

## First Baptist Church in Needham

858 Great Plain Avenue,  
Needham MA 02492  
[www.fbcneedham.org](http://www.fbcneedham.org)

Meditations for Sunday,  
May 31, 2020  
(or whenever you are so led to  
pause, reflect, and pray)

## Pentecost

Edition 11



## Lighting the Candle of Life

You may wish to light a candle or use the candle photo as a focus.

**ALL:** We light the Candle of Life — a candle that represents community, spirit, and the fullness of all of life — birth and death and all of the transitions in between and beyond.

## Praying the Call to Worship

Lord, help me remember that I love your children.  
Remind me that I love them with everything I am.

Give me patience.

Give me peace.

Give me kind words.

Lord, help me make it through these long moments,  
that we might all rest and wake tomorrow to new  
beginnings.

Amen

--Rev. Anjie Peek Woodworth<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> "A Prayer for When Bedtime with Children is Stressful," in *We Pray with Her: Encouragement for Women Who Lead*, edited by Emily Peck-McClain, Danyelle Trexler, Jen Tyler, J. Paige, Boyer, and Shannon Sullivan (Nashville, TN: Abington Press, 2018), 83 (paraphrased).

## Hymn 128

## *Spirit, Working in Creation*

IN BABILONE

English hymnist and author, John Richards (b. 1939), has served as a curate in several parishes and as school chaplain and currently is director of Renewal Services. Written in 1978, this hymn focuses on the moving of the Holy Spirit first in creation, then in Christ and his followers, and finally in the church, the Body of Christ, today.<sup>2</sup> Sing or read aloud the text as an invocation of the Holy Spirit transcending all time and circumstance to move **within** your life and **through** your life today—where you are, as you are. Or sing along to three of the verses with handbell musicians, Larry and Carla Sue of Holland, MI, as they play the tune IN BABILONE online: <https://youtu.be/HQISm1Iu5nk><sup>3</sup>.

Spirit, working in creation, bringing order out of strife:

come around God's gathered people, giving harmony and life.

Spirit, speaking through the prophets so the voice of God was heard:

come, inspire, alert your people to this day's prophetic word.

Spirit, over-shadowing Mary as the Christ-child in her grew:

come, so that the Christ within us may today be born anew.

Spirit, coming from the Father as a dove upon our Lord:

come upon your favored people, and your blessings be outpoured.

Spirit, driving to the desert even God's Anointed One:

come to us in trial and testing that God's will in us be done.

Spirit, breathed on the disciples, giving peace where there was fear:

come among us, touch us, send us, making Jesus' presence near.

Spirit, wind and flame, empowering fearless witness to the lost:

come, unite, renew your wonders as of a new Pentecost!

Praise and glory, Holy Spirit, for your love on us outpoured,  
giving honor to the Father and proclaiming Jesus "Lord."



<sup>2</sup> <https://hymnary.org/hymn/LUYH2013/235>

<sup>3</sup> To learn more about Larry and Carla Sue's handbell arrangements, see: <http://larryandcarla.com>

## A Reading from Acts 2:1-18 (NRSV)

*Read the text aloud. Pause and notice what image or phrase stands out or "shimmers" as you tell the story.*

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs-- in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.'

**ALL: The word of our Lord. Thanks be to God.**



## Hymn 461

## Breathe on Me, Breath of God

TRENTHAM

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889) was an English theologian, educator, and minister. This hymn, one of a small body of musical work, has been published in hundreds of hymnals because of its deeply embodied spirituality that calls on an enduring and all-encompassing relationship with the Divine—until God is closer than the pause between each breath.<sup>4</sup>

This prayerful hymn will be our initial Pentecost response to reading aloud and hearing the word of God in worship. Especially in the time of COVID19 when the ability to breathe is so crucial, we turn to the Spirit's life-giving breath as that which sustains us in scripture, in this life, and in life beyond death. Sing or read it aloud as your prayerful response to the above text, or allow the quartet of voices from St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Houston, TX, wash over you online at [https://youtu.be/3qV\\_IHByYBk](https://youtu.be/3qV_IHByYBk).<sup>5</sup>

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love the way you love,  
and do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,

until my will is one with yours,  
to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life  
for all eternity.

