



Prelude

Call To Worship, Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16, pp. 439-440

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

Leader: In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;
do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.
Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily.

**All: Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.**

Leader: You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me,
take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.

**All: Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.**

Leader: My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

**All: Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.**

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

Children's Message: Recalculating

Hymn: #251 *Thine is the Glory*

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:¹

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: #5 *Come, Thou Almighty King*

Sacrament of Communion

Prayer of Confession

Minister: Whoever believes in Christ will not be put to shame.
Confident in this promise,
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

**All: Almighty God,
your word offers freedom from sin,
but we confess that we have not obeyed your word.
We have harbored malice toward our enemies;
we have been deceitful in our relationships;
we have been insincere in our commitments;
through gossip we have slandered our friends.
Forgive us our sins and lead us to genuine repentance.
Help your children long for your pure, spiritual milk
that we may grow into the joy of salvation
through Jesus Christ.**

¹ Today's Prayer of Joys and Concerns was inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "An improv on John 14's opening verses ..." Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted May 3, 2023, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2023/05/03/an-improv-as-john-14s-opening-verses/> (accessed May 4, 2023).

Minister: Sisters and brothers,
once we were not a people,
but now we are God's people;
once we had not received mercy,
but now we have received mercy.
In the name of Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Invitation to the Table

Minister: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

Minister: Let us give thanks to God most high.

All: It is right to give thanks and praise.

Words of Consecration

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks O God for having renewed and refreshed us with this sacrament of your love and for being present with us through Christ. We ask, O God, that our faith be strengthened and our love for one another be increased that we would be a true witness to your love. We ask it in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn: #648 O Jesus, I Have Promised

Scripture Reading: John 14:1-14, p. 877

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

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

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: #365 *Abide with Me, Fast Falls the Eventide*

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 the gifts we bring in gratitude for your astounding goodness.
Make our lives to be an acceptable offering in union with our risen Lord,
who lives and reigns with you forever.
Amen.**

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16)

Leader: Lord, I am broken and frightened that someone will call me on it. I need your help to pull myself together.

All: **Be strong for me, hold me fast, keep me from flying apart.**

Leader: I am so grateful that you are as solid and protecting as you have been from the beginning, as gentle and tender that you will disentangle me from all the nets and snares and traps that life has laid for me.

All: **You promised my life was worth saving and you saved it.
Whatever the cost was to bring me back to myself, you paid it
and set me free.**

Leader: Where I go from here is up to you. You are keeping my enemies at bay.

All: Shine your light on me, let me see your face in my darkest night, weave your steadfast love into my tattered soul and make me whole.

Leader: Let all of God's people say, Amen.

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

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Notes:

Psalm 31

Psalm 31 is a petition in crisis, alternating between petition and confession of trust. Verses 1-8 suggest that the alternative to God’s refuge is shame. In the ancient Near East, shame was a more powerful force, a life of dishonor, rather than our contemporary association with embarrassment and grief. Shame was associated with death and destruction, a broken life with no hope. This God took the risk of initiating a relationship with the covenant community, and that includes the speaker. The expectation of that relationship is that God is the one who comes to deliver refuge and a reversal of the crisis.

Verses 9-20 articulate a renewed prayer for help, beginning again with strong petition. It uses personal imagery to characterize a crisis that involves all of life: eye, body, strength, and bones. Sorrow and grief define all of life. The speaker has been shamed and so is shunned as one gripped by the power of death. Although it seems that enemies surround the petitioner, God is still worthy of trust: “I say, ‘You are my God.’” That simple and profound articulation of the I-Thou relationship makes it clear that the petitioner’s future is in divine hands. God is the one who gives refuge from malicious gossip and the shame it brings.

Verses 21-24 express certainty that God hears the petitions of the covenant community. The petitioner has found renewed faith in the midst of this struggle. The petitioner’s fear was that the shame resulting from malicious enemies would lead to even more troubling isolation. The petitioner has found a renewed faith and perspective even though the crisis is still present. The divine promise stands even in the face of oppression.



