



*Brookline Community
Church*

December 11, 2022

Prelude: [Psalm 146: Praise the Lord, My Soul by Mark Haas](#)

Call To Worship, Psalm 146:5-10, p. 507

Praise. Of David.

Leader: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD their God,

**All: who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;**

Leader: who keeps faith for ever;
who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

All: the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

Leader: The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

All: the LORD loves the righteous.

Leader: The LORD watches over the strangers;

**All: he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.**

Leader: The LORD will reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.

All: Praise the LORD!

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 Marjorie and David Drake will light the candles to bring us together in the warm light of God's love.

Lighter 1: In the Gospel of Luke, John the Baptizer points to Jesus:
as the people were filled with expectation, ...
questioning whether John might be the Messiah,
John answered them by saying,
"I baptize you with water,
but one who is more powerful than I is coming ...
He will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and fire." (*Luke 3:15-16*)

Lighter 2: If we follow Jesus Christ,
we will get everything we hope for,
and more than we bargained for
We light our third candle to praise God
whose Spirit comes to us
with disturbing and wonderful blessings.
(Light the pink candle)

Lighter 1: Living Christ, give us faith to trust you
hope to follow you,
and love to live for you.

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

[Response: The Advent Song by Janess Sifers](#)

Words	Gestures
Advent is the time to wait	Point at wristwatch on arm
Not quite time to celebrate	Wag finger in a 'no' motion
Count the candles one by one	Put up four fingers one by one: index, middle, ring finger, pinky
Until Advent time is done	Hands out palms up make a circle ending with palms down on the word 'done'
Day by Day we work and play	Create fists with both hands, stack on top of each other, bringing bottom to top
to prepare for Christmas Day	Cross hands over and place on chest

Children's Message: The Gift of Patience

Hymn: [When We Seek Him by Shawna Edwards and Angie Killian](#)

We'll sing the chorus and let the kids in the video sing the verses.

If miles lay between us
Then I'd walk to Jesus;
O'er mountain and desert
I'd follow that star
But he doesn't ask us
To journey so far
For he will be with us wherever we are
When we seek him

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: [Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness by the Chet Valley Churches](#)

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.

Celebration of Holy Communion¹

Stations of Welcome

Stations of Remembering

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Elements

Stations of Thanksgiving

Hymn: [Gaudete by Steeleye Span](#)

¹ The communion liturgy was inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "Stations of the Crèche Communion — December 4, 2022" Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted November 23, 2022, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2022/11/23/stations-of-the-creche-communion-december-4-2022/> (accessed November 30, 2022).

Scripture Reading: James 5:7-10, p. 982

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)

Reflection on the Scripture:

Prayer for Advent Preparation²

Leader: Be still, my impatient spirit.

Wait in hope; wait in peace; wait in joy; wait in love - just wait.

All: Preparation has more to do with my heart than bows and ribbons.

Leader: Please, God, strengthen my heart for patient preparation.

All: Preparation that takes time to hear and read the story and patience to hear the message anew.

Leader: Please, Jesus, curb my tendency to grumble through my preparation.

All: Preparation that asks me to give of myself in all the ways I can each day to better reveal you.

Leader: Please, Spirit, soften my soul for hearing and understanding in the face of so much suffering in the name of preparation.

All: Preparation that asks us to love more than to be loved.

Everyone: God, still my impatient spirit.

Jesus, help me to wait in hope, in peace, in joy and in love.

Spirit, quiet me to wait with love.

Amen

² This prayer for Advent preparation came from Carol A. Crothers, the Many Waters District Lay Leader who offered the UMC's Daily Prayer on December 8, 2022.

Hymn: [O Come Divine Messiah by the Sunday 7:00pm Choir](#)

O come, divine Messiah.
The world, in silence, waits the day.
When hope shall sing its triumph
And sadness flee away.

Dear Saviour haste!
Come, come to earth.
Dispel the night and show your face,
And bid us hail the dawn of grace.

O come, divine Messiah.
The world, in silence, waits the day.
When hope shall sing its triumph
And sadness flee away.

O Christ, whom nations sigh for,
Whom priests and prophet long
fortold,
Come, break the captive's fetters,
Redeem the long-lost fold.

Dear Saviour, haste!
Come, come to earth.
Dispel the night and show your face,
And bid us hail the dawn of grace.

O come, divine Messiah.
The world, in silence, waits the day.
When hope shall sing its triumph.
And sadness flee away.