## Holy Spirit, Unbounded ...

The Holy Spirit is described in a wide variety of ways: hovering over the primordial waters, as wind and breath, flowing water, an infusing presence that can heal and enliven as well as convict and challenge, as divine Wisdom, the Shekinah, as Sacred Word, a comforter, a dove, a cloud, and as fire, to name a few. This aspect of the Divine, the Holy One, is ineffable Mystery, uncontained and flowing free, but She is also the still, small voice and the abiding presence that does not abandon us from the moment of our first crying breath until the last dying sigh.

- *Grappling with the inability to fully describe or contain Holy Spirit, what images do I find most resonate with my experience and understanding of Her? What does each image reveal to me about the Spirit?*
- *When have I felt the Spirit's presence moving within or even "pouring out" upon me? If I have not, what do I understand or imagine this description to be?*
- *Peter quotes the prophet Joel to explain to their retractors what is happening. In this time of COVID19, what hope, consolation, and prophetic witness may I offer to a grieving, hurting world this week? To my community and colleagues? My family? My friends and neighbors? The people who provide services for me? The people I do not know who I encounter?*

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<sup>4</sup> [https://hymnary.org/text/breathe\\_on\\_me\\_breath\\_of\\_god](https://hymnary.org/text/breathe_on_me_breath_of_god)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.smumc.org/>

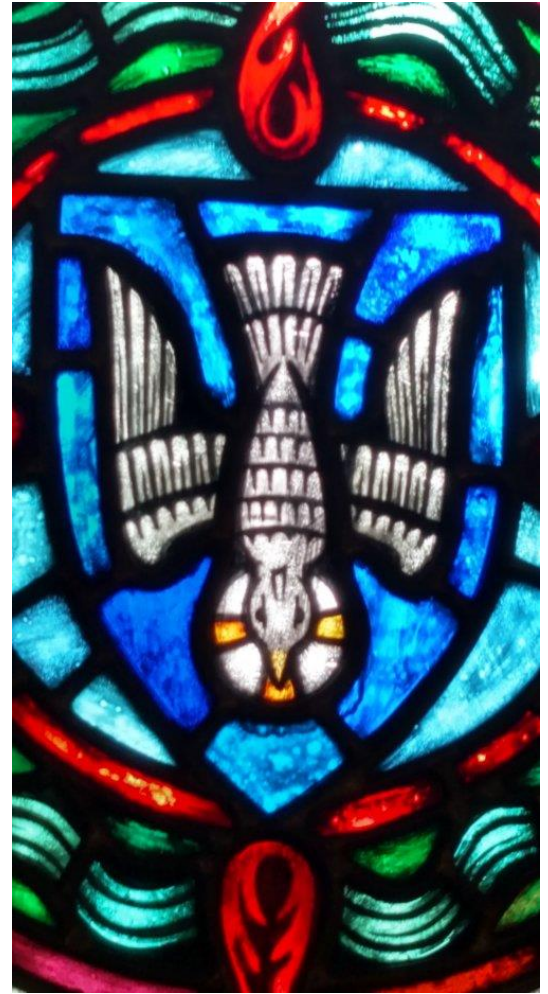
## Hymn 134

## Sweet, Sweet Spirit

words & music by Doris Akers

Doris Akers (1923-1995) was born in Brookfield, MO, one of ten children. She was taught herself piano by age six, and had composed her first song and organized a jazz band by age twelve. Moving among the burgeoning gospel community of the mid-twentieth century, Akers formed the first interracial choir in Los Angeles, the Sky Pilot Choir, in 1958. She wrote over 300 songs and received numerous awards for her music composition, recording, and directing throughout her life. Akers was posthumously inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001.<sup>6</sup>

