

First Baptist Church in Needham

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Edition 54



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Worship and Prayer Resource

Sunday, March 21, 2021

(for whenever you are so led to pause, reflect, and pray)

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492

www.fbcneedham.org

¹ A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

We make 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 one of the included images 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

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt--a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection

Holy God, Scripture tells me that your word is written on my heart,
But I struggle to hear it.

Is it possible that I have covered up your words with my own self-narratives?

Is it possible that I have erased your truth to write my own?

Is it possible that I have forgotten your words entirely?

Take me back to the beginning.

Remove the self-talk that distracts.

Clear away the cobwebs of doubt.

Show me how to look inside myself for your truth,
And then write on my heart once more.
I am listening. I am hopeful. I am here. Speak now.²



² Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

³ Lauren Wright Pittman. "Written on Our Hearts." Digital drawing. Inspired by Jeremiah 31:31-34. | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

John 12:20-33

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say--' Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

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⁴ Hannah Garrity. "Drawn to Love." Paper lace. Inspired by John 12:20-33 | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

Reflection

In the gospel of John, a group of Greek people approach the disciples and say, “We would like to see Jesus.”

It’s a brief, beautiful moment that the text doesn’t spend a lot of time on, And yet, it always catches my eye.

It catches my eye because the phrase, “I want to see Jesus,” Feels like it should be my constant prayer.

Help me see Jesus.

I’d like to see Jesus.

Bring me closer to Jesus.

In this moment help me recognize how much space exists between me and those words,

Trusting that even when I forget to seek out God, God is seeking me out.

In turn, I take one step closer to the Divine. ⁵

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH 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.

Moving 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 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*



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⁵ Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

⁶ “Lenten Prayer Beads” - ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

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

Prayers of the People

Enter 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 a quiet pause with this prayerful meditation:

Flowers need the rain.
Humans need community.
Bodies need rest.
Hearts need connection.
Mornings need sunrise.
Seasons need change.
Grief needs space.
Change needs time.
Love needs security.
Pain needs art.
Joy needs company.
My spirit need God.
Again and again, my spirit need God.
Fortunately for me, I trust that God is here.
God is at work in my life.
God is a lighthouse keeper that never gives up.
Thanks be to God.⁷

⁷ Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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.**

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:

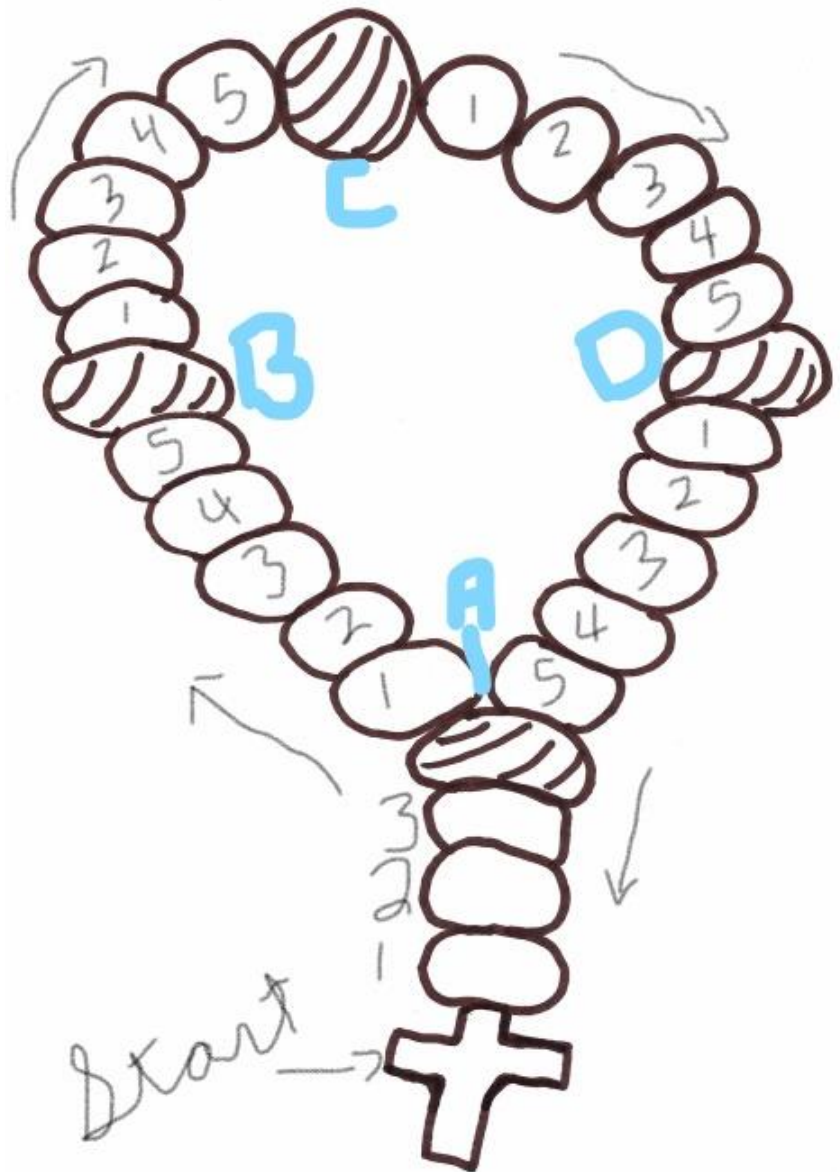
Bead 1: Creator God, hear my prayer.