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:**

**Thanks be to you, O God, maker of heaven and earth—
giver of justice, lover of righteousness,
hope of the afflicted, and friend of the poor.
Your faithfulness never fails.
Take and use these gifts we offer
to further your purpose in the world
and to fulfill the promise of the world to come;
through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.**

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 146:5-10)

Leader: I look for flourishing life all around me because the God of my ancestors is still with me

All: Life flourishes because God made the heaven and earth, found a place for chaos, made a plan for peace.

Leader: I find life flourishing all around me, not just because the natural and wild places are beautiful, but because God has set the world up to offer justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry.

All: God is freeing those imprisoned in prejudice, opening the eyes of those blinded by racism, lifting the burdens of economic disparity

Leader: God invites all of us to return to right relationship with God and with each other

All: God watches over the stranger, those who have no access to power in the world

Leader: But the wicked God strikes down, sooner or later, even if we don't see it.

All: God will reign forever and make God's kingdom in our hearts and in the heart of this world

Leader: Praise the Lord, Hallelujah

All: Hallelujah and Praise the Lord.

[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: [Christmas is Coming by Jason Gray](#)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Notes:

Psalm 146

Psalm 146 begins with a summons to praise (v. 1), followed by a double resolve by the speaker to praise (v.2). Praise will last as long as life itself. The question of the psalm is: Whom shall we trust? The answer is: do not trust princes, do not trust humanity, do not trust creation, do not trust ostensive power. They become powerless, futile, helpless, unable to deliver, and unable to keep promises. In an affluent society like ours, besotted with self-sufficiency, the question of basic trust is a profound public issue. The negative answer to the question of trust is an assault on the most powerful ideologies of our own society.

The positive counterpart is God, so helpful, who is unlike power arrangements of this age, which are fickle and fleeting and unable to help.

There follows in the psalm a bill of particulars concerning the fidelity of this creator God “who makes, who keeps, who executes, who gives.” We cannot praise God very long without embracing the core agenda of well-being for God’s beloved creatures.

The doxology draws God and the singing congregation into the reality of social emergency, social inequality, and social possibility. Then comes the concluding doxology that matches the introduction (v. 10).

Psalm 146 is a statement about God’s powerful purpose for human well-being. The psalm is an act of self-abandonment in trust to God. The psalm urges casting one’s lot with this God who is present, powerful, and noticing, the only true help and comfort in life. Psalm 146 lives at the threshold of action. Such singing as Psalm 146 precludes any more dropping out into safe, indulgent self-concern, because the world is decisively reshaped in the song. The sinners cannot stand outside the orbit of God and God’s noticed, treasured partners.

Walter Brueggemann, *The Psalms and the Life of Faith*. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 126-129.



PRAYER LIST (12/11/22)

- Friends & family of Elly Austin, Patty Birner, Jesse Delrossi, Jane Jukes, Edith Corey, Sandy Garvin, Scott Higgins, Ed Krom, Ron Whitebred, Chris Crowder.
- 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
- 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 Jim, 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 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 George, a beloved grandfather, in the hospital in Boston, may he recover fully and quickly and be home soon.
- For Alex, Marjorie's friend, going for his last chemo treatment before returning to the Mayo Clinic, hopefully for good news.
- For Cassie, Amy's mom, who fell and broke her hip, may she recover soon
- For Anne & John, Rev. Cath's parents, recovering from Covid, and from an additional trip to the ER. May they have a quiet, isolated week with no more drama
- For the friends and family of Morris Nicholson, John's father, who passed away at his home in Arizona after a long illness
- For the friends and family of Andrew, Candy's four-year-old cousin, who passed away on Sunday after catching flu on Thursday
- For Paulette, Rena's daughter-in-law's mother, who's been diagnosed with terminal cancer. May the love that surrounds her help her through this difficult time.
- For Mary, Rena's high school friend, who's facing back surgery.
- 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: Morning³

Holy God, at the dawning of this day new life blossoms like the crocus, and fresh promise wells up like a spring. As I go forth in your presence, confirm my resolve to worship you, strengthen my hands to serve your people, and keep me always in your holy way; through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Mighty God, my soul rejoices at the great things you have done this day—giving daily bread for my hunger, showing endless mercy for my sin. As you have blessed my ancestors bless and keep me this night; in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What does the kingdom of heaven have to do with the signs that Jesus describes for John's disciples: "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Matt. 11:5)? Where have you seen or heard such things?

Daily Awareness Reflection⁴

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 ...

³ 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.

⁴ 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 +/-
November	\$82,450	\$83,380	(\$930)

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.

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.

Christian Education Coming up on January 1, 8:30-9:30am

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

Offering Envelopes

If you would like offering envelopes, talk to Rena or email her at renaduncklee@charter.net.

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