Akers wrote Sweet, Sweet Spirit in 1962 after requiring her choir to wait to enter a Sunday morning worship service because she felt they were not spiritually prepared to lead worship singing. She insisted they wait and pray longer stating, "Prayer is more important than great voices." When the prayers continued, the pastor sent an urgent request that the service start. Gazing at her choir's "sweet expressions" Akers reflected it was a hard to leave—even for formal worship—when they felt "a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place." The next morning, she wrote the song that the Smithsonian Institute has named a National Treasure.<sup>7</sup> As we celebrate the birth of the Church at Pentecost during COVID19, sing or speak these words with the full assurance that the self-same Spirit of God that settled upon the first Christ-followers, moves within your life, as well. Or listen to Doris Akers, herself, sing along with The Statesmen Quartet and Hovie Lister in this 1964 rendition online at: [https://youtu.be/0rHAFEI\\_M\\_U](https://youtu.be/0rHAFEI_M_U)<sup>8</sup>.



There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,  
and I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;  
there are sweet expressions on each face,  
and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove,  
stay right here with us, filling us with your love;  
and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;  
without a doubt we'll know that we have been  
revived when we shall leave this place.

## Prayers of the People

Enter into this time in song. If you don't know the tune, let the words be the doorway to your prayer.

### Sung Prayer

### Hear My Prayer, O Lord

BENZENHAFFER  
arr. Holly C. Benzenhafer

Hear my prayer, O Lord. Hear my prayer, O Lord.  
I am asking, hear my prayer, O Lord.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-sweet-sweet-spirit>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.staugustine.com/article/20151105/LIFESTYLE/311059899>

<sup>8</sup> Sweet, Sweet Spirit · Doris Akers · The Statesmen Quartet · Hovie Lister Sing for You © Originally released 1964. All rights reserved by RCA Records, a division of Sony Music Entertainment Released on: 1964-06-13

## Prayerful Meditation

In a broken and fearful world  
the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing,  
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,  
to unmask idolatries in church and culture,  
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,  
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.  
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,  
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives,  
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus!  
With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death  
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.<sup>9</sup>

## We Hold in Prayer...

*Many of this week's prayers are requests from members of our congregation in the past week. If you have general or specific prayer requests—joys as well as concerns—to share please contact Holly or Daryn to pass them along.*

As a community of faith gathered in Spirit when we cannot be in person, we offer our hearts and voices in prayer where we are, as we are, entrusting the Spirit's moving among us and responding far beyond our individual reach and influence...

This week, in only three months' time, we bear witness to 100,000+ deaths of individuals to COVID19 within our country. We bear witness to the growing number of 355,000+ deaths of individuals who have succumbed to the coronavirus around our world so far. We bear witness to the unreported deaths of individuals to COVID19 who are not counted both in the United States and in countries across the globe. We give witness to their lives, their relationships, friends, and beloved ones. We witness their loss in work and communities. We witness the hollowness of life without their laughter, the absence of their compassion and wisdom, and the emptiness at table and daily routines and presence that impacts us all and leaves us wanting. We pause and seek to empathize with the fullness of trauma and grief for those souls who love and now survive them. For the lives lost to COVID19 and its impactful trauma, and souls now released from their suffering of this pandemic into your Spirit's living breath who we now name...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

We hold **Liz and her family** to God's deep peace as they grieve the death of her **Aunt Virginia**. May these days and weeks ahead be infused with Spirit's healing peace alongside the legacy of Virginia's life and love. With Ernie, we hold the family of **Cindy Chambers** as they grieve her death after a long illness. For these two lives and all persons who have entered God's nearer presence since last we entered prayer together, souls who grieve this day... and for souls whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

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<sup>9</sup> In "A Brief Statement of Faith," in *Worship Resource, Edition II*, <https://hymnary.org/hymn/LUYH2013/235> .

