



*Brookline  
Community Church*

*January 30, 2022*

*Rev. Catherine A.  
Merrill, Minister*

View from Mt. Precipice, near the ancient town of Nazareth

**Prelude:** [\*A Mighty Fortress is Our God\* by Martin Luther](#)

**Call To Worship, Psalm 71:1-6**

Leader: In you, O LORD, I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.  
In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me and save me..

**All: Be to me a rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress, to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.**

Leader: Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.

**All: For you, O Lord, are my hope,  
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.**

Leader: Upon you I have leaned from my birth;  
it was you who took me from my mother's womb.

**All: My praise is continually of you.**

Leader: Amen.

**Hymn: [Psalm 71 Hymn 'Be to me to the rock of my refuge to which I may always come.'](#) by Jesse & Leah Roberts**

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 (for kids of all ages):**

Where is Jesus at home?

**Lifting up Our Joys and Concerns:**

The response to "O God of all creation," is "**be our hope and trust.**"

[For next week, please feel free to send me your joys & concerns and I'll include them in our prayers: [minister@bccnh.org](mailto:minister@bccnh.org) or call/text (857) 259-7269.]

**Let us pray 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.

**Hymn: [God of Grace and God of Glory by UCG Atlanta](#)**

1 God of grace and God of glory,  
on your people pour your pow'r;  
crown your ancient Church's story,  
bring its bud to glorious flow'r.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
for the facing of this hour,  
for the facing of this hour.

2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us  
scorn the Christ, assail his ways.  
From the fears that long have bound  
us

free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
for the living of these days,  
for the living of these days.

3 Set our feet on lofty places;  
gird our lives that they may be  
armored with all Christlike graces,  
in the fight to set men free.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
that we fail not them nor thee,  
that we fail not them nor thee!

**Scripture Reading: Luke 4:14-30, pp. 835-836**

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’ He said to them, ‘Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Doctor, cure yourself!” And you will say, “Do here also in your home town the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.”’ And he said, ‘Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s home town. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.’ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

## Reflection on the Scripture:

### Hymn: [I Go to the Rock of My Salvation by Sheri Easter, Larnelle Harris](#)

1. Where do I go when  
there's no one else to talk to?  
Who do I turn to  
when no one wants to listen?  
Who do I lean on  
when there's no foundation stable?  
I go to the rock  
I know He's able  
I go to the rock

#### Chorus:

I go to the rock of my salvation  
I go to the stone  
that the builders rejected  
I run to the mountain  
and the mountain stands by me  
When the Earth all around me  
is sinking sand

On Christ, the solid rock I stand  
When I need a shelter,  
when I need a friend  
I go to the rock

2. Where do I hide till  
the storms have all passed over?  
Who do I run to  
when the winds of sorrows threaten?  
Is there a refuge  
in the time of tribulation?  
When my soul needs consolation,  
I go to the rock

#### Chorus x2

When I need a shelter, when I need  
a friend  
I go to the rock

**Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given:**

**O God, bless these gifts that we have given  
as expressions of our love  
for you and our neighbors,  
that they may bring closer to fulfillment  
your reign of peace and love;  
through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign. Amen.**

**Announcements**

**A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 19)**

Leader: Hold me in your hands, O LORD. Keep me safe from the buffeting of the world, keep me connected with my community and free from shame.

**All: Lend me your strong hands, hold onto to me just as I hold on to you.**

Leader: Free me from the clutches of the unjust and the cruel, even if they are my own images that echo from my youth and maturing, when I learned my own song in the world,

**All: Surround me with the hope and trust that your people have always had in you, that you have always handed your people, even when we started to wander away.**

Leader: You have known, and held, and loved me from my very beginning

**All: Be with me all the way to the end, to receive my never ending praise and lay hands of blessing on me. Amen.**

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: [Rest by Aaron Shust](#)**

*Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.*

## Psalm 71

Psalm 71 requires a great deal of its readers. The psalm moves back and forth between petition and the expression of trust, and that movement seems to add to the urgency of the prayer. The prayer comes in three identifiable sections (vv. 1-8, 9-13, and 14-24), each containing both petitions and expressions of hope. Enemies also appear in each section. The psalm's final section moves to a greater emphasis on hope. The psalm is a prayer for help from an individual "I" who is portrayed as elderly, is pursued by enemies, and is likely ill.

The petitioner in Psalm 71 has been taught for a lifetime that God delivers and creates a community that makes possible wholeness of life. It is in this covenant relationship that the speaker trusts and hopes. The petition is that God will bring to fruition precisely these covenant promises that the faith tradition has taught, integrating lived experience and the received faith tradition.

This speaker has had a long-standing relationship with the covenant God and with the faith tradition. This petition is part of the honest dialogue that nurtures that relationship. The psalm expresses a genuine vulnerability and fear of being forgotten and left to the mercy of bloodthirsty enemies.

The great fear is to be forsaken by God and thus left without options. God is the one who initiates a relationship with "deeds of saving," so all depends on this God. The psalm is clear that there is trouble in life and that trouble is pressing, but the context of the petition is still hope and faith, crafted over a long life.

Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr. *Psalms, in New Cambridge Bible Commentary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 306-311.



## PRAYER LIST (1/30/22)

If you know those on this list, call on them & tell them we are praying for them. If you know others who should be added to this list please give their names to the minister or a deacon.

