



Brookline Community Church
January 19, 2025
Rev. Catherine A. Merrill

[Photo by Daniel Reche:](#)

[Prelude: Psalm 36: Fountain of Life by Project of Love](#)

Welcome & Right Hand of Fellowship

Extend a greeting to those nearby

Call To Worship, Psalm 36:5-10, p. 443

Leader: Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

**All: Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgements are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.**

Leader: How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

**All: They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.**

Leader: For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

**All: O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart!**

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

Children's Message: *Magic or Miracle or Mechanics?*

Hymn: *This is the Day that the Lord Has Made*

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made. I will rejoice, I will rejoice and be glad in it and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made. *(repeat)*

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.]

Prayer for the Work of the Church

This week we ask for prayers to help us realize all the miracles God is offering the church.

Hymn: *Your Love O Lord – Psalm 36 by Third Day*

Your love, oh Lord reaches to the heavens. Your faithfulness stretches to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountain. Your justice flows like the ocean's tide. I will lift my voice to worship You, my King. I will find my strength in the shadow of your wings.

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Your love, oh Lord reaches to the heavens. Your faithfulness stretches to the skies.

¹ Today's Prayer of Joys & Concerns inspired by *Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar*, former Bishop of the UMC New England Conference who offered the UMC's Daily Prayer during this COVID-19 Crisis on January 15, 2022.

Sacrament of Communion

Prayer of Confession

Minister: In the light of Christ,
we see the darkness of our world and of our hearts.
Trusting in God's saving love, let us confess our sin.

**All: Almighty God,
we confess that we have been led astray by the
idols of our world.**

**We have depended on our possessions
and have not placed our trust in your grace.**

**We have carelessly consumed the gifts you offer
and have failed to be faithful stewards of the earth's resources.**

**We have sought security in the might of the sword
rather than the strength of your Holy Spirit.**

Forgive us, we pray.

Lead us to true repentance that we may serve you faithfully.

Minister: Hear the good news:
Christ unmask the idols of our world
and frees us from slavery to all that would oppress us.

All: In 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: I Turn to Jesus by Katy Nichole](#)

In the morning when I rise, I lift my head and turn my eyes, to the window where the light is shining through. When my feet hit the ground, I know a place where love is found. So I go where I know I'll find the truth.

I turn to Jesus. I turn to the One who knows my name. I know he walks with me, and He talks with, and He tells me I am safe. And honestly, I could give a million different reasons for why I turn; I turn to Jesus.

When the night starts to fall and I'm worried I won't see the dawn. And my heart is afraid of what's ahead, there's a voice through the chaos that comforts me and gives me rest when I'm weary and I'm longing for a friend. I turn to Jesus. I turn to the One who knows my name. I know He walks with me, and He talks with, and He tells me I am safe. And honestly, I could give a million different reasons for why I turn; I turn, I turn to Jesus.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim. In the light of His glory and grace.

I turn to Jesus. I turn to the One who knows my name. I know He walks with me, and He talks with, and He tells me I am safe. And honestly, I could give a million different reasons for why I turn; I turn to Jesus.

Scripture Reading: John 2:1-11, p. 863

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

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

Reflection on the Scripture:

[Anthem: Miracle by Riley Clemmons](#)

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:**

**At the wedding feast at Cana
you gladdened the guests with divine generosity,
filled to the brim and flowing over.**

We offer our gifts with grateful hearts.

**Bless them and our lives to your service,
that they may reveal your glory,
nurture faith, and manifest the common good.**

In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Announcements

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 36)

Leader: Your grace and truth are big enough to fill all of creation

All: **You save all of creation, from the depths of the sea to the mountain tops.**

Leader: Your righteousness and judgment shelter us, resting on us light as a feather, surrounding us as fierce as a mother hawk.

All: **You care for us out of your abundance, a mighty river of water and time and mercy, flowing from the beginning of the world**

Leader: You have set the fountain of life and light going, so we marvel at its beauty even as we dance in its light

All: **Protect your creation, O Lord, bring us safely to your familiar home. Amen and**

Leader: 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: The Wedding by Michael Card](#)

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.

Notes:

Psalm 36

This psalm is a prayer of trust in God by one who has experienced betrayal and alienation from other members of the community. The psalm is divided into two primary parts, verses 1-4 concerning the destructive behavior of the wicked and verses 5-9 concerning God’s steadfast fidelity. These two contrasting themes are brought together in the petitionary prayer of verses 10-12.

The wicked live in devious, destructive and arrogant ways, alienated from God, but the speaker is focused on destructiveness in social relationships.

In verses 5-6, four characteristic terms are used to fully bear witness to God: “grace and truth” and “righteousness and judgment”. The four terms together summarize God’s responsibility seen in the sustenance of all creation. “Human and animals” suggests a focus on the goodness and reliability of all creation,

The “shadow of your wings” and “abundance of your house” likely refer to the Jerusalem temple, where the extravagance of God is fully exhibited and experienced. The “rivers of delight” (in which the word “delight” is “Eden”) alludes to creation, an image reinforced with reference to a fountain and light.

In the end, the psalm is dismissive of those evil doers who are now “unable to rise,” that is, without power and therefore without power to hurt. They are contrasted with those who have known God and are therefore safe, fed, watered, cared for, and surrounded in the well-being that God can give and the wicked cannot negate.

Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr. *Psalms, in New Cambridge Bible Commentary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 177-180.



PRAYER LIST (1/19/2025)

- Friends & family of Ken Perrin, Alice Krom, Dave Flannery, Marc Searles, Steve Pearson, Dave Fessenden, Ken Hower. Richard Dupont, Sr.. Joanne Hower, Allan Fessenden.
- For Dave Joki, member of the Brookline Fire Department, fighting cancer
- For Charlie, Yifan's friend, who needs a strong and steady recovery to avoid further medical intervention
- For Ron, another of Yifan's friends, who has bladder cancer
- For Amanda, Kym's friend, whose cancer is responding to treatment
- For McKenzie, hopefully heading for better treatment in Philadelphia. If you'd like to send her a card, Jessica has the address
- For the friends and family of Warren Razzaboni, Amy's relative
- For Fred, Susan's brother, who's still working with a neurologist to resolve his spinal issues
- For Megan's neighbor, whose life has been disrupted with a brain cancer diagnosis and all that entails
- For friends and family of Maurice, Sharon Nicholson's dad, may they know the love that surrounds them
- For Susan, John Irwin's friend, who has entered hospice, may her end come peacefully
- For Carolyn, Jakub's American mother, recovering from two broken femurs
- For Ellie, Donna's friend, recovering from a knee replacement
- For KJ's & Jocelyn's Poppy, whose sister passed away, may he know that love that surrounds him.
- For the friends and family of Chris, Donna's relative, especially Susan and Tim, that they know the love that surrounds them.
- For Jen Colgan, Kevin & Jill's friend, returning to her battle with colon cancer
- For the friends and family of Kathy Luce, may they know the love that surrounds them
- For the friends and family of Bill Toomey, may they know the love that surrounds them
- 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: Morning²

Enlivening God, each morning I am awakened by your goodness nudging the earth to life. I am filled with wonder. Your steadfast love extends to the sky, your constancy reaches to the clouds. How precious is your steadfast love! It shines like the dawn, and dews the desolation of my soul. Manifest in me the gifts of your Spirit that I may rejoice in you as I delight in serving your world this day. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

As evening falls and darkness shuts the day,
do not forsake us, O God.

Crown the sky with jewels of light

that your salvation may burnish the heavens
and illumine the earth,

and all find refuge in the shadow of your wings. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

The Holy Spirit enlivens each of us with unique gifts that nurture faith and serve the common good. To identify those gifts we can ask ourselves such questions as, When do I feel most alive? What do I love to do? What things, tasks, or actions fill me with a sense of purpose? What am I doing when time seems to stand still? These questions help us discern the Spirit's movement in our lives. Created in the image of God, each of us is uniquely gifted to reveal divine likeness. When our deep joy is united with meaning and purpose, vocation is birthed. How or where is God calling you?

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.

Announcements

1/26, 11:15am BCC Annual Meeting

The Brookline Community Church will be holding its 2025 Annual Meeting in person on Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 11:15 am. The meeting will be preceded by our regular worship service at 10:00 am. The primary purpose of this meeting will be a review of church operations in 2024 and a faithful conversation about how our finances and church leadership structure can best be aligned with our ministry and mission moving forward. We will also vote on the nominations to our boards and the 2025 budget.

This discussion and vote are part of the church's ongoing discernment of what God is calling us to do and require a quorum to transact this business.

1/27, 2:00pm & 6:30pm Library Book Discussion

The Brookline Library will have a discussion of Geraldine Brooks' *Horse*. Michele Decoteau will lead that discussion twice, to make it fit well with everyone's schedule. Everyone is invited to join what promises to be an interesting discussion!

2/16, 8:30am Faith Formation is Reflecting on Love!

This year's Faith Formation program is well underway! We'll meet at 8:30am on 2/16, 3/16, 4/13 (9:30am), 5/18, 6/1.

3/7, Take Home Meals & Girl Scout Cookies: Can It Get Any Better?!?

We'll be offering two take home meals for pick up as well as helping the local Girl Scouts with their cookie drive. If you can help with ingredients or have questions for the THMs, see Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com). We'll let you know how to order the cookies in advance if you want to be sure of your choices!

Looking for Help to Spruce up the Church's Exterior

Brookline is already planning its contribution to the nation's 250th birthday party in 2026. We'd like the church to put its best face forward. We'll be looking to speak with folks who can help us improve the look of the exterior, as well as finding sources of funding to help pay for that. If you're able to help, please speak with Susan Haight (sdlhaight@gmail.com).

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.

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 +/-
December	\$82,871	\$99,761	(\$16,889)

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.