PRAYER LIST (5/7/23)

- 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, Polly Foley.
- 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 been declared cancer free!
- For Jessica's relative, who's been diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma, may they find the right combination of care quickly
- For friends and family of Peter Merrill, Rev. Cath's cousin, who died of pancreatic cancer surrounded by his family
- For the friends and family of Jean Reinhold, Russell's brother's mother-in-law
- For Alex, Marjorie's friend, whose diagnosis at the Mayo Clinic means more chemotherapy to hopefully get a better handle on the cancer.
- For Kaye, Kym's sister, who has been in the hospital for a month, struggling to get on a stable path back to going home.
- For Dave Joki and Dave Flannery, both members of the Brookline Fire Department, both fighting cancer
- For Eric, Rena's high school friend's son, who is having serious side effects from his cancer treatment
- For Brandy, Jessica's sister, whose family is going through a lot at the moment.
- For Paul, John's friend, who's in a tough fight with cancer.
- For the friends and family of Ken Perrin, whom we laid to rest this week.
- For those with and who struggle daily with mental health issues, especially anxiety and depression
- For all those struggling to start a family
- 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

Lord Jesus, as I serve you this day, let not my heart be troubled. Help me to believe with conviction that you are with me, and I am in you, and you are in God. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Faithful God, my rock and my fortress, into your hands I commit my spirit. As darkness falls, let your face shine upon your servant, and keep me in your steadfast love. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

Is the “dwelling place” (John 14:1–14) of which Jesus speaks a place for us after we die, or does it include our life in the present? What does Jesus mean when he says that his disciples “will do greater works”? What does it mean to pray “in Jesus’ name”?

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 +/-
April	\$40,847	\$35,143	\$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.

Senior Luncheon on May 6, 11:30am

Pasta salad, sandwiches and great company. We have a very flexible definition of "senior" so come and add to the company!

Christian Education Coming up on May 7, 8:30-9:30am

We'll be continuing our Christian Education program (for both kids and adults) on May 7. Coming up: Jun. 4.

Annual Meeting of the Hillsborough UCC on May 7, 2:00-5:00pm

The meeting will be held in person at the Hollis Congregational Church and on-line on Zoom. Please let Rev. Cath know if you would like to attend and she'll get you all the details.

E-Recycling and Repairing Event on May 13

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is hosting an electronic device collection with Makelt Labs on Saturday, May 13th from 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon at 25 Crown Street, Nashua. [More details](#) on what you can bring.

Scouts Spaghetti Supper, May 13

Nothing tastes better than a spaghetti supper to support Scouting in the community. Plus there's no clean up!

Dinner to Support Dave Joki, May 19 at the Event Center

Roast beef dinner, comedian/hypnotist, meat raffle, raffle baskets, so much goodness going to support fire fighter Dave Joki as he fights cancer! Tickets available to enjoy the evening. Contact Peter B (pdrbret@charter.net) for details.

Make it easier to find your house; House numbers visible from 50'

Emergency services come quickly, but it can be hard finding the right house if the numbers aren't clear and visible from at least 50' away. So take a fresh look at how easy it is to find your home, especially for someone hurrying to help!

B – S.A.F.E.: Brookline - Special Assistance for Emergencies

If you have special accommodation needs or require special assistance during a possible or actual emergency within the town, such as an extended power outage or undrivable road conditions, the information would be helpful to local responders. This could include information on complicated medical condition or medical equipment, communication challenges such as hearing loss or inability to speak, etc. [The form](#) is completely voluntary. It should be returned to the Ambulance chief.

Critical Home Repair Program from Habitat for Humanity

The program provides home repairs to low to moderate income homeowners who are struggling to maintain their homes due to age, disability or family circumstances. The program focuses on health, life and safety code issues. It allows Habitat for Humanity to partner with families to help them reclaim their homes with pride, dignity, and in safety without being disrupted by the uncertainty, trauma and expense of moving. [More information and an application](#) are available on Habitat's website.

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.

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