

First Baptist Church in Needham

First Sunday of Lent

Edition 49

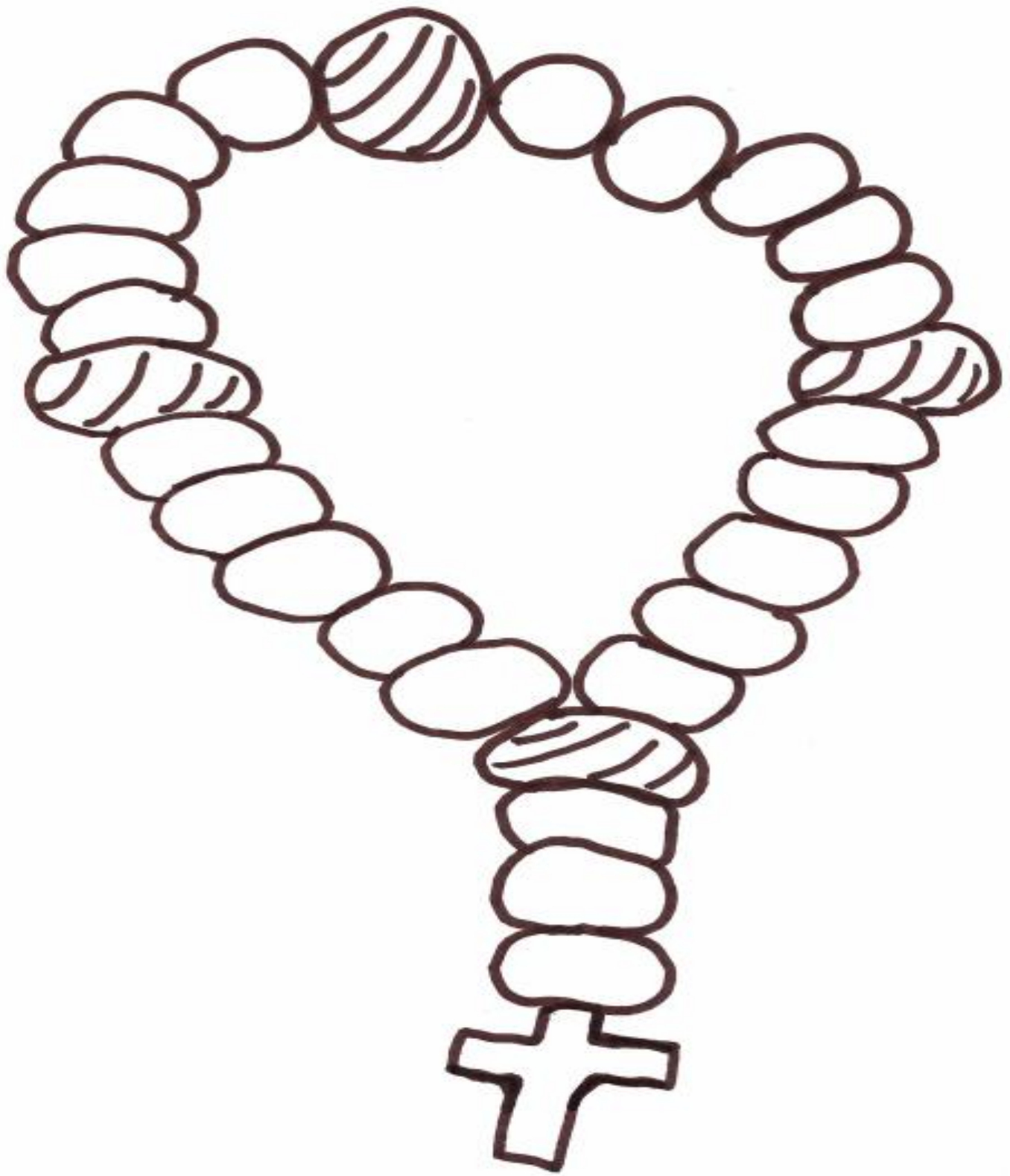


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Worship and Prayer Resource
Sunday, February 21, 2021
(for whenever you are so led to pause, reflect, and pray)

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492
www.fbcneedham.org

¹ Photo: "Peace Wall Tile - Handprint" Providence, RI – 2019: ©Holly Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.



