



Brookline Community Church
November 27, 2022
Rev. Catherine A. Merrill

Prelude: [*Psalm 122: Let Us Go Rejoicing to the House of the Lord* by Francesca LaRosa](#)

Call To Worship, Psalm 122, p. 498

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

Leader: I was glad when they said to me,
'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'

**All: Our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

Leader: Jerusalem—built as a city
that is bound firmly together.

**All: To it the tribes go up,
the tribes of the LORD,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.**

Leader: For there the thrones for judgement were set up,
the thrones of the house of David.

**All: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
'May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls,
and security within your towers.'**

Leader: For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, 'Peace be within you.'

**All: For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,
I will seek your good.**

RESPONSE: [#820 Threefold Amen \(Danish\)](#)

Lighting the Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is shaped in a ring. It shows the circle of God's unbroken love. Each week we will invite a "family" to light the candles in the wreath. This week the Deacons will light the candles to bring us together in the warm light of God's love.

Lighter 1: The Gospel of Luke speaks about the future:
"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars,
and on earth, distress among nations.
People will faint from fear and foreboding." (*Luke 21:25-36*)

Lighter 2: Because our world is full of fear and distress,
we light our first candle,
trusting that Christ is alive on earth
and that the Spirit of Christ lives among us.

(Light the first candle)

Lighter 1: Living Christ, give us faith to trust you.

All: We trust you, we love you, we praise you. Amen.

[Hymn: Hope Waits for Us at Advent by Amanda Udis-Kessler](#)

Hope waits for us at Advent.
Hope waits for us to trust.
Hope waits for our commitment
to a land that's kind and just.

In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
that heals the ones in pain,
Hope is born in us again.

A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:

Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ,
for the sake of the world that God so loves, let us pray.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

**All: We pray for peace in every nation—
that people will turn their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks
and study war no more.**

Leader: Pray for the peace of the church.

**All: We pray for peace in Christ's body—
put an end to fear and fighting,
and help us to proclaim in word and action
the good news of salvation to all.**

Leader: Pray for the peace of this community.

**All: We pray for peace in this place—
for safety in our homes and streets,
for the prosperity of our neighbors,
and for the health of family and friends.**

Leader: Pray for those lifted up with joy.

For

**All: We pray for those who celebrate the joy in their lives
That they may know the peace in their hearts
And share it with others.**

Leader: Pray for those weighed down with concerns.

For

**All: We pray for those who are struggling
That we may ease their burdens
And that God's loving presence may come even closer in the
coming week.**

Leader: God of the future,
make us ready for the coming of your reign,
when you will bring everlasting peace
and renew the face of the earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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: [The Thrill of Hope by Christy Nockels](#)

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.

John 6:31-35, p. 868

Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

[RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen \(Danish\)](#)

Group Reflection: How do we understand "bread of life"?

Hymn: [Bread of Life and Cup of Hope by Jane D'Souza](#)

Bread of life and Cup of hope,
we come as a gift to You.
Change our hearts; fill us with peace.
Transform our lives anew.

Open our eyes so that we might see
Your presence in one another.
Your life, poured out in love today,
unites us all in You.

Loving Lord, Creator
God,
open our eyes to see,
the good that lives in each of us,
that called the world to be.
And when we fail to see the good,
when friendships falter and crumble,
give us the courage to forgive
that we may live in peace.

Group Reflection: What is the bread of life for us?

Hymn: Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee by Go Fish

Joyful, joyful we adore thee
God of glory, Lord of love
Little baby here among us
sent to earth from God above

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness
Drive the dark of doubt away,
Giver of immortal
gladness
Fill us with the light of day!

All they works with joy surround
Thee,
earth and heaven reflect Thy rays.
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
center of unbroken praise

Field and forest, vale and mountain.
Flowery meadow, flashing sea.
Singing bird and flowing fountain
call us to rejoice in Thee

(enjoy the animation on the screen!)