With Anthony and Bev, we lift to God's healing presence persons continuing to be diagnosed and living with COVID19. We continue to hold **Bruce Wile** and the residents at Wingate who have tested positive. Simultaneously, we offer prayers of deepest gratitude for ongoing reports from our FBC Needham community of continued good health and health and well-being of most extended family members. For recovery to and continued good health, resilience, and God's watch-care...and for souls we now name who are living with the virus...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly, we hold persons living with non-COVID19 illness and injury requiring hospitalization or treatment. We lift Daryn's cousin, **Draegen** to Spirit's watch-care after a second, more extensive shoulder surgery and is recovering at home. We continue to pray for Holly's Aunt **Deb Benzenhafer**, in Wartburg, TN, as she prepares for stomach cancer surgery June 9, and her Uncle **Tom Benzenhafer**, who is recovering well at home from knee replacement surgery. In the midst of suffering and unknowing, life changes and beloved presence, we gather these souls before you, Holy Spirit, and now speak the names of persons likewise confronting serious medical conditions...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Dorothy, Louise, Anthony, and Marty, we pray for persons living in countries around the world who do not have the wealth, technology, or infrastructure to provide sustenance and support to their people during this pandemic. We especially name the people of the Philippines and pray for their resilience and safekeeping. We pray, too, for the numerous disparities within our own country that COVID19 has exposed and continues to highlight. For persons unable to receive adequate health care, who face lost jobs and job insecurities, who stand in food lines, who fear eviction, who must balance their health safety and that of their loved ones with employment, who face domestic violence, and who were already living with injustice, racism, discrimination, marginalization, and invisibility, we bear witness and lift in prayer. That the work of Christ continue to grow among the people of our world, our country, our towns, our neighborhoods, and our households...and for those countries and individuals whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Harry and Pastor Daryn we give thanks for food banks and delivery services that seek to ensure all people are adequately fed during COVID19, especially the Needham Senior Center, First Baptist Church Jamaica Plain's service to 200 families a week, and the Boston Food Bank...and for souls receiving assistance and souls engaged in this work whose names we speak aloud...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Harry, we hold the comfort of ritual and tradition in visiting the graves of loved ones to share honor, memory, and respect. We cherish their presence with us and honor them in our daily living, especially Harry's beloved wife, **Jean**...and souls no longer in this life but with us still whose names we speak with great love...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*



We celebrate with Pastor Holly on the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her ordination to the gospel ministry on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2009. For her continued dedication of a life of vocational service and presence and for the continued work of all persons both ordained and those souls called to vocational ministry who are prevented ordination because of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or other human-deemed impediments who nevertheless continue to find ways to serve as hands and feet, heart and voice of the Body of Christ in the world...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Clif, Anthony, Liz, Ernie, and Pastor Daryn, we acknowledge the pain of being unable to be in full community and in-person worship in a manner that is safe for all of our community while COVID19 continues to spread. We recognize the frustration of sheltering-at-home even when doing so does save lives and spares unnecessary, horrific infection. We acknowledge doing so is hard on us, and yet not as hard as for many souls with fewer resources and support. We acknowledge how much more difficult this time would be without our community of faith at FBC Needham and our storied history together. In our perceived loss, we long for what is familiar and

comforting while we seek different ways to be the Body of Christ in this new reality. What we treasure in worship is radically altered and will continue to be, and yet we claim your promise to be with each of us no matter the situation or circumstance—that our prayers are heard, our hearts open to receive your Spirit as we worship in Spirit and Truth in new ways. With that assurance, we hold our straining patience, our loneliness, our aggravation at life being disrupted, the adjustments required to our habits of gathered worship, our simply missing being together, and our fear of the unknown to Spirit's presence ...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Barbara, Dorothy, Harry, Clif, Anthony, and Marty, we offer gratitude for the ability to worship in safe-keeping at home through the Worship Resource, online, and on television. We give thanks for the ways our Worship Resource attunes us to God's abiding presence through prayerful worship and song, reflection on scripture, art, and our own community's shared life of prayer which knows no boundary. For Spirit's moving through the written word and photographs, for the ability to worship and pray wherever and however we are, and for the ingenuity of countless communities of faith who persist in caring for their members, surrounding neighbors, and the most vulnerable among us through creative means of virtual and spiritual connection during COVID19...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*



