



*Brookline
Community Church
December 31, 2023*

[Photo by lascot studio:](#)

Prelude: *Magnificat* by Nidarosdomens jentekor & TrondheimSolistene

Call To Worship, The Magnificat, Luke 1:46b-55, pp. 831-832

- Leader: 'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
**All: for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.**
- Leader: His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
**All: He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.**
- Leader: He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
**All: he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.**
- Leader: He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
**All: according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'**

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

Children's Message: *How do you become a card carrying member?*

Hymn: *His Name is Wonderful* by Chazz Robertson

Come see the baby Crib for a bed His mother Mary Lay down His sweet head
The starlight was shining The wise men were led Come see the baby And
worship Him

His name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting
Father, Emmanuel, Holy One, Son of God, Savior of the world

Come and adore Him On bended knee He came to ransom Someone like me
What could I offer What could I bring Come and adore Him King of Kings

His name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting
Father, Emmanuel, Holy One, Son of God, Savior of the world

And the greatness of His reign will never end

Let there be peace on earth And all goodwill to men

Come let us worship Him

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father,
Emmanuel, Son of God, Holy One, Savior of the world

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father,
Emmanuel, Holy One, Son of God, Savior of the world

A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:¹

The response to "we are God's beloved children" is "**We are your daughters.
We are your sons.**"

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 & Concerns is inspired by Brian Wren, *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayer for Public Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 162-163.

Hymn: *Mary's Song* by Liturgical Music

My soul proclaims the Lord my God. My spirit sings God's praise, Who looks on me, and lifts me up, That gladness fills my days.

All nations now will share my joy; For gifts God has out-poured. This lowly one has been made great. I magnify the Lord.

For those who fear the Holy One, God's mercy will not die. Whose strong right arm puts down the proud, And lifts the lowly high.

God fills the hungry with good things, And sends the rich away; The promise made to Abraham Is filled to endless day.

Then let all nations praise our God, The Father and the Son, The Spirit blest, who lives in us, While endless ages run.

Galatians 4:4-7, p. 947

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

RESPONSE: #820 Threefold Amen (Danish)

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: *I Still Believe in Christmas* by Anne Wilson

The choir's singing carols. Bells are ringing, streets are bright. It's Christmas all around me, so why is Christmas hard to find? December snow is falling down, like I am to my knees. I could use some hope right now, cause right now hope is hard to see.

Help me still believe.

For God so loved this broken world, He sent His only son, To a carpenter and teenage girl, to show us all His love. He left His home in heaven, to make heaven my home. My Emmanuel is with me, and I'll never be alone. Down here my heart can't find much to believe in, but I still believe in Christmas.

I still believe in healing, for the weary and the hurt. And in a world that's so divided, I still believe in peace on earth. I still believe that love is strong enough to conquer hate. And in a world that won't believe it, I still believe enough to say:

For God so loved this broken world, He sent His only son, To a carpenter and teenage girl, to show us all His love. He left His home in heaven, to make heaven my home. My Emmanuel is with me, and I'll never be alone. Down here my heart can't find much to believe in, but I still believe in Christmas.

I still believe in Christmas.

I still believe in Jesus. The name above all names. A Savior in a manger. And a star that leads the way. Help us all believe.

For God so loved this broken world, He sent His only son to a carpenter and teenage girl, to show us all His love. He left His home in heaven, to make heaven my home. My Emmanuel is with me, and I'll never be alone. Down here my heart can't find much to believe in, but I still believe in Christmas.

I still believe in Christmas.

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:**

**Loving God,
we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ,
through whom we have received adoption as your children.**

**With Jesus our brother,
we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world,
that we may live as heirs of your promises
to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.**

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

Leader: The Promised One of God brings good news
to the oppressed
and binds up the brokenhearted.

All: We are witnesses to the light of Christ!

Leader: The Promised One of God proclaims liberty
to captives and release to prisoners.

All: We are witnesses to the light of Christ!