Joyful, joyful we adore thee
God of glory, Lord of love
Little baby here among us
sent to earth from God above

Field and forest, vale and mountain.
Flowery meadow, flashing sea.
Singing bird and flowing
fountain
call us to rejoice in Thee

Congregational Reflection: Selecting December's Bread of Life

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:**

**We give you thanks and praise, O God,
that you have built us up in faith
and bound us together in love.
By your grace, may all that we do
show the glory of your name
and serve the good of your people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 122)

Leader: Let's celebrate every invitation to come nearer to God's presence.

All: Wherever our feet are standing, let us take a minute to realize we are in God's presence.

Leader: God has built a world that is woven tightly together, with each piece affecting the *shalom*, the peace, of all.

All: All the tribes of the world are invited into God's peace, where they can give thanks for the life they have been given.

Leader: God offers us a system of justice, especially for the weak and the vulnerable. To build that justice into our human systems lets us build a bit of God's kingdom into our daily lives.

All: We pray that the peace of God's kingdom will sweep through the world, that all will be safe from war and its ravages, from treason and betrayal that shatter communities as completely as combat.

Leader: For the sake of the people I know and love, I say "peace be within you."

All: For the sake of the people we do not know and yet still love with the love Jesus taught us, we say "We will seek your good.

Leader: 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."](#)

Postlude: [I Still Believe in Christmas by Anne Wilson](#)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.



PRAYER LIST (11/27/22)

- Friends & family of Elly Austin, Patty Birner, Jesse Delrossi, Jane Jukes, Edith Corey, Sandy Garvin, Scott Higgins, Ed Krom, Ron Whitebred.
- 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, having more surgery after his motorcycle accident
- For the friends and family of Chris Crowder, whose life we celebrated on Tuesday at the church.
- For all those involved in the shooting at the club in Colorado Springs, may the love of God surround them.
- For Carol, Candy's aunt, still working through the medical diagnosis process to figure out what is causing what is clearly not right
- For Lois, Amy's aunt, who would have loved to have met baby Parker
- 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 George, a beloved grandfather, in the hospital in Boston, may he recover fully and quickly and be home soon.
- For Kate, recovering from a migraine and scheduled to go with Sanjay to a concert with loud music and flashing lights this evening
- For Alex, Marjorie's friend, going for his last chemo treatment before returning to the Mayo Clinic, hopefully for good news.
- For Luke, Jessica's family friend, who has entered hospice care
- For Donna's dad, who fell and broke his shoulder. Hopefully he and Donna will be able to get out past 6½ feet of snow.
- For the friends and family of Chris Crowder, whose life we celebrated on Tuesday at the church.
- For those who will be helped by the donations from our recent food drive, that their balancing act of food, gas and housing might become easier.
- For the families who are getting help from SHARE to make this Christmas a merrier one, especially the two families we're supporting.
- 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: Morning¹

Lord God, you have woken me from sleep; the night is gone, the day is here. Enable me to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and help me to live honorably this day, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

God, my Savior, you are even nearer now than when I first learned to trust in you. Help me to lay aside the burdens of the day and rest in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, my strength and my salvation. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean to “get your house in order” for the coming of the Lord? Can we ever be perfectly ready for Christ’s return? Why is the coming of the Lord compared to a thief in the night? Is there grace in God’s surprising advent, God’s unexpected arrival?

Daily Awareness Reflection²

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 ...

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.

² Elizabeth Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31.

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.

	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	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 603-506-4455 for 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.

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.

Soup & Chili To Go at the Christmas Faire on December 4!

We hope to provide 7 soup and 7 chili choices. We'll need help with set-up (3-4pm), serving during the Faire (4-6pm), and cleanup (5:30-6:30pm).

If you are willing to make a soup or chili, please let Ann know (moderator@bccnh.org) and be specific with the type of soup or chili, so we can ensure some variety.

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 this year.

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

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) or Rev. Cath (minister@bccnh.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 or Marjorie Drake (mlapandrake@gmail.com).

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.

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](#) for more details.

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.

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](#) has updates. And there's now [a long, robust Google doc](#) 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