With Harry, Clif, and Pastor Holly, we share the joy of gardening and being within nature. For dog-walking, planting tomatoes and flowers, the heady scent of lilacs, walking in the woods with family, and feeling the sun's warmth on over-wintered skin...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Marty, we lift in gratitude neighbors and friends who check in and offer assistance when life feels like a three-ring circus. For the goodness of others, friend and stranger, alike...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*



With Andrew and Pastor Holly, we hold souls in assisted living and who are in vulnerable populations who continue to live under stringent regulations for their health and safe-keeping. We especially lift up members of our community, **Barbara, Gloria and Jim, Marilyn, Bruce, Margaret, Trevor, Marty, and Wren** who is isolated in her first month of motherhood with **Carmen**. For their continued endurance, mental well-being, good humor, boredom, loneliness, and for persons whose minds no longer permit them to understand the disruption to their routines or why their families cannot visit...and for souls whose names we speak aloud...*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

With Pastor Holly, we celebrate the students, parents, teachers, and administration staffs who have worked to enable education to continue in the midst of great upheaval, dislocation, makeshift arrangements, iffy internet, and shelter-at-home regulations as they come to the end of the school year, especially the **Stylianopoulos, Burden, Zimpleman, Duncan, and Wolfteich families**. As they turn toward summer, new schedules and expectations, and the continued concerns of COVID19's spread, we pause for this moment to bless all the creative and on-the-fly work, planning, and implementing required of all of them to get to the end of the semester. For

their accomplishments and the renewed appreciations for the expertise, work, and calling of educators...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Ernie, we celebrate the joys of special life moments, especially Jonathan Steeve's stepdaughter, Ramsey's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday...*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

With Marty and Anthony, we give thanks for the shifts of perspective this experience living through COVID19 affords us for the better. We acknowledge the rebalancing of the importance of material things in our lives and affirm instead the enduring value of nurturing our spiritual lives and peace of mind. We endeavor to let go of the things that distract us from the fullness of life and the enduring life beyond life... *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow....*

For the prayers of our hearts that you, Holy One, know even when words cannot hold them...  
*Hear my prayer, O Lord....*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory forever. Amen.

### **Holy Spirit, Living Word...**

In today's text, situated at the end of the liturgical season of Eastertide, the Spirit finally makes Her arrival to Jesus' followers. She comes as a *sound* and *fire* and *comprehensible language*. She unlocks the inhibitions and fear-chambers of the Christ-followers and leaves no room for hesitation and no person untouched. Her fire anoints them, as the waters of our baptism anoint us, to a life-long dedication to serving as Christ's Body in the world. No limitation or infirmity, no socially-constructed prejudice or discrimination allows us to waver from our calling through the Spirit's baptism by fire or water to care for the world with great compassion; generous welcome; and deep commitment to serve and put first the least of these, the vulnerable, and the harmed.

- *The Holy Spirit enters the story in a manner of some upheaval that enables the Christ-followers to begin to speak in a way that others can now understand them. Consider how language is used to both divide, shut down, and alienate people and also to include, respect, and nurture community. What forms of language have I witnessed recently? In what ways has my language, my conversation, reflected my own baptism by water in the Spirit? When has it not?*
- *On this week at the beginning of the Season after Pentecost, how may I commit myself to intention, careful speech that offers healing, inclusion, compassion, and hope to each person I encounter? What do I need to change in how I think or talk to ensure I speak in a way that acknowledges the full value and respect for the children of God I encounter?*

- Who needs to hear a life-giving, affirmative, loving, or fully-supportive word from me this week? Am I willing to trust the Spirit's moving in my own life to speak hope, peace, and love into the places of need, injustice, pain, and loneliness where I've chosen to be silent?