Leader: The Promised One of God comforts all who mourn
and gives a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

**All: Rejoicing always, praying without ceasing,
holding fast to what is good,
we are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

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: *Because of Bethlehem* by Matthew West](#)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.



PRAYER LIST (12/31/23)

- Friends & family of Morris Nicholson, Eddy Razzaboni, Flora Kenyon, Polly Foley, Ken Perrin.
- For Dave Joki and Dave Flannery, both members of the Brookline Fire Department, both fighting cancer
- For Paul, John's friend, who's in a tough fight with cancer.
- For Kim, Donna's relative, whose liver transplant had a setback
- For Brandon, Jill & Kevin's friend, on the heart transplant list.
- For Mark, John Nicholson's brother, who's facing medical complications
- For Kevin, Kevin's dad, who's facing some medical issues
- For Tim, Megan's friend, recovering from medical setbacks
- For the friends and family of Leo, Amy's son George's best friend,
- For a friend, figuring out a way to pay her rent
- For a family in transition
- For Zane, Jessica's friend, who's continuing to recover from his accident
- For John Lee's step-mother diagnosed with pancreatic cancer
- For Warren, George Razzaboni's relative, diagnosed with lung cancer
- For Wignadine, leaving the Compassion International program
- For Madge, Megan's friend, whose mother passed away.
- For all those who are grieving during the holidays
- For Bob, Jill's uncle, who is entering hospice
- For Natalie, Marjorie's sister-in-law, recovering from her third heart attack.
- For the friends and family of Clayton, Marjorie's nephew and Natalie's son. May they know the love that surrounds them.
- For Alison, Susan's friend, whose breast cancer has returned at Stage 4.
- For Tina, Barbara's friend, who is beginning chemotherapy
- For Kim, Amy's friend, recovering from a liver transplant
- For the friends and family of Lucy, Candy's dear friend's mother-in-law
- For Ken, Ann's dad, recovering from emergency surgery
- For the people of Israel and Palestine, may they find a way forward
- 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

In you, O God, I will greatly rejoice:
in speaking, I will greatly rejoice;
in silence, I will greatly rejoice;
in travels, I will greatly rejoice;
in resting, I will greatly rejoice;
in working, I will greatly rejoice;
in leisure, I will greatly rejoice;
in duties, I will greatly rejoice;
in freedom, I will greatly rejoice.

O God, my whole being exults in you, and my life shall evermore declare your praise, my light, my love, my joy. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Lord, let your servant sleep in peace this night and fulfill your gracious word. Reveal to me the salvation that you have prepared for all people. With Jesus Christ, help me be a light to the nations and a sign of your glorious promise to Israel. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

Consider what it means to be a child of God by adoption. What does it mean to you to think of yourself as a brother or sister of Jesus, who is the Son of God?

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

Thanks for the holiday decorating!

The trustees wanted to thank everyone, including Karen Haight, for helping to make the church look so festive for the holiday season!

Faith Formation: Deepen Your Connection with God: Jan. 7, 8:30a

We will be offering faith formation sessions once a month. In addition to the activities designed for the kids, we'll be offering a separate track of reflections on Christian Faith Practices for the adults.

We meet at 8:30am on Sunday mornings: 1/7, 2/4, 3/3, 4/14 (moving from 4/7 because I usually take the Sunday after Easter off), 5/5, 6/2

Gently Used Winter Clothes can find a good next home

If you have any gently used winter clothes, let Amy (arazz3914@gmail.com) know. She'll find a good home for them.

Email Scams may appear to come from the church!

You may get an email that appears to come from the church or Rev. Cath asking for money or gift cards. We won't ever do that, so you can ignore them.

Unfortunately, mean people make it difficult for all of us.

There's a task list in the Social Hall if you could help with a church project

Some are bigger than others; some will require supplies that the church will provide. If you have a few hours and would be willing to take on a task, we would appreciate the help!

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.

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 there's anyone who could use some help from the Food Pantry, please let 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

The church's financial obligations continue.

	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs. Expenses +/-
November	\$116,035	\$91,374	\$24,661

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.

