



Brookline Community Church
May 21, 2023
Rev. Catherine A. Merrill,
Minister

[Prelude: Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring by VOCES8](#)

Call To Worship, Psalm 93, p. 478

Leader: The LORD is king, he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed, he is girded with strength.
He has established the world; it shall never be moved;

**All: your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.**

Leader: The floods have lifted up, O LORD,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.

**All: More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters,
more majestic than the waves of the sea,
majestic on high is the LORD!**

Leader: Your decrees are very sure;

**All: holiness befits your house,
O LORD, for evermore.**

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

Hymn: Psalm 93 The Seas Have Lifted Up by the Sons of Korah

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.

Children's Message: He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

He's got the whole world in his hands	He's got everybody here in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands	He's got everybody here in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands	He's got everybody here in his hands
He's got the whole world in his hands	He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got the little bitty baby in his hands	He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got the little bitty baby in his hands	He's got the whole wide world in his
He's got the little bitty baby in his hands	hands
He's got the whole world in his hands	He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got you and me, brother, in his	He's got the whole world in his hands
hands	He's got the whole world in his hands
He's got you and me, sister, in his	(repeat)
hands	
He's got you and me, brother, in his	
hands	
He's got the whole world in his hands	

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.]

¹ Today's Prayer of Joys and Concerns was inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "Ascension Day, 2021" Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted May 13, 2021, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2021/05/13/ascension-day-2021/> (accessed May 17, 2023).

Hymn: Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise by North Stoneham and Basset Parish

Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
To his throne above the skies. Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners give, Alleluia!
Enters now the highest heaven. Alleluia!

There for him high triumph waits; Alleluia!
Lift your heads, eternal gates. Alleluia!
He has conquered death and sin; Alleluia!
Take the King of glory in. Alleluia!

Lo, the heaven its Lord receives; Alleluia!
Yet he loves the earth he leaves. Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
Still he calls mankind his own. Alleluia!

See, he lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
See, he shews the prints of love; Alleluia!
Hark, his gracious lip bestow; Alleluia!
Blessings on his church below. Alleluia!

Still for us he intercedes; Alleluia!
His prevailing death he pleads, Alleluia!
Near himself prepares our place, Alleluia!
He the first-fruits of our race. Alleluia!

Lord though parted from our sight, Alleluia!
Far above the starry height, Alleluia!
Grant our hearts may thither rise, Alleluia!
Seeking thee above the skies. Alleluia!

Scripture Reading: Luke 24:44-53, p. 861

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: *The Ascension* by Phil Wickham

This is the start of something
amazing
A moment when heaven touches
earth
Here in our hearts Lord we are
waiting
For something that's far beyond
What we have seen or heard
Let us start the ascension let's begin
the climb
Up this holy mountain where Your
glory shines
Further up further in just to be with
You again
Let us start the ascension
We're fixing our eyes on glory and
fire
Your name is branded on our hearts
You are the source of all we desire
Nothing can hold us back
We're running to where you are
Let us start the ascension let's begin
the climb

Up this holy mountain where Your
glory shines
Further up further in just to be with
You again
Let us start the ascension
We run to your light
Let us start the ascension let's begin
the climb
Up this holy mountain where Your
glory shines
Further up further in just to be with
You again
Let us start
Let us start the ascension let's begin
the climb
Up this holy mountain where Your
glory shines
Further up further in just to be with
You again
Let us start the ascension
We run to your light

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:**

O God of all glory and majesty,
we give you thanks for the gift of your Son,
and his power at work in our lives and our gifts.
Bless these gifts for the benefits they afford
in bringing life to others in your name.
Bless our lives that we may be your witnesses to the end of the earth
as we love and serve you, O God most high. Amen.

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 93)

Leader: In this world, which seems to have the “crazy” knob dialed up to 11,
there is a strong and peaceful ruler.

**All: My ruler brought order out of chaos, brought everything that is
out of the whirlpool of chaos and calamity.**

Leader: As the roaring of anger gets louder, as the roaring of fear and shame
and hate gets louder, as the roaring of division gets louder and my
attention strays

**All: God's love drowns out the anger, God's peace drowns out the
fear and everything else, God's grace drowns all the division,
until all the chaos is washed away.**

Leader: My ruler is sure, is mighty, is reliable.