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.

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⁸ "Lenten Prayer Beads". Pen and ink drawing. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

1st Theme: Gratitude & Thanksgiving

Place your finger on the first ridged bead (A) above the original three smooth beads saying:
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 Stan and Andrew who received a first vaccine shot and Dorothy and Peggy receiving their second ones.

Bead 2: With Louise and Harry for the weekly calls and conversations with Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly and the pleasure of checking on each other and the Lenten Prayer Beads practice to guide our communal prayers.

Bead 3: With Andrew for the immigrant congregation moving into the former Needham Presbyterian Church building that they find abundant welcome and flourish in the community.

Bead 4: With Harry, Peggy, Dorothy, Mark, and Stan for our families who remain healthy and for the ability of many people to work from home in order to extend safe precautions to the larger community.

Bead 5: With Andrew for Mark and Peggy's facilitating the Thursday night Lenten Zoom Bible Study and the goodness of this time together.
Praise God, from whom all blessing flow....

2nd Theme: Personal & FBC Needham Concerns

Place your finger on the second ridged bead (B) 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 Louise in concern for our pastors and the many difficult and complex situations they navigate each day with sweet spirits.

Bead 2: With Peggy, and Stan in hope to see grandchildren, other family members, and each other safely in person this year.

Bead 3: With Harry for Liz as she moves day by day through complicated decisions, legalities, and housing concerns—that she find resilience each morning and restorative rest each night and walk through each day in the Spirit’s care.

Bead 4: With the children, teachers, and parents who enter FBC Needham’s building each day and witness the crocus and daffodils emerging from the ground with promises of spring to come.

Bead 5: With Clif and Pastor Holly for the congregation’s continued discernment as we move toward intentional decisions and faithfully living into them with *Creative Callings* in April.

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

3rd Theme: Healing, Solace, & Courage

Place your finger on the third ridged bead (C) 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 Liz whose cousin Linda is moving to memory care assisted living that her transition be as peaceful as possible.

Bead 2: With Andrew for Betty Martin (Murrow Home) whose mother died from COVID extended side effects and whose daughter, Jasmine, gave birth to a daughter, Birdie Noel. Grief comingling joy.

Bead 3: For Harry in learning that the Senior Center will commemorate Jean’s memory with a plaque on outdoor picnic tables, and the goodness of this kind act.

Bead 4: For Ernie in his continued treatments and upcoming reports.

Bead 5: With Clif for his continued restoration to full health and infusion treatments and in gratitude for the wonder of medical science and research in enabling people to have better health and well-being.

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

4th Theme: Community, Nation, & World

Place your finger on the fourth ridged bead (D) 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 Louise for the ability have a full tank of heating oil on cold days and concern for so many people who have inadequate heat.

Bead 2: With Andrew for the COVID online memorial service commemorating a year of closures in this pandemic and for the countless ways we have each been impacted, traumatized, grieved, and changed.

Bead 3: With the families of the eight people murdered in Atlanta spas and for the Asian communities who have endured ongoing threats, abuse, violence, and discrimination during the COVID pandemic.

Bead 4: With Andrew for Sheri Kamp (Murrow Home) who was Cherokee and died from COVID at age 51 in January. In her death we hold the indigenous people across North America who have been devastated by COVID including over 1000 deaths among the Navajo Nation in Arizona.

Bead 5: With the people of Myanmar as political unrest and social upheaval continues into another week.

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 (A) 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.⁹

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.

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.

⁹ Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Welcome to Lent – Our Theme is *Again & Again: A Lenten Refrain*

Our Lenten Prayers of the People take on a different format as we hold our communities and 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 our hearts and minds make 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 drawn from A Sanctified Art, LLC, www.sanctifiedart.org; prayer practices; worship; and daily faithful living.



“Again and Again: A Lenten Refrain” – Lenten Zoom Gatherings Fellowship, Study, & Prayer | Thursdays in Lent | 7:00pm-8:00pm on Zoom | Hosted by Peggy & Mark Hellberg

Would you like to get together for a time of fellowship, study, and prayer as we explore our Lenten devotional book, “Again and Again: A Lenten Refrain” during the season of Lent? If so, please join us on Thursday nights from 7 PM to 8PM on Zoom as we walk through Lent one week at a time.

We hope that by sharing this time we will get to know each other better, and we will grow in our understanding of God's call to each of us. It would be great if you would review the resources before the meeting but that is not a requirement. It would be helpful if you had access to a Bible. Please reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. We look forward to seeing you (virtually) on Thursday.