We Enter the Journey of Lent incorporating the rituals of worship – light, prayer, offering, and benediction – with art, reflection, and the ancient practice of praying with prayer beads. May the creative interpretations and theological contemplation shared here join your own daily experiences, encounters of God’s presence, and prayerful compassion as we make this sacred, worshipful journey together. –*Pastor Holly*

Lighting the Candle of Life

You may wish to light a candle or use the photo above as a focus for this time.

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 the transitions in between and beyond.

Scripture

Genesis 9:8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his children with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."



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³ Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman. "In Our Hands." Hand-carved block print with oil-based ink on paper. Inspired by Genesis 9:8-17 | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Reflection

God meets us in the night—
Before the sun rises,
Before the wound heals,
Before there are answers,
Before there is closure.
God meets us in the light—
Where joy is effervescent,
Where laughter is contagious,
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
And where people gather around the table.⁴

Mark 1:9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

⁴ Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

Reflection

God meets us at the threshold—
At the edge of the water,
At the beginning of the wilderness,
At the start of something new,
On the edge of faith.
And if God meets us in all those places,
Then surely God meets us in between—
Staying with us through the wilderness.
We are not alone. God is all around.
Let us worship the God of the here and now.⁵

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

PRAYING WITH PRAYER BEADS: Starting with Lent, Prayers of the People changes format to connect to the spiritual practice of using prayer beads. This ancient practice of holding a strand of beads to help focus the mind and body during prayer has been a very meaningful form of prayer throughout Christian history. As your fingers move from one bead to the next, you pray, sometimes the same prayer again and again and sometimes a different, personal prayer with each bead.

As we move through Lent, you may wish to pray Prayers of the People (or your own prayers) by following along with the prayer beads printed in the Worship Resource or perhaps color each bead as you pray. You may choose to make your own

⁵ Ibid.

prayer beads or use a set significant to you. However you choose to enter into our weekly congregational prayers, know the act of prayer is holy conversation through the Spirit of God as we journey within the purple shades of Lent's path. May the prayer beads nurture and support this sacred worship. –*Pastor Holly*

Instructions are included in purple italics throughout the prayers so you can follow along with the beads.

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

BENZENHAFER
arr. Holly C. Benzenhafer

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

Prayerful Meditation

Holding or sitting with the image of your prayer beads, enter into a quiet pause with this prayerful meditation of assurance:

“Family of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this: God is here. God sees you. God knows you. God meets you at the edge of every new beginning, And God calls you beloved. We are washed by the water. We are called beloved. Thanks be to God for a love like that.”⁶

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.

⁶ Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Place your finger on **the cross** and begin the prayer with these words:

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

Place your finger on the **first three beads** above the cross saying:

Bead 1: Creator God, hear my prayer.

Bead 2: Loving Christ, hear my prayer.

Bead 3: Abiding Spirit, hear my prayer.

The **4 ridged beads** mark off four themed sections of our Prayers of the People. Each ridged bead is followed by **5 smooth beads** that represent five specific prayers from our FBC Needham community that are related to that theme. Your finger will move from bead to bead around the loop until you have prayed with each bead and return to the original three beads and cross.



1st Theme: Gratitude & Thanksgiving

Place your finger on the **first ridged bead** above the original three smooth beads saying: ⁷
O God, thank you for each new day and all that it brings. You promise to provide all that I need, caring not only for me, but for all creation and so I rejoice...

Move to the **first set of 5 smooth beads**, and offer your prayers of gratitude & thanksgiving along with those of our community of faith:

Bead 1: With Barbara for receiving her second COVID vaccine at Wingate, and with Dorothy for receiving her first vaccine.