- Friends & family of June Hoff, Braedon O'Connor, Elly Austin and Patty Birner.
- Luca, Amy's nephew, who's working with a new pediatrician who's helping him and his family
- For everyone to stay as healthy as they can in the days to come
- For the friends & families of those who have died alone
- For our church, that we remain patient with the process of re-opening
- For Judith Atherton, recovering from cardiac surgery
- For Clarence Farwell, recovering from a stroke
- For Melissa Kurz, a Stacey Haight's friend, who lost her husband in a car accident right after Christmas, whose broken heart is affecting her eating.
- For those suffering from addiction
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

### **Household Prayer: Morning<sup>1</sup>**

God, you have given me the gift of another day; may I live it in gratitude. Help me to be loving to others, to Earth, and to myself; in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **Household Prayer: Evening**

Holy One, this day is drawing to an end. Be with me as I pause and ponder all the love I saw and received today. Help me to see you in each moment of love. Where I fell short of being patient and kind, help me to feel your patience and kindness toward me, and give me peace, as I give this day back to you. Amen.

### **Questions for Reflection**

In Jesus' first sermon, he referred to two scriptural stories to illustrate God's love. Why did that so enrage the congregation that they wanted to kill him? Do some of Jesus' teachings still enrage us today?

### **Daily Awareness Reflection<sup>2</sup>**

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 ...

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

## Announcements

The church's financial obligations continue. If you are able, please mail your offering to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

|          | Actual Income | Actual Expenses | Income vs. Expenses +/- |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| December | \$100,731     | \$89,522        | \$11,209                |

Please shop [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

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.

### Call to Annual Meeting on February 6

The Brookline Community Church will be holding its [2022 Annual Meeting via Zoom on Sunday, February 6, 2022 at 11:15 am. The meeting will be preceded by a Zoom worship service at 10:00 am.](#) The primary purpose of this meeting will be a review of our 2021 operations and ministry. We will also vote on the nominations to our boards and the 2022 budget.

This year's Annual Meeting will be an opportunity for continued conversation about our life together as the Body of Christ during these pandemic/endemic times. Please join us as we discuss the financial constraints imposed by these uncertain times, acknowledge the work we have already done in developing strategies to adjust and respond to this new age of ministry, and prepare ourselves for our future ministry together.

This discussion and vote are part of the church's ongoing discernment of God's call and mission and require a quorum to transact this business.

We hope to see you there!

### Referring folks for the Deacons' Persons in Need (PIN) Fund grants

The Deacons wanted to remind everyone that we have a Persons in Need fund, where we can help folks out, anything from needing help with co-pays for medicine, to rides to the vets to heating oil.

If you know someone who could use some help, please let Rev. Cath or one of the deacons know and we can handle it discretely from there.

## **Free Covid Home Tests**

1. Gov. Sununu [announced a program to deliver free Covid home tests to NH residents](#). You just go to [the program's website](#), put in your zip code and then follow the prompts. They're delivered via Amazon.

2. The federal government will deliver four tests to your home. Just enter your details on a special [US Post Office web page](#).

## **Warm Clothes Drive at the Brookline Hollis High School**

The Hollis Brookline High School Democrats are sponsoring a warm clothing drive for local residents and Afghani refugees. They're looking for new or gently worn warm clothes. If you have any to donate, please bring them to church on 1/30 and Melanie Levesque will deliver them.

## **Take Home Meals: Shepherd's Pies & Lemon Bread available AND Mac & Cheese with Tomato Soup on the side coming up on Feb 11!**

What could be more delicious and easier than stocking up on take home meals?

In February, we'll be supporting the Nashua Soup kitchen. We'll have more updates to share what we're looking for.

## **Reading Together During Epiphany**

We've decided to read Andy Weir's *Project Hail Mary*. We also decided to meet in person in Fellowship Hall (but I can add a zoom meeting if you want to try that). We'll decide what time to meet for the next session at each session.

Our plan looks like:

January 30, 11:30am: Chapters 1-7

February 27: Chapters 15-22

February 13: Chapters 8-14

March 13: Chapters 23-end

## **2022 Calendars on Sale from the Historical Society!**

The Brookline Historical Society is selling 2022 Calendars for \$20 at the Library and the Hollis Pharmacy. Email [info@brooklinehistory.org](mailto:info@brooklinehistory.org) for more details.

## **Habitat for Humanity Build in Nashua**

Although they are not accepting volunteer builders at the moment, we have provided a financial donation to Habitat for Humanity in Nashua. They are currently working on a duplex for two female veterans and their kids. Habitat would welcome financial contributions at this time as well.

## **Help Lines**

This time of isolation can be very difficult. You may know someone who needs some support beyond what you can provide. We're in this together.

- Suicide prevention: 1-800-273-8255
- Sexual assault: 1-800-656-4673
- Domestic violence: 1-800-799-7233

## **Brookline Food Pantry**

Although we cannot be together physically at this time, Outreach is continuing to work through the Brookline Welfare office & CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) to address our community's needs.

The Brookline food pantry is now open on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10-2:00 for drop-offs only. There is a list on the [Brookline Food Pantry's Facebook page that is being updated](#) as items are needed. In addition to Market Basket gift cards, this week, they're looking for:

Milk, eggs, cheese

Breads

Juice boxes

Bottled water

Women's razors and shaving cream

Batteries

Flash lights

Cleaning products

Sponges, paper towels,

Vitamins for women, men and children

Cold and cough medicine

Also, if anyone can donate can openers, some of our families need can openers for all of the canned goods that we provide

If you know of anyone who could use some help from the Food Pantry, please let Rebecca or Amy know. We sense there's more need in the community than is currently picking up food.

Non-perishables can be dropped off at Brookline Town Hall (downstairs near the Town Clerk's Office), at the Brookline Post Office, or at the Cozy Tae Cart any time those places are open.

As always, perishable items such as bread, cheese, butter, eggs, meats, and milk can be donated during open pantry hours: Tues and Thurs, 10am - 2pm.