Please feel free to invite your friends.

Peggy and Mark

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82130750040?pwd=OFMvakoxNDYzVUg0SFdKOVZQWWFHUT09>

Meeting ID: 821 3075 0040

Passcode: 575973

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,82130750040#,,,,*575973# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 821 3075 0040

Passcode: 575973 Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82130750040?pwd=OFMvakoxNDYzVUg0SFdKOVZQWWFHUT09>

Needham Interfaith Clergy Association

COVID19 One-Year Anniversary Commemoration

Peace and blessings from the Needham Interfaith Clergy Association.

We have collaborated on a service to commemorate one year of living through the COVID-19 pandemic. You are invited to join us as we reflect, honor the memories of those lives lost, honor the resilience of our community, and offer prayer and encouragement to all.

In addition to the service, you will also find an opportunity to offer your own words of blessing and creative expression for our community in the video description. We are blessed to be part of the Needham community. Thank you for all you have done and are doing to support your neighbors through this time.

Feel free to share this link with your neighbors: <https://youtu.be/i-OanapK-Tg>

Holy Week Services

You Are Warmly Invited...

Join First Baptist Church Newton

for

Palm Sunday (March 28) Zoom

Worship Service

10:00 a.m

and

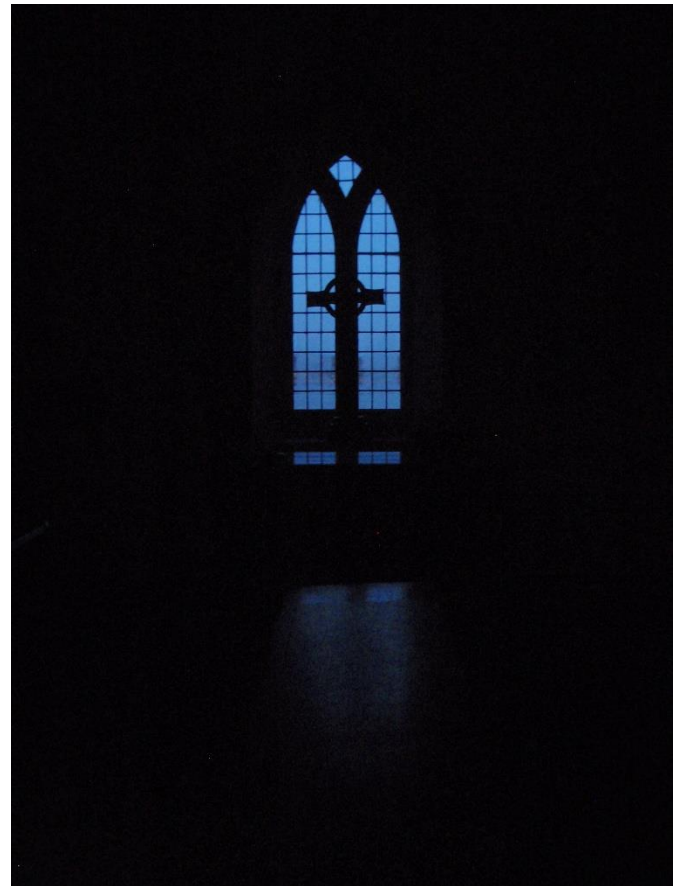
Maundy Thursday (April 1) Zoom

Service

time tba

Contact Pastor Daryn or Pastor Holly for
FBC Newton's Zoom link.

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¹⁰ "Prayer Chapel." Iona Abbey, Isle of Iona, Scotland, 2013. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.



FBC Needham Easter Morning Prayer Service

Sunday, April 4, 2021

10:00 -10:30 a.m.

Gathering on the
Side Lawn

¹¹*(weather permitting)*

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We will gather for a brief outdoor Prayer Service and Flower Cross Decorating to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus and entering the Holy Season of Eastertide.

Masks and social distancing remain in effect.

Consider Making a Generous Gift!

Thanks to **America for Christ (AFC) Offering** contributions, **American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS)** supported communities distressed by the devastation of COVID-19 last year, as the pandemic swept our country and Puerto Rico. ABHMS also helped families who lost homes to floods, wildfires and storms, along with children living on the edge because of poverty, and seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News. These are just a few of the ways we minister to those in need; there are many more.

Please help us continue to bring healing and hope to communities, families, children, and Jesus' disciples in 2021 by supporting this year's America for Christ Offering.

¹¹ "Lavra Easter Eggs." Kiev, Ukraine, 2010. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

Creative Callings

Collaboration, Innovation, and Prophetic Witness



Boston University School of Theology
Center for Practical Theology

Creative Callings Stage 3: COLLECTIVE & INDIVIDUAL VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT Intentional Decisions – Faithfully Stepping Forward Starts Thursday, April 22, at 6:30pm on Zoom!

Previous videos are available on the *Creative Callings* link on the church website. 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.

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.

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**