⁷ "Lenten Prayer Beads". ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

- Bead 2:** With Harry, Louise, and Bev for the Lenten Packet and devotional resources to guide the journey through Lent. And for the pleasure of celebrating holidays – Chinese New Year, Valentine’s – even when it’s altered from previous years.
- Bead 3:** With Marty and Louise for warm, safe homes during wintery weather.
- Bead 4:** With Louise, Andrew, Bev, Dorothy, and Barbara for the weekly calls from Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly, the weekly Worship Resource, and for the pleasure of receiving Valentine cards.
- Bead 5:** With our congregation’s ongoing vocational discernment through Creative Callings and the promise and hope it holds for offering blessing and benefit far beyond our individual imaginings.
- Praise God, from whom all blessing flow....*

2nd Theme: Personal & FBC Needham Concerns

Place your finger on the second ridged bead saying:

Faithful God, you know me inside and out, all my hopes and dreams, fears and failures. Guide and support the FBC Needham community and me as we seek to follow Jesus’s teachings and life’s ministry while sharing the concerns of our hearts as I pray...

Move to the second set of 5 smooth beads, and offer your prayers of concern along with those shared within our community of faith:

- Bead 1:** With Liz as she faces selling her home, moving, and the complexities of multiple changes that weigh on her heart and mind.
- Bead 2:** With John for his continued healing and return to full health.
- Bead 3:** With Anthony in the shared concern that we will each be able to see family in person, to travel to them, and be with them at some point in the year ahead...and the concern that we may not.

Bead 4: With Harry, John, Dorothy, Clif, and Marty for the heaviness of the tedium, loneliness, boredom, and isolation we and so many have experienced this year alongside the inability to get out or see beloved family and friends.

Bead 5: With Jim for success in his efforts in his work.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer....

3rd Theme: Healing, Solace, & Courage

Place your finger on the third ridged bead saying:

God of mercy and peace, your people cry out to you for healing and comfort, courage and strength. Surround your children known and unknown to me with your watch care and abiding presence, as I pray...

Move to the third set of 5 smooth beads, and offer your prayers for Spirit's comfort, healing, and peace saying:

Bead 1: With Bev, Barbara, Andrew, and Marty for Clif's continued recovery and treatments, Ernie's ongoing wellbeing during cancer treatments, and Spiro's physical rehabilitation toward full recovery of his arm.

Bead 2: With Ernie for his neighbor Anne who went in hospital unexpectedly and all souls navigating medical crises and chronic conditions during COVID.

Bead 3: With Andrew for Wren and her mother who are in COVID quarantine after testing positive.

Bead 4: With Bev as she lives with ongoing back pain and treatments that have not alleviated her discomfort.

Bead 5: With Pastor Holly for her dear friends Gray and Dabs Jackson as they mourn their mother, Eda Jackson's death on February 11, after 100+ days in COVID ICU. For their consolation that Eda now flies free in God's nearer presence and the countless families who grieve beloved members' deaths.

Lord, in your mercy, hear my prayer....

4th Theme: Community, Nation, & World

Place your finger on the fourth ridged bead saying:

God of compassion and justice, there is so much in the news that is painful, from natural disasters to governmental actions to hunger, poverty, and violence. And there are so many instances of lovingkindness, beauty, and hope. Move among your creation and your children, as I pray...

Move to the fourth set of 5 smooth beads, and offer your prayers for Spirit's moving:

Bead 1: With Clif for the beginning promises of spring as the first daffodils are breaking ground at the church yard.

Bead 2: With Dorothy for increasingly better administration and availability of the COVID vaccine and people's willingness to receive it.

Bead 3: With Bev in concern for Pastor Daryn's grandparents' recovery from home invasion and the deeper layers of wanton disregard and violence that ripple through our communities and world.

Bead 4: With Andrew and Pastor Holly for the people across North America who have endured winter weather and temperatures far worse than they are adequately able to handle, and who have suffered injuries and death from extreme temperatures and ice.

