

First Baptist Church in Needham

Palm Sunday

Edition 55



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Worship and Prayer Resource Entering Holy Week Sunday, March 28, 2021

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

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492

www.fbcneedham.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

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

O give thanks to the LORD, for God is good; your steadfast love endures forever!
Let Israel say, "God’s steadfast love endures forever."

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we beseech you, O LORD! O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD.

The LORD is God, and you have given us light.

Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.

O give thanks to the LORD, for God is good, for your steadfast love endures forever.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection

As I enter Holy Week through the veil of Palms,
Even when I gloss over the truth,
Even when my courage fails me,
Even when I doubt that I can do hard things,
God believes in me.
God loves me.
God forgives me.
And thus, I hear and believe this truth:
I am known.
I am loved.
I am forgiven.
Again and again and again.²

John 12:1-19

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.)

Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!"

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

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: 'Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!'

His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.

The Pharisees then said to one another, 'You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!'

*The word of the Lord,
thanks be to God.*

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³ Lauren Wright Pittman. "Through the Palms." Hand-carved block printed on oil-based ink on paper. Inspired by John 12:1-19 | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

Reflection

God of palm branches and hallelujahs:
I confess—I love a good Palm Sunday celebration.
I love the sound of a joyful parade.
I love shouting, “Hallelujah!”
I love that Palm Sunday means Easter is just around the corner.
I love good news.
However, if I slow down and pay attention,
I know that Palm Sunday was not a walk in the park for you.
There was risk.
There was fear.
There was the threat of violence.
You were leading a peaceful protest against an unjust empire,
And the whole world knew it.
Forgive me for glossing over the courage this day took.
Remind me that the story of faith is a story of courage,
And even I can do hard things.⁴

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

⁵ “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:

"We can do hard things."
These five simple words aren't particularly radical,
Except that life and faith require courage.
Vulnerability requires courage.
Relationships require courage.
Advocacy and justice require courage.
Facing our privilege requires courage.
Faith requires courage.
Even confession requires courage.
So friend, let us do hard things.
Let us do hard things trusting that God is always there,
Cheering us on, in every courageous act.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.

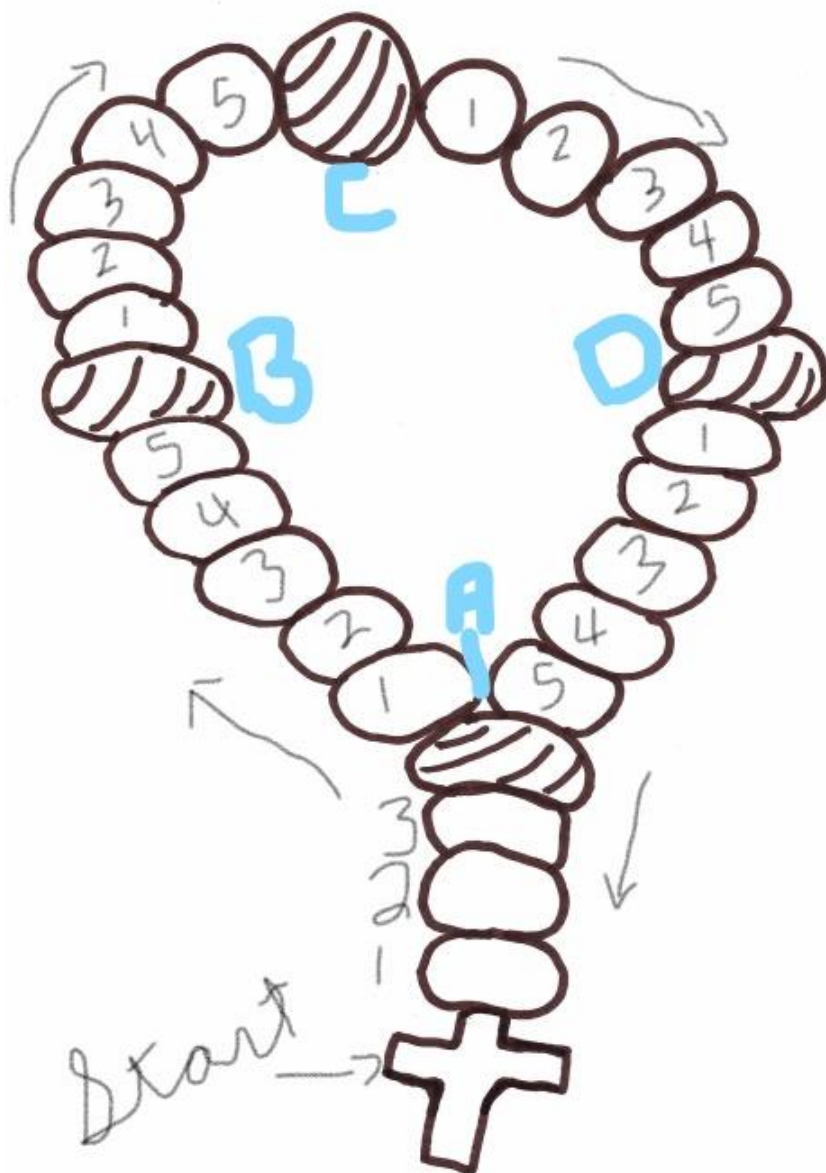
The **4 ridged beads** mark off four themed sections of our Prayers of the People. Each ridged bead is followed by **5 smooth beads** that represent five specific prayers from our FBC Needham community that are related to that theme. Your finger will move from bead to bead around the loop until you have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