**All: God offers sanctuary to everyone, yesterday, today and
tomorrow, without question or condition**

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: Ascension Song by Graham Kendrick](#)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Notes:

Psalm 93

The beginning verses of Psalm 93 suggest that God has been king from of old. The phrase could well be an enthronement acclamation, but that does not assume that God was not king and now suddenly is somehow. It rather reenacts and celebrates the acclamation for the festival congregation. The proclamation that God reigns makes the confession present and formative for the congregation.

The psalm's opening phrase announces the theme of the reign of God. The emphasis is that it is God who reigns as king, robed in royal garments, majesty, and strength. This king created the world and reigns over it; it is established and stable, a witness to the divine rule. The choir response affirms that God's throne is "from of old" and that the victorious divine warrior tames the forces of chaos. God reigns, and thus the order of creation remains established. Chaos will not reassert itself and bring instability or catastrophe. The portrayal of chaos is the battle that would undo the order of creation, but it is God who has tamed these forces of disorder. One could interpret verse 3 as suggesting that the waters threaten God or that the water praise God, but in either case it is clear that God is greater than the waters of chaos. The taming of the seas bears witness to the divine kingship. Psalm 93 begins by acclaiming God's reign and then portrays the battle with the forces of chaos, so the divine king is present and active on behalf of the creation and the congregation.

The psalm's conclusion proclaims that God's decrees are trustworthy, perhaps a reference to the decrees of verses 1-4. The sanctuary is symbolic of the divine throne room, and from there the divine king proclaims decision or ordinances for governing the community's social and religious life. In that way, the sanctuary, the Jerusalem temple, becomes a source of divine blessing.



PRAYER LIST (5/21/23)

- Friends & family of Jane Jukes, Edith Corey, Sandy Garvin, Scott Higgins, Ed Krom, Ron Whitebred, Chris Crowder, Morris Nicholson, Eddy Razzaboni, Flora Kenyon, Polly Foley, Ken Perrin.
- 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 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 Paul, John's friend, who's in a tough fight with cancer.
- For Renee, Donna's nephew's wife, going through cancer treatment, including tumor surgery.
- For Brandon, Jill & Kevin's friend, admitted to Tufts Medical Center.
- For Kim, Amy's friend, who is in the hospital
- For Nathan Bairstow, a student at Hollis Brookline High School who passed away recently
- For friends and family of the six-year-old girl struck and killed in Andover's town square, and for the truck driver who hit her.
- 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

Holy God, I give thanks this day that your Son ascends in the core of my being as new life arises in me. Open the eyes of my heart this day to seek and serve you in all whom I meet. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

I repent of the wrongs I have done this day, and seek forgiveness by the grace of your love. Clothe me with power on high this night that my life may rest hidden in you. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

The risen and ascended Christ promises to send us power from on high. How do I use such “soul force” to bring forgiveness, blessing, and love to others?

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.

Chicken Florentine, Take Home Meal, May 19

Part of the proceeds this month go to His Mansion. His Mansion Ministries is a residential recovery community located in Deering, NH. Let Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com) know if you'd like an order (you can order it without spinach if your Popeye muscles are already strong enough!).

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.

Spring Cleanup at the Church, June 3, 8:30am:

Come help Susan Haight and David Drake get the exterior grounds and gardens spiffed up for the spring. We'll be getting rid of last year's leaves and putting down a fresh layer of mulch.

Memorial Day Weekend Worship Change: Thurs. May 25, 7:00pm

Like last year, we'll worship together on Thursday, May 25 at 7:00pm celebrating Pentecost. Then we won't meet again until Sunday, June 4th.

Rev. Cath on vacation May 26 – June 4

Rev. Cath will be taking vacation from May 26 to June 4. The Deacons will be leading worship on June 4. If you need Rev. Cath during that week, contact Candy (secretary@bccnh.org, 603-801-5918) or Jill (jgoods4@gmail.com, 973-713-7832) and they'll get you to the correct person.

Barbeque Take Home Meal, SATURDAY, June 10th

Ribs with 2 or 4 sides. So, so, so good. While they may not freeze, they'll eat like you've gone to heaven. Let Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com) know if you're interested.

2023 Parking Passes are available for the Grove

You'll need a parking pass to park for our Lake worship services in June, July & August. For membership details and hours when you can get that taken care of, [see the town website](#). If you aren't a Brookline resident, contact Candy (secretary@bccnh.org, 603-801-5918) and she'll explain the system.

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, 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.

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