Bead 5: For the people of Myanmar in the midst of uprising and societal upheaval.
For the moving of your Spirit in hope and healing throughout our world, praise God, from whom all blessings flow ... And for your enduring presence, justice, and mercy in our brokenness, Lord, in your mercy, hear my prayer....

Concluding the Prayer

Return to the first ridged bead saying:

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

You may wish to use the *original 3 beads to offer your own prayers.*

Bead 1:

Bead 2:

Bead 3:

Hear my prayer, O Lord...as I pray the prayer your son taught us saying:

Holding the cross, end with 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.

Offering

*During this time of offering, consider going right now to <https://www.fbcneedham.org> (Take Action) to complete your offering or continue to support the ongoing ministry of the church by writing your check to the church office and preparing it to 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. Let this act be a spiritual practice woven in within your worship.*

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.

Again & Again: A Lenten Refrain

As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again,
Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. Amen.⁸

Hymns under copyright are used by permission under CCLI # 763542.

Announcements

Our ministry at FBC Needham continues!

Our **church office** is open for our Office Manager, Robin Bevilacqua. We are encouraging limited visits to the church building, and all who visit are required to mask, sign-in, and socially distance. **If you need to speak with Robin, please call ahead if you can.** Pastoral and other church 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.

⁸ Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Worship - Worship Resource and Calls of Caring continue!

Worship Resources and Calls of Caring are provided each week. You are encouraged to make use of the Worship Resources and to find other meaningful opportunities for worship and reflection, Zoom services, or other spiritually enriching means of communing with God and community during this time of social distancing. The Zoom links provided for FBC Newton and FBC Jamaica Plain remain the same as before and are posted on our website on our member page. Contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly if you need links to join these services.

Welcome to Lent – Our Theme is “Again and Again: A Lenten Refrain”

If you have not received our Lenten Devotional Booklet from A Sanctified Art LLC, please notify Robin in the church office, and one will be mailed to you. Additionally, our Lenten Prayers of the People take on a different format as we hold our communities and our FBC family in ongoing intentional prayer and compassion with the ancient practice of praying with prayer beads. A drawing of prayer beads will be included each week for you to follow along or color along if you do not have a set of beads. As we prepare our hearts for this 40-day journey toward Easter, may we also be open to the Spirit’s moving in our congregation’s discernment through our devotional resources, prayer practices, worship, and daily faithful living.

Questions About Accessing COVID Vaccinations in Needham?

Needham Public Health has created a dedicated email and phone line for vaccination questions. Before contacting Needham Public Health, please see the Frequently Asked Questions on the Town’s COVID webpage

(<http://www.needhamma.gov/documentcenter/view/22927> - updated as of 2/5). You can email questions to needhamvaccine@needhamma.gov or call 781-455-7934. Note, this line is a voicemail box. Your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Needham Community Council continues to provide necessary resources and food to individuals in need of their services: <http://needhamcommunitycouncil.org>.

Please note: They are accepting donations by appointment only at this time due to safety protocols. Financial donations are greatly appreciated and needed.

Creative Callings

Collaboration, Innovation, and Prophetic Witness



Boston University School of Theology
Center for Practical Theology

Our Community Partner Conversations have concluded wrapping up a very fruitful and thought-inspiring set of sessions:

Stage 1 (Congregational Partners Conversations) and

Stage 2 (Community Partners Conversations)

We begin **STAGE 3 – COLLECTIVE & INDIVIDUAL VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT** – Thursday, April 22, at 6:30pm on Zoom! Put it on your calendar, and plan to be part of the process!

All of the previous and current videos are available on the Creative Callings link on the church website.

Thank you to all who have shown up curious, engaged the videos and video partners in meaningful dialogue, curated questions, and held possibility for our church in this process of discernment and dreaming. If you have questions about Creative Callings, or how you can best support First Baptist in our participation, please contact Pastor Daryn, pastordaryn@fbcneedham.org, or Pastor Holly, pastorholly@fbcneedham.org.

