



*Brookline Community Church*

*July 31, 2022*

*Rev. Catherine A. Merrill, Minister*

**Prelude:** [\*Gloria in Excelsis Deo – Monteverdi Choir\*](#)

**Call To Worship, Psalm 49:1-12, p. 451**

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

Leader: Hear this, all you peoples;  
give ear, all inhabitants of the world,  
both low and high,  
rich and poor together.

**All: My mouth shall speak wisdom;  
the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.  
I will incline my ear to a proverb;  
I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.**

Leader: Why should I fear in times of trouble,  
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,  
those who trust in their wealth  
and boast of the abundance of their riches?

**All: Truly, no ransom avails for one's life,  
there is no price one can give to God for it.  
For the ransom of life is costly,  
and can never suffice,  
that one should live on for ever  
and never see the grave.**

Leader: When we look at the wise, they die;  
fool and dolt perish together  
and leave their wealth to others.

**All: Their graves are their homes for ever,  
their dwelling-places to all generations,  
though they named lands their own.**

Leader: Mortals cannot abide in their pomp;

**All: they are like the animals that perish.**

Hymn: [Psalm 49 by Steve Bradley](#)

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:**

### **A Prayer of Joys and Concerns:**

The response to "Gracious God," 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](mailto:minister@bccnh.org) or call/text (857) 259-7269.]

### **Hymn: [Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus by Reawaken Hymns](#)**

O soul, are you weary and troubled?  
No light in the darkness you see?  
There's light for a look at the Savior,  
And life more abundant and free!

Through death into life everlasting,  
He passed, and we follow Him there;  
O'er us sin no more hath dominion  
For more than conquerors we are!

Refrain

Refrain x 2

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.

**Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23, pp. 536 & 537**

Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

I, the Teacher, when king over Israel in Jerusalem, applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me —and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

**Reflection on the Scripture:**

**Hymn: [In Christ Alone by Keith & Kristyn Getty with Alison Krauss](#)**

In Christ alone my hope is found;  
He is my light, my strength, my song;  
This cornerstone, this solid ground,  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!  
My comforter, my all in all—  
Here in the love of Christ I stand.  
In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save.  
Till on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied;  
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid—

Here in the death of Christ I live.  
There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain;  
Then bursting forth in glorious day,  
Up from the grave He rose again!  
And as He stands in victory,  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me;  
For I am His and He is mine—  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.  
No guilt in life, no fear in death—  
This is the pow'r of Christ in me;  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny.  
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man,  
Can ever pluck me from His hand;  
Till He returns or calls me home—  
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

## 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:**

All we have and all we are comes from you, O God,  
our Father, our Mother, our Creator, our Sovereign.  
If we were to give thanks until the end of time,  
we could not repay your benevolence and grace.  
Take these meager offerings, we pray,  
and increase our generosity,  
that everything we say and do  
might show forth your irrepressible love.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Announcements

**A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World (a riff on Psalm 49:1-12)**

Leader: Listen up, everyone. Not just the church people, but all the people, especially the wealthy folks and the wise. Let me share some hard-won knowledge that isn’t very obvious. We’re going to learn together, because that’s part of the message: we’re no different from one another, we all come to the same end.

**All: In the world we live in, the people who keep faith with God don’t usually prosper, and the schemers come out on top. And somehow they think their possessions will protect them from the final accounting, death.**

Leader: But no one can buy their way out, God is the songwriter for this tune of life we’re all dancing to, and God isn’t taking requests. No matter how much stuff you have in this world, you’re not buying your way out of the next.

**All: We all come to the same end, so it’s not worth hurling ourselves in buying and accumulating more and more and more.**

Leader: We can’t pay the ransom for eternal life. But God can.

**All: And God will. The music God has written for the world and just for us will keep playing. Because God is not finished yet. Death is just a pause in music, before God’s composition continues to carry us along.**

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: Be Thou My Vision by Reawaken Hymns**

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

## Notes:

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### Psalm 49

This psalm echoes the instructional style of the book of Proverbs. It voices the central reflection of one who has observed the aggressively rich and their inability to secure their future by their acquisitive practices.

The first instructional element of the psalm ponders in turn “those who trust in their wealth” (vv. 5-9) and the wise, who rely on their own discernment (vv. 10-11). The same conclusion is drawn for both: death is their future; neither wealth nor wisdom can “buy” (ransom) a different future. They are engaged in an illusion that cannot circumvent the divine givenness of the created order, namely that “you cannot take it with you.”

The second part of the teaching reiterates the main point (vv. 16-19) and ends with the conclusion of verse 12 reiterated (v. 20). Here the inescapable end of the foolhardy is put more graphically: they are ushered into the place of the dead (v. 14). The latter text describes the arrival of the powerful into the realm of the dead, now rendered weak and insignificant, even the ones who had relished their own pomp.