## Responsive Hymn

## O Spirit of the Living God

FOREST GREEN, CMD

Henry Hallum Tweedy (1868-1953) attended Phillips Andover Academy in Andover, MA, before earning degrees at Yale, Union Theological Seminary, and University of Berlin. A Congregationalist minister, he eventually became a homiletics professor at Yale specializing in liturgy, music, and the arts. Tweedy wrote this Pentecost hymn in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression. Tweedy sought to interpret the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts in a way that reminds present-day Christians that the Spirit continues to move through each of us regardless of the circumstances or point in history in which we find ourselves.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever this moment in life with COVID19, Pentecost calls us to **be the living church every day**, not only on Sundays or when it's convenient or easy. Sing this English melody or read the words as a prayer of response and commitment to the Spirit's refining fire, wind of wisdom, and enabling language that moves within each of us as we endeavor to be the hands and feet, heart and mind, voice and eyes of Christ in a world in dire need of transformative love, compassionate joy, and unbridled welcome. Or, sing along with an ensemble instrument accompaniment online at: <https://youtu.be/RoB75hjIFHw><sup>11</sup>

O Spirit of the living God,  
 thou light and fire divine,  
 descend upon thy church once more,  
 and make it truly thine.  
 Fill it with love and joy and power,  
 with righteousness and peace;  
 till Christ shall dwell in human hearts,  
 and sin and sorrow cease.

Blow, wind of God! With wisdom blow  
 until our minds are free  
 from mists of error, clouds of doubt,  
 which blind our eyes to thee.  
 Burn, winged fire! Inspire our lips  
 with flaming love and zeal,  
 to preach to all thy great good news,  
 God's glorious commonweal.

Teach us to utter living words  
 of truth which all may hear,  
 the language all may understand  
 when love speaks loud and clear;  
 till every age and race and clime  
 shall blend their creeds in one,  
 and earth shall form one family  
 by whom thy will is done.

So shall we know the power of Christ  
 who came this world to save;  
 so shall we rise with him to life  
 which soars beyond the grave;  
 and earth shall win true holiness,  
 which makes thy children whole;  
 till, perfected by thee, we reach  
 creation's glorious goal!

<sup>10</sup> <https://hymnary.org/text/o-spirit-of-the-living-god-thou-light-an>

<sup>11</sup> Traditional Hymns & Songs – Lyrics & Music at [www.traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk). Sound recording is copyright© Rod Smith but non-commercial, worship and individual education use is OK.

## Offering

For online giving, go to <https://www.fbcneedham.org> or continue to support the ongoing ministry of the church by sending a check to the church office via mail to: First Baptist Church in Needham, 858 Great Plain Avenue, Needham MA 02492. Please indicate it is your offering or pledge on the check.

## Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

## Benediction

*(Speak these words of benediction knowing that you are part of a loving community of faith. If you lit a candle at the beginning, you may wish to blow it out now.)*

One: Our blessing to one another is that we are here for one another, that we are with one another, that we celebrate and remember one another along the journey.

**ALL: We extinguish the Candle of Life, but the Light continues to shine within us. As we pass the peace we carry the Light of the Candle of Life from this hour into this world and beyond, offering peace, hope and light wherever the journey leads.**



## Passing of the Peace

*(Picture in your mind's eye the faces of beloved souls with whom you would share the peace of Christ in person if you could, and offer each one your blessing of peace.)*

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

One: Let us greet one another in peace as we prepare for the journey ahead.

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## Announcements

### While the Church Office and Building are currently closed, our ministry continues!

Pastoral and office staff are working from home. Office voicemail and email are being checked regularly. If you have a pastoral concern, contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly by email, phone, or text.

**FBC Jamaica Plain Food Distribution Ministry Needs Donations!** First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain distributes meals and groceries to more than 200 families per week in Boston during this COVID-19 pandemic. Pastor Daryn has been volunteering on Fridays with grocery packing and delivery. This week, there was such a high demand at the Food Bank, that FBCJP was unable to secure an appointment. They have sent out an urgent request for groceries so that they are able to supply the needs of the families they are serving.

#### Three ways to donate:

- Donate groceries, please refer to the needed items provided by Pastor Ashlee Wiest-Laird.  
**Drop off at the church (ring bell) at 633 Centre St., Boston on these days/times: Tues 12-8; Wed 8-8; Thurs 12-8.**
- Contact Pastor Daryn to arrange pick up of groceries you wish to donate.
- Make a financial donation to FBC Jamaica Plain's ministry online:  
[www.firstbaptistjp.org/page/give](http://www.firstbaptistjp.org/page/give)

From Rev. Ashlee Wiest-Laird:

*"Do to huge demand we were not able to get an appointment with the Food Bank this week. Please help us get groceries to the 200 plus families we are serving. We are looking for donations of:*

Rice (1-2 lb bag)	Canned soup	Shelf stable milk
Bag of Potatoes	Tomato sauce	Bag of Oranges
Dried beans, lentils	Peanut butter	Bananas
Pasta	Bread	Cheese
Canned tuna or chicken	Bad of Carrots	
Canned veggies or fruit	Bag of Onions	

**Do You Need Washable Masks?** Be Kind Needham Masks for Seniors is a local organization making washable fabric masks available to local senior residents *for free*. Your health and safety in the weeks and months ahead is paramount, and having reusable, washable masks aids sanitation, is environmentally friendly, and is cost-effective. If you or a senior you know need masks, please contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly.

**Needham Community Council** continues to provide necessary resources and food to individuals in need of their services. If you or someone you know are in need of reaching out to them or if you want to learn how you can best volunteer to help at this time, go to their website at: <http://needhamcommunitycouncil.org>. *Please note: They ARE NOT accepting drop-off donations at this time due to safety protocols. Financial donations are greatly appreciated and needed.*

# MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL of CHURCHES **ONECHURCHFUND**

The Massachusetts Council of Churches and its member congregations and denominations believe in One Church. We believe all parts of the body of Christ are necessary. And, at this terrible moment when so many people are suffering because of the COVID19, some parts of the body of Christ are suffering more than others. As members of the one body of Christ, we cannot say to one another, "I have no need of you."

**Through the One Church Fund, the Massachusetts Council of Churches prioritizes the financial, practical, and relational support of immigrant, Black, poor, unhoused, and unaffiliated churches.**

Many of these churches' needs are going unmet by federal, state, denominational, and local church resources, even as they have been decimated by the circumstances of the COVID19 pandemic compounded by long legacies of racial and economic disparities and systemic inequities. Churches are essential service providers, especially in immigrant Black, poor, and homeless communities. Immigrant churches and Black churches have long operated with an outsized role in meeting the needs of their communities, by providing education, banking, health care, food, clothing, mental health and spiritual support, often because other institutions failed to provide care.

The need for your support is urgent and growing because many of these vibrant churches operate from plate to plate, with no reserves, no endowment, no savings. These churches are in danger of closing critical ministries because of the economic crisis caused by COVID19. These churches are experiencing increasing need at a time of decreasing local resources. We need your help to unify and sustain these churches in the communities experiencing the most suffering. We can be a balm to one another in the Body of Christ. To learn more, go to <https://www.onechurchfund.org/about/>

**Please give generously and ask for what you need to ensure the whole body of Christ endures.**

**You can also donate through our church's Paypal link at [www.fbcneedham.org](http://www.fbcneedham.org) .**

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