



Prelude

Call To Worship, Psalm 121, p. 498

A Song of Ascents.

Leader: I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

**All: My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.**

Leader: He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

**All: The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

Leader: The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

**All: The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and for evermore.**

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

Children's Message: Measuring God's Love

Hymn: #552 *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

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.

A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:

[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.]

Blessing of the New Chalice

In December, 2022, United Methodist Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar retired. He auctioned off a number of chalices to raise money for the UMC Clergy Respite Fund. The deacons participated in the auction, placing the winning bid for this lovely blue ceramic chalice.

Let us pray a prayer attributed to St. Therese

**Loving God, to you I raise my whole being,
a vessel emptied of self.
Accept Lord, my emptiness,
and so fill me with yourself,
Your Light, your Love, your Life,
that these precious gifts may radiate through me
and over-flow the chalice of my heart
into the hearts of all with whom I come in contact this day,
revealing unto them the beauty of your Joy and Wholeness
and the Serenity of your Peace
which nothing can destroy.
Amen.**

Hymn: #212 *What Wondrous Love Is This*

Invitation to Holy Communion, reflecting on Psalm 121¹

Leader: We lift up our eyes to grandma's pantry and the food pantry,
to sacristy and IV pole, grocery bag and take-out,
looking for what sustains us.

**All: God sustains us with the gifts of earth and sky,
with parable words to guide our decisions,
and human helpers to hold our sorrows.**

Leader: God does not sleep through our prayers
or slumber when we weep or complain.

**All: God is our host, giving us a true meal,
for the hungers of daytime work
the wanderings of the night,
and even when danger and loss surprises us.**

Leader: We have bread and cup strength when we go out,
bread and cup comfort when we come in,

**All: a sacrament of life as real as daily food,
as holy as the small, sweet gift of Holy Communion.**

Words of Remembering

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Elements

Leader: Let us receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

All: We come to Christ in this and every bread we share.
(Eat the bread)

Leader: Let us receive the gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

All: We come to Christ in this and every cup we share.
(Drink from the cup)

¹ Today's Communion Liturgy was inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "Celebration of Holy Communion – March 6, 2023," Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted February, 2023,
<https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2023/02/23/holy-communion-liturgy-for-march-6-2023/>
(accessed March 1, 2023)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: In thanksgiving for this sustenance on our Lenten journey, we claim all stories of Jesus Christ as our own, a path of healing and love toward the cross and the ever-present truth of the resurrection. Let us pray ...

All: **O Holy One, we come to you with our weariness and hope. We thank you for the rest and strength of this Communion so that we may re-turn our tables to service in the world and hear your words of guidance every day and every night through Christ who has taught us to pray, saying ...**

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.

Hymn: #224 Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know

Scripture Reading: John 3:1-17, pp. 863-864

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

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

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: #519 *It is Well with My Soul*

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:**

**Gracious God,
we dedicate to you not only these gifts,
but also ourselves, in deep gratitude—
for your call on our lives,
for blessing us
that we may be a blessing to others.
Accept what we bring
for your own good purposes.
In Christ we pray. Amen.**

Announcements

A Prayer of Confession to Send us Back Out into the World

Leader: We cannot earn God's grace or favor.
It comes to us, not as something owed,
but as a gift freely given.
Confident in God's love for us,
even when we are ungodly,
we confess our sins in faith.

**All: Gracious God, we come before you
in need of forgiveness and grace.
You call us to trust in you completely,
but we do not.**

**We are timid and fearful as we follow your lead.
We justify our actions and words,
though we know they are not what you require.
We struggle to understand the new life Christ offers,
preferring old habits to risky change.**

**Forgive us, we pray.
Help us to be born again into the life of Christ,
trusting that you have included us by grace
in the family of faith.**

Leader: Friends, God is for us and not against us!
For that very reason,
God sent the Son into the world
not to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.
Believe the good news,

All: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

[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

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Notes:

Psalm 121

This psalm, along with Psalm 23, is our best-loved psalm. It is a song for pilgrims under way to Jerusalem who are passing through ominous terrain. The hills are filled with threat and danger that evoke the question of “help” (v. 1).

The simple, direct, unambiguous answer in verse 2 is that God is the single, necessary, all-sufficient source of help who will give protection. As creator of “heaven and earth,” moreover, God is surely sovereign over “the hills,” even if they seem full of threat.

In the following (vv. 3-8), God is credited with three characteristics: (a) God protects the path of the pilgrims; (b) God is vigilant and does not sleep; and (c) God is endlessly awake and attentive. God is the keeper, the one who guards, protects, preserves, and keeps safe. Thus, in verse 4 the questions of verse 1 is fully answered.

In verses 5-8, more statements are made concerning God, only now God is explicitly named four times. Verse 5 reiterates the primary claim of verses 3-4: God is “keeper.” God is like a shade tree to protect travelers from the heat of the sun; the poetic parallel of the moon is added, for one does not need to be protected from the moon.

From the specificity of sun and moon, verses 7-8 make a more general claim. Now God protects the traveler from “all evil,” from every possible threat. It is God who keeps one’s life safe, even in dangerous circumstances. The traveler is safe departing and arriving, and all along the way.

