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Prelude

Welcome & Right Hand of Fellowship

Extend a greeting to those nearby

Call To Worship, Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

Leader: Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,
for they will soon fade like the grass,
and wither like the green herb.

**All: Trust in the LORD, and do good;
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.
Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.**

Leader: Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.
He will make your vindication shine like the light,
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

**All: Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.**

Leader: Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.
Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

**All: Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look diligently for their place,
they will not be there.
But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight in abundant prosperity.**

Leader: The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.

**All: The LORD helps them and rescues them;
he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.**

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

Children's Message: *What's your number one rule?*

Hymn: #690 *Bind Us Together*

A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:

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 clearly articulate God's purpose for this church. Our candidate purpose statement is: *Forgive yourself, find your place at the table, share it with love.*

Hymn: # 651 *O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*

Sacrament of Communion

Prayer of Confession

Minister: Jesus promised us that God is kind
even to the ungrateful and the wicked,
even to us.

Trusting in God's kindness and love, let us confess our sin.

**All: Merciful God, we confess
that we have not followed your ways
or trusted your promises.**

**We love only those who love us;
we show kindness only to those who are kind to us;
we give only when we expect to receive.**

Forgive us, Lord.

Fill our hearts with your selfless love.

Change our lives by your matchless grace.

These things we pray through Christ our Savior.

Minister: Children of the Most High God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord
we have received grace in good measure—
spilling out and running over.

All: Thanks be to God.

Minister: Now go and live as Christ commands:
Be merciful, as God is merciful;
do not judge, and you will not be judged;
do not condemn, and you will not be condemned;
but forgive, and you will be forgiven;
give, and it will be given to you.

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: #598 *Peace, Perfect Peace*

Scripture Reading: Luke 6:27-38, p. 838

‘But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

‘If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.’

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

Reflection on the Scripture:

Hymn: #708 *Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

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:**

Sisters and Brothers in Christ

**in obedience to Jesus' words to love others as we love ourselves,
do good, bless and pray for friends and enemies alike,
let us now do to others as we would have them do to us,
we offer our tithes and gifts
for the sake of those in need.**

Announcements

Hymn: #44 *Great Is the Lord*

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 37)¹

Leader: Assist me to decide what I believe in, O LORD. The prosperity of the wicked or the providence of God.

All: Break me open so I can hold on to the blessing you have given all of us, like the land alive under a blanket of snow.

Leader: Call me to live into the promise that the meek will inherit the earth,

All: Despite the fact that it just doesn't look like that's ever going to happen in this world.

Leader: Ease my mind and keep me from getting hot and bothered, fired up with rage and jealousy when the wicked seem to get so much more than their share.

All: Find the strength for me to believe that one day I'll look up and the evil people won't be there anymore, and the land and all your blessings are shared with everyone, no exceptions.

Leader: God of great reversals, who promises to restore everything to the righteous, no matter what our daily experience says, you offered us the reality and triumph of the cross.

All: Help us to care for each other until we see the great change you have promised. Rescue us soon, O LORD. You are our refuge. Amen

Leader: In the name of the Lord, amen.

¹ In Hebrew, Psalm 37 is written as an acrostic, with each stanza beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order. So in my riff, I did the same, to try to offer the same insight that there is an underlying order to the world we don't always notice.

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 37

In this psalm, the problem is the prosperity of the wicked. The contrast between the righteous and the wicked is central to this text, which is a kind of meditation on the problem that the wicked seem to be doing well in life. The psalm puts the question in terms of a faith choice: Do you believe in the prosperity of the wicked or in the providence of God? Contemporary readers need to tread carefully, however. The psalm is not a piece of theory that articulates a universal structure of reality. It is rather a pragmatic homily on how to live in the face of the observation that the wicked seem to prosper.

The psalmist also speaks of the faithful inheriting the land. This shouldn't be taken in a literal sense but as a symbol of a full life. In living faithfully, one finds wholeness. The psalm may be an educational tool for the young to urge youth to live faithfully.

Some readers may be tempted to dismiss Psalm 37 as naïve or even misleading in portraying life as just. The poem is more nuanced, however. The psalm admits that one can observe life and see the wicked succeed. It admits that an honest view of life brings troubling questions and does not advance all the answers. At the same time, the poem believes, based on life experience, that God is trustworthy. The justice (vv. 6 and 28) and faithfulness of God are at the heart of this meditation. The psalm does not exhibit a triumphalist tone, but it tenaciously holds onto the trustworthiness of God in the long view.

Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr. *Psalms*, in *New Cambridge Bible Commentary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 180-186



PRAYER LIST (3/2/2025)

- 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, Jessica's relative, struggling with seizures
- For the friends and family of Warren Razzaboni, Amy's relative
- For friends and family of Maurice, Sharon Nicholson's dad, may they know the love that surrounds them
- For the friends and family of Susan, John Irwin's friend, may they know the love that surrounds them
- For Carolyn, Jakub's American mother, recovering from two broken femurs
- For Jen Colgan, Kevin & Jill's friend, returning to battle with colon cancer
- For Harry, Donna's friend, entering dialysis in his nineties
- For Corin, Kym's friend, facing the end of a tough pregnancy, may everything go well until her due date in March
- For Mary, Donna's friend, who is facing new challenges after her dad fractured a hip and dementia is preventing his full recovery
- For the kids who are supported by the American Heart Association and the fundraising at the Brookline schools, may their big hearts grow healthier
- For the Avramov family, and everyone else who is battling the flu
- For Linda Ashton, and everyone else who is battling covid
- For Julie and her grandmother, Ava's friends, who are recovering from a fall while struggling with dementia
- For the 67 people lost in the air collision in DC, may their families know the love that surrounds them
- For minority populations in our country who are feeling the pressure of additional scrutiny, may we remember God's charge to care for the widows and orphans and strangers among you
- For George, Sanjay's father, who had set a retirement date, may he enjoy the next phase of his life
- For Jennifer, Jill's friend who is starting chemo
- For Amy's nephew Luca, facing new health concerns
- For Pope Francis who is suffering from double pneumonia

- For the peace talks between Israel and Gaza, may they lead those communities forward into a better future
- 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
- In the 2/23 worship service, Jessica asked for prayers for the family who unexpectedly lost both parents, leaving five children orphaned. Several people asked if there was a more worldly way to help. This [GoFundMe site](https://gofund.me/0b75c1bd) (https://gofund.me/0b75c1bd) was set up by their mother before her passing.

3/2 Household Prayer: Morning²

In the morning when I rise, O God, you are with me strong and sure, turning my dreams into insights and teaching me the delights of your law. You preserve my life day after day, and in return, I rejoice at the new dawn. Guard my waiting this day, O Lord, guide my feet and my hands, give me stillness and patience so that I may give delight to myself and to those I meet; in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

3/2 Household Prayer: Evening

Lord, throughout this day you have rescued us from harm and despair, giving us instead the joy of accomplishment and fellowship with our family and friends. Protect us through the night, Holy One, that in our dreams we will not be shaken but will see you face to face and wake renewed. We take refuge in you; in Jesus' name. Amen.

3/2 Questions for Reflection

How has God sent you to be a preserver of what is good and healthy?

How is your family living up to the wisdom that Joseph showed in caring for the people of Egypt and, eventually, even his own kin?

Ash Wednesday Household Prayer: Morning

Dear God, you call me to repentance as I begin this new day. If through careless ways I ignore your grace, O Lord, prick my heart, shake me, make me aware of your abiding presence, and lead me in the way of everlasting life. Amen.

Ash Wednesday Household Prayer: Evening

[Pray Psalm 51:10 which is:]

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And put a new and right spirit within me. Amen.

Ash Wednesday Questions for Reflection

How can I give alms, pray, or fast without regard for the attention of others? How does Jesus' admonition to do these acts in secret compare to his earlier command in the Sermon on the Mount: "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16)? What is the reward that God gives to those who give alms, pray, and fast?

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

3/2, 4:30pm Book Group discussion of Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We*

Cannot See The BCC Book Group is reading *All The Light We Cannot See*. The first discussion will be at Sanjay's house, 6 Maxwell Drive, this Sunday March 2nd from 4:30 to 6 and will cover from the beginning through Chapter 48 - Hauptmann. Plates, cups, and water will be provided. You are welcome to bring snacks or drinks to share but it isn't required.

- March 2: Chs. 1-48: Hauptman
- March 16: Chs. 49: Flying Couch - 95: Relapse
- March 30: Chs. 96: Someone in the House - 152: Final Sentence
- April 13: Chs. 153: Music #1 - the end of the book

3/5, 7:00pm Ash Wednesday service at the Hollis Congregational Church

The Mason, Brookline and Hollis churches will be worshipping together for Ash Wednesday at the Hollis Congregational Church (3 Monument Sq. Hollis, NH 03049). Come to a quiet and powerful service to begin the season of Lent.

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!

3/8 Church History- Megan Menard and Susan Haight will be meeting at the church at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 8, 2025 to start gathering and organizing the church's historical documents. If you love historical research and want to learn more about our church, please join them on March 8th

3/15, Senior Luncheon celebrating St. Patrick's Day!

Corned Beef & Cabbage and a great opportunity to get together. Put it on your calendars!

3/16, 8:30am Faith Formation is Exploring Lent

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

3/31, 2:00 & 6:30pm Brookline Public Library Book Group: Robert Frost Poems

There's a special event coming up at the Library on April 7, 6:30pm where there will be a speaker on Frost's poetry. Join the book group for a little review before the event.

4/7, 6:30pm *A Walk in the Woods* at the Brookline Public Library

In celebration of both Robert Frost and the natural world around us, author and poet Jeffrey Zygmunt recites a selection of Frost's nature poems, emphasizes their beauty, explains their significance, and describes how they deepen our understanding and appreciation of New Hampshire's natural environment.

5/18, 11:15am Quarterly All Church Meeting on Increasing Church Vitality

Enhancing the vitality of our church should yield all kinds of benefits: spiritual, financial, practical. But it's easy to keep doing the same things because they seem to need doing and we don't explore new opportunities to change and grow because we're too busy. At January's Annual Meeting, we agreed to meet quarterly as a church to help us maintain our focus on what will help us the most to fulfill God's purpose for this church.

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 +/-
January	\$3,323	\$9,789	(\$6,465)

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.