Now Accepting Applications

NEED HELP PAYING RENT DUE TO COVID-RELATED INCOME LOSS?

APPLY FOR COVID-19 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE

To qualify:

- Must be a Needham resident
- Have reduced income because of COVID-19
- Have an annual income at or below 80% of Area Median Income (\$67,400 for individual; \$96,250 for family of 4)

CONTACT: robyn@metrowestcd.org
or 617-923-3505 x 5

How Are You?

Mental Health Awareness, Well-Being, & Care

The pandemic is exacting a daily price from each of us mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, financially, and through our sense of instability and insecurity. If you are finding life increasingly difficult to navigate, there are numerous resources available to help throughout our larger local, county, state, and national communities. **At FBC Needham we recognize the necessity of behavioral and mental health support in nurturing wellbeing and safekeeping of our community as well as physical safety and wellbeing. Isolation occurs in so many ways.** As your pastors, Daryn and Holly endeavor to address your spiritual needs *and* connect you to agencies and services that can directly help meet other potential needs. Please utilize these resources and share them with friends and loved ones who may benefit from them.

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Norfolk County's "Are You Ok?" Program for Seniors & Residents with Disabilities – Provided free of charge to Norfolk County seniors and residents with disabilities, this program provides a daily check-in call 365 days a year monitored by staff from Norfolk County Sheriff's Office and Fallon Ambulance. **For more information or to sign up, call Deputy Sheriff Cheryl Bambery at 866-900-7865.**

National Suicide Prevention Hotline – 800-273-8255 · We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. **For more information, check online at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org**

The Trevor Project – www.thetrevorproject.org · The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth. Our trained counselors offer 24/7 support. If you are a young person in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment-free place to talk, call the **TrevorLifeline now at 1-866-488-7386**. **TrevorChat** is a free, confidential and secure instant messaging service that provides live help to LGBTQ youth. **TrevorText** is a confidential and secure resource that provides live help for LGBTQ youth with a trained specialist, over text messages. **Text START to 678-678.**

Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline – www.helplinema.org · The Helpline is the only statewide, public resource for finding substance use treatment and recovery services. Helpline services are free and confidential. Caring, trained Specialists will help you understand the treatment system and your options. **Call the helpline at 1-800-327-5050**

Mental Health America (screening tools) – <https://screening.mhanational.org> · Founded in 1909, MHA promotes mental health as a critical part of overall wellness, including prevention services for all; early identification and intervention for those at risk; integrated care, services, and supports for those who need it; with recovery as the goal. MHA provides online screening tools, recommendations for maintaining wellbeing, and resources/programs, a newsletter for current mental health information, and advocacy.

SafeLink – Massachusetts' Domestic Violence Hotline – 877-785-2020 · Casa Myrna is Boston's largest provider of shelter and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence, providing safety, resources, advocacy and information since 1977. They operate SafeLink, the 24/7 statewide domestic violence hotline, and promote domestic and dating violence prevention through awareness and education. All of their supports are provided to survivors free of charge. **For more information, check Casa Myrna online at www.casamyrna.org**

Needham Community Council – www.needhamcommunitycouncil.org
The Needham Community Council is a private non-profit organization which supports people in Needham who have under-met health, educational or social needs and promotes volunteerism, community and a sense of shared responsibility. If you are a Needham resident in need of resources from the **Thrift Store, Food Pantry, Lift Transport Program, Tablets & Tutors, Medical Equipment Loan Program, Child Assault Prevention Program, Cyber Bullying, etc.**, the NCC can help! Check online or call 781-444-2415 for more information.

Needham Public Health – www.needhamma.gov/85/Public-Health
NPH's **Traveling Meals** program provides two meals/day to qualified Needham residents (both temporary and long-term). NPH also offers **Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention** and the **Gift of Warmth Program** (utility bill relief). For more information on the full list of services, check online or call 978-455-7940.