll sell them for $5/dozen during the Christmas Faire.

## Senior Citizen Active Walking Program is starting again!

The NH Wellpoint Foundation is once again offering the Winter Walking Program for Brookline residents age 70+ at The Hampshire Dome in Milford.  The program runs from 11/15/2022 to 3/31/2023.  Please see [the flyer](https://www.brooklinenh.us/sites/g/files/vyhlif2876/f/news/walking_program_poster_22-23.pdf) for more details.

## Brookline Food Pantry

The Brookline food pantry is open on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10-2:00 for drop-offs [Brookline Food Pantry's Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/BrooklineFP/) has updates. And there’s now [a long, robust Google doc](https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1f-Nt6RfTVsO-n3XDTrfhCCE4eAV2YoKW1wI1OiVE2og/mobilebasic) that shows what they need.

If you know of anyone who could use some help from the Food Pantry, please let Angie or Amy know.

## Help Lines

You may know someone who needs some support beyond what you can provide.

* Suicide prevention: 1-800-273-8255 (or 988)
* Sexual assault: 1-800-656-4673
* Domestic violence: 1-800-799-7233
1. The Morning & Evening Prayer and Question for Reflection are reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word*® *Worship Companion*. Copyright 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Elizabeth Liebert, The Soul of Discernment (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)