Verse 15 is an especially interesting verse because it promises to the psalmist a future quite in contrast to that of the rich and the wise, who are in fact foolish. The term “ransom” has been used negatively in verse 8 to deny that there is any such rescue; here it is used positively to give hope to the nonrich and the nonwise speaker of the psalm. The psalmist – who does not trust wealth or wisdom – is himself among those who have hope beyond the death that awaits the acquisitive.

The psalmist in an instruction about right priorities sees that death is the great equalizer for the wealthy, who will also end up empty-handed, as must all creatures. All that will matter at that moment is the relationship with God.

Walter Brueggemann and William H. Bellinger, Jr. *Psalms, in New Cambridge Bible Commentary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 226-230.



## PRAYER LIST (7/31/22)

- Friends & family of Braedon O'Connor, Elly Austin, Patty Birner, Jesse Delrossi, Jane Jukes.
- For the friends & families of those who have died alone
- For Luca, Amy's nephew, whose treatments continue
- For those struggling with thoughts of suicide
- For Polly, John Panto's sister, recovering from a stroke, who's moving into another facility
- For Mike Esposito, Miracle Mike, friend of Susan and Russell's family, returning home after months in the hospital and rehab
- For Cassie & Bill, Amy's parents, who have Covid and aren't able to go on the family vacation
- For Bob Higgins, Barbara's ex-husband, facing medical challenges
- For Stacey and Cameron, Susan & Russell's family, recovering from Covid
- For Jill & Kevin's friends' children; Grady is facing surgery and his sister Nayanna is his donor
- For the people of Ukraine, who fight on, even as the world looks elsewhere
- 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>**

I greet this new day with joy, O Lord, for you are my light and my hope. Do not let me fall prey to the anxieties of this world, or be tempted by false charms, but keep me ever faithful to you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

### **Household Prayer: Evening**

Holy Comforter, Protector, and Deliverer, at the close of this day I entrust to you all my life and all those I hold dear, knowing that your tender mercies cover all my failings and all my fears.

Thank you for your unending love. Amen.

### **Questions for Reflection**

The Christian life is one of constant renewal, turning and returning to God. In this season of your life, what would it mean to strip off the old self with its practices and clothe yourself with the new self (Col. 3:9–10)?

### **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 +/-
June	\$33,466	\$46,882	(\$13,416)

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.

## ARE YOU 60 or OLDER or KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS? DO YOU LIKE A GREAT MEAL?

If you do ... BE ON THE BROOKLINE COMMUNITY CHURCH'S SENIOR LUNCHEON LIST. We have lunches periodically on Saturdays throughout the year just for the 60 and older crowd. If you are interested, just let us know how you would like to be contacted for notices of these lunches (email, mail, Facebook ..., etc.) Any questions.... just ask Megan King ([kingmegan7@gmail.com](mailto:kingmegan7@gmail.com)) or Amy Razzaboni ([arazz3914@gmail.com](mailto:arazz3914@gmail.com)).

## NH is now part of the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

New Hampshire is announcing the launch of 988, the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL). People can call 988 to be connected with trained counselors that are part of the existing NSPL network.

## Volunteers Needed for the Brookline Food Pantry

They are looking for four more regular/long term volunteers to work at the pantry for two hour shifts on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the summer, and possibly continuing through the end of the year, depending on their availability and desire to serve.

Specifically, they need to fill Tuesdays & Thursdays 10-12 and 12-2; they have opportunities for younger friends on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 when there are fewer clients and it's much quieter if any middle/high school kids are interested.

To re-cap: most of the effort is just being a cheerful face and a heart of encouragement. We help people find what they need and just help in any way we

can. There are no limitations, really...if you can breathe and you can smile you can do it!

### **Get Your Parking Placards for the Lake!**

We hope to worship more often at the Lake than in previous years. So make sure you have an up to date parking placard.

### **The Family Caring for their Granddaughter is Looking for a New Apartment**

A few weeks ago, we learned from Angie about a family that was awarded custody of their granddaughter. We helped them get the clothes and other resources they needed to settle her in.

Now they are looking for a new apartment, preferably in Brookline, and are facing a tight housing market. If you know of anyone who might be looking for a great tenant, please contact Amy Razzaboni ([arazz3914@gmail.com](mailto:arazz3914@gmail.com)).

### **Would You Like to Pick the Music for Worship?**

Music is not one of Rev. Cath's gifts, so she gets help from a variety of people. If you'd like to try picking the music once or many time, please let her know ([minister@bccnh.org](mailto:minister@bccnh.org)). Yifan's happy to do it. He knows how much he enjoys it and want other folks to have an opportunity if they'd like to give it a try.

### **Homeless keys looking for an owner on the back table:**

In tidying up the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor classrooms, we found a number of keys that are looking for a home. They may have been there a while, so see if they were the set you were never able to find! See Susan Haight ([sdlhaight@gmail.com](mailto:sdlhaight@gmail.com)) for more details.

### **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](#). And if you've ordered 4 in the past, you can get four more the same way!

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

### **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 (or 988)
- Sexual assault: 1-800-656-4673
- Domestic violence: 1-800-799-7233