



Brookline Community Church

April 21, 2024

[Photo by Quang Nguyen Vinh:](#)

Prelude

Welcome and Right Hand of Fellowship

Extend a greeting to those nearby

Call To Worship, Psalm 23, King James Version

Leader: The LORD is my shepherd;

All: I shall not want.

Leader: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

All: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

Leader: He restoreth my soul:

All: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Leader: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:

All: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Leader: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

All: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Leader: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

All: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

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

Children's Message: *What is following you?*

Hymn: [Let's Praise the Lord by LifeKids](#)

Call	Response
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah	Let's praise the Lord
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah	Let's praise the Lord,
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	Hallelujah
Let's praise the Lord	

A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:

The response to "God of goodness and mercy," is "hear our prayer."

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 #62 *Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise*

Scripture Reading: John 10:11-18, pp. 872-873

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

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

Reflection on the Scripture:

Anthem: "A Servant in Your Heavenly House" by Pepper Choplin

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 give you thanks
that you have shown us the meaning of love
through Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us.
Show us how to share Christ's love
by giving our lives for one another;
to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Announcements

Hymn #77 *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 23)

Leader: The LORD is my shepherd. I have everything I need: a place to rest, plenty to eat and drink. I just need to notice the abundance I have.

All: God puts me back together when I have fallen apart, sets me on the right path when I have gotten off track.

Leader: When life is taking into the darkest ravines, God is with me, guarding me, nudging me forward, comforting me.

All: Even though there are enemies all around me, some of my own making, God offers me a feast

Leader: God offers me healing and vitality

All: Goodness and mercy pursue me every day, never letting me get away. I will live in the home God made just for me every day I'm given on this sweet earth.

Leader: Amen.

All: Amen.

Anthem "Draw the Circle Wide" by Mark A. Miller.

[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 23

This is the psalm we say to remember. We recite it together in funerals. Much of the power of this psalm comes from the contexts we remember when we recite it. And yet we recite it to remember because its imagery evokes grace, hope and abundance. Still that grace, hope and abundance are encountered in the real world, where we walk through Death Valley, where our enemies have taken our place at the table.

Our good shepherd has given all that is needed – good food, good water, good paths. Notice that all the verbs of action are for the shepherd. The sheep have no verbs. The sheep wait and enjoy the gifts. Because the shepherd is generous, the sheep live a safe, trust-filled life, surrounded by generosity. That is the grace that is offered.

We need to let ourselves be caught and embraced in love, like that of a sheep with safe pasture, like a traveler with rich and unexpected food. Our life is not willed by God to be an endless anxiety. It is meant to be an embrace by God. That's the hope, that we figure out how to let ourselves be caught.

What God gives will be enough for me. This is a statement of enormous confidence in the generosity of God, the one who knows what we need and gives well beyond all that we ask or think. "I shall not want," is a decision made against the greed and lust and satiation and aggressive ambition of a consumer society. I will refocus my desire. I will not entertain all those other distractions that keep me busy and make me selfish and cause me not to notice my neighbor.

I will remember.

Walter Brueggemann, *The Threat of Life: Sermons on Pain, Power, and Weakness*. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 92-93



PRAYER LIST (4/21/24)

- Friends & family of Ken Perrin, Alice Krom, Dave Flannery, Marc Searles.
- For Dave Joki, member of the Brookline Fire Department, 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 Kevin, Kevin's dad, who's facing some medical issues
- For a friend, figuring out a way to pay her rent
- For a family in transition
- For Terry, Kym's friend, recovering from a double lung transplant, hopefully headed home soon.
- For Ken, Ann's dad, facing complicated diagnosis and treatment
- For Susan, John Nicholson's mom, home after a stay in the hospital, but heading back there for more procedures.
- For the friends and family of Bobby, Jill's uncle, may they know the love that surrounds them
- For Natalie, Marjorie's sister-in-law, recovering from her third heart attack.
- For Alison, Susan's friend, whose breast cancer has returned at Stage 4.
- For Kim, Amy's friend, recovering from a liver transplant
- For Warren, George Razzaboni's brother, entering chemo
- For Alex, Marjorie's friend, starting a new round of chemo
- For Lori, Amy's sister-in-law, home from the hospital recovering
- For Charlotte, Ann's cousin, who had spinal surgery which will take several months of recovery
- For Melissa, Donna's niece, due to have a baby in three weeks, praying the baby turns
- For the ever-present news from Middle East - praying for peace
- For Sue, John Lee's step-mother, facing complications and infections in her cancer treatment
- 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, recovering from a powerful earthquake
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning¹

Good shepherd, walk beside me through the joy and trouble of this day, and lead me in right paths for your name's sake. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Good shepherd, remain with me in the dark and stillness of this night, and let me lie down in safety to restore my soul. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean to lay down our lives for one another (1 John 3:16)? Think about people who have been “good shepherds” for you, sharing the love and showing the way of Jesus Christ. Who has helped to lead you in right paths or walked with you in dark valleys? Who has given you comfort and calmed your fears? Who has shown you hospitality and grace, making a place at the table for you, even when you felt surrounded by enemies? How have you done these things for others?

Daily Awareness Reflection²

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 ...

¹ 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.

² Elizabeth Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31.

Announcements

Thanks to everyone who donated for Janice's House!

Your support made a big difference in the lives of women who are in the middle of a really tough transition.



Treats for Coffee Hour

We'll be hosting the Hollis Congregational Church next Sunday, so we could use some extra treats!

Faith Formation: Deepen Your Connection with God: May 5, 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: 5/5, 6/2

Horton Center Schedule for 2024 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

Would You Like Offering Envelopes for Your Weekly Offering?

Just let Bill Dunbar (financechair@bccnh.org) know, and he'll set you up!

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 +/-
March	\$15,939	\$25,108	(\$9,169)

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.