The psalm voices a simple, direction confidence in God. The term “keep” (along with “help”) governs the poetry. The recurrence of the term “keep” attests to the abiding, complete trustworthiness of the presence of God in every season of risk.



PRAYER LIST (3/5/23)

- Friends & family of Jesse Delrossi, Jane Jukes, Edith Corey, Sandy Garvin, Scott Higgins, Ed Krom, Ron Whitebred, Chris Crowder, Morris Nicholson, Eddy Razzaboni, Flora Kenyon.
- 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 those who are balancing food, gas and housing in tough times
- For Rick, Nancy's cousin, diagnosed with Stage 4 kidney cancer
- For Jen, the Aitken's friend, diagnosed with cancer
- For Hailey, daughter of the Razzabonis' friends, who has started cancer treatment
- For Jessica's relative, who's been diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma, may they find the right combination of care quickly
- For Peter, Rev. Cath's cousin, whose pancreatic cancer has shown up in his liver
- For the friends and family of Polly, John Panto's sister, who passed away after a long illness
- For the Avramovs, traveling to Prague later in the week, may it all go smoothly
- For Doris, Marjorie's 98 year-old aunt, who's been diagnosed with Covid
- For all those struggling to start a family
- For Harrison and his grandparents, a good friend, who is in week 10 of Covid; may they recover soon
- For the rapid recover of a friend's newborn, in for retinal surgery this week at Boston Children's Hospital
- For Dennis Miller, Susan & Russell's relative in CA, who is seeking a diagnosis and cure for a serious illness
- 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: Morning²

Loving God, you have given me the gift of this new day, and you send me out to live it fully and well. Help me to be attentive to your direction and leading. If you should call me to go in some direction, give me courage to try this new thing. If you present me with a mysterious truth or grace, help me to understand, or to seek understanding, with a sense of wonder and faith. Whatever this day may hold, I trust that you will keep me in all my comings and goings. In your Son's name, I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Gracious God, as the evening comes and the light fades, I look for you even in the shadows. Your love and protection stay with me through the night hours, and I rest in your promises. For the day as it has been, I give you thanks. For the gift of rest, I offer a hymn of praise. You love me and the whole world so greatly that you offer us salvation. After a night of rest, bring me into the light of a new day. In gratitude, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

Why does Jesus instruct the disciples to keep quiet about what they had seen “until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead” (Matt. 17:9)?

Daily Awareness Reflection³

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 ...

² 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.

³ Elizabeth Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31.

Announcements

The church's financial obligations continue.

	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs. Expenses +/-
February	\$11,682	\$17,386	(\$5,704)

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.

Thanks to everyone who supported Outreach's recent efforts

We're very grateful for everyone who contributed to our recent drive to support Marguerite's Place and the Salvation Army Food Pantry. A small donation can make such a big difference in someone's life.

Christian Education Coming up on March 5, 8:30-9:30am

We'll be continuing our Christian Education program (for both kids and adults) on March 5. We'll be taking a kid's eye view at Holy Week. I think the adults might be surprised by what they see. Coming up: Mar. 26 (Palm Sunday is Apr. 2, so we'll meet a week early), May 7, Jun. 4.

March 11, Senior Luncheon: Corned Beef & Cabbage

Faith and begorrah, it's time to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the seniors in the community.

March 11, Food Pantry Fundraiser at the Event Center

The Fire Department is working on an evening fundraiser at the Event Center to support the Brookline Food Pantry. There are rumors of corned beef and cabbage and special entertainment!

Take Home Meal, March 24, Supporting Habitat for Humanity

We're supporting Habitat for Humanity with March's THM. If you would like to provide an "add on," something we can sell in addition to the meals, please let Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com) know.

The Church has 12 Covid Test Kits, Take & Replace!

NH made Covid supplies available to certain non-profits. We took advantage of the program to snag 12 Covid test kits. If they become hard to find again, feel free to grab one (Candy secretary@bccnh.org can help) and replace it later.

Cookies/Cakes for Coffee Hour

We like to have treats available during coffee hour, so if you're cooking at home and would make a bit extra for the church, we'd love to freeze them and share the love later.

His Mansion is Hiring a Director of Operations for their 320 acre campus

The Director of Operations leads a team who runs the day-to-day operations of a 320-acre campus and property. This includes building maintenance, work crews, property care, and farming. Housing and a hybrid compensation package may be available. See Rev. Cath (minister@bccnh.org) for more details.

Update to the Senior Citizen Active Walking Program

A nice addition to the Winter Walking Program, offered to Brookline residents age 70+ at The Hampshire Dome in Milford by NH Wellpoint Foundation, is LUNCH!! Beginning February 21st, Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County is proud to sponsor free lunches for participants of the Hampshire Dome Winter Walking Program. Lunch is available on Tuesdays 11:30AM -12:30PM. Please see [the flyer](#) for more details.

Horton Center Schedule for 2023 looks awesome!

Lots of fun theme weeks, from Mysteries on the Mountain to Hogwarts at Horton Center. If you know of anyone who could use some time in a beautiful place, centered on Christian faith, please pass the word. Scholarships are available. www.hortoncenter.org.

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