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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...



⁷ "Lenten Prayer Beads". Pen and ink drawing. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

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 Liz, Bev, Harry, and Clif for the delight and satisfaction of early spring gardening and yard cleaning in warming weather and days filled with sunshine.
- Bead 2:** With Peggy, Andrew, and Pastor Daryn having received their second COVID shots and dealing with residual symptoms.
- Bead 3:** With Dorothy for the prayerful connections enabled each week through the Worship Resource.
- Bead 4:** With Harry for the prayer beads practice and having the Worship Resource to invite him into prayer each week.
- Bead 5:** With Clif for the goodness of restorative rest and reading an engrossing book alongside pup PJ when a morning's work reminds us that we don't have the energy we used to have.
- 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 Marty who is in rehabilitation after suffering a mild stroke on March 9th that she continue to recover and regain her strength and her son Chris in his concern and caregiving.
- Bead 2:** With Marilyn as she receives comfort and care from her family and hospice.
- Bead 3:** With Bev for Trevor as he has medication adjustments and is somewhat unsteady walking but always sweet-spirited day by day.
- Bead 4:** With Liz as she works through cleaning out her house in the spiritual practice of blessing and letting go and continues to navigate the complexities of her housing questions.

Bead 5: With Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly for the congregation's continued discernment as we move toward intentional decisions with *Creative Callings*.
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 Anthony in concern for the people of the Philippines as they struggle with COVID resurgence, inadequate vaccinations, work closures, and restricted international travel that his family remain safe and the country continue to move toward health and wellbeing.

Bead 2: With Liz as her cousin Linda settles into memory care in Florida that she be at peace during the transition.

Bead 3: With Bev and Trevor for their son, Chet, who has had Bell's palsy for the past three weeks that he be relieved and his health restored.

Bead 4: With Ernie who received a good oncology report and continues his treatments in gratitude and affection for all the folks who hold him in prayer.

Bead 5: With Clif as he awaits clearance from his doctor to receive the COVID vaccine, and for all persons medically unable to receive vaccinations or with immunosuppression conditions.

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 Harry, Anthony, Clif, and Peggy for the persons murdered in Atlanta and the discrimination, pain, and violence endured by the Asian and Pacific Islander communities in the United States both historically and especially in the past year during COVID. Speaking their names (*listed below*), may their families and friends know your abiding peace and consolation, Holy One...

Updated with Korean & Chinese
names by Julie Ae Kim

Soon Chung Park 박순정, age 74
Hyun Jung Grant [김]현정, age 51
Sun Cha Kim 김선자, age 69
Yong Ae Yue 유명애, age 63
Delaina Ashley Yaun, age 33
Paul Andre Michels, age 54
Xiaojie Tan 谭小洁, age 49
Daoyou Feng 冯道友, age 44

•MSKATHYKHANG

Bead 2: With Clif in hope of being able to safely see family and friends in person soon and the hope of travel in 2022.

Bead 3: With Harry for the Stop Asian/Pacific Islander Hate Vigil held in Needham on Saturday, May 20, and the many people who attended that the hate, misogyny, racism, and white supremacy that brought on such violence will be eradicated and such vigils no longer be needed.

Bead 4: With Peggy and Louise for the persons murdered in Boulder, Colorado, as they went about their grocery errands. In the disruption of daily life and the devastation to their friends and loved ones by yet more gun violence, may your Spirit move with sighs too deep for words, Holy One as their names are spoken...

Denny Strong, 20,
Neven Stanisic, 23
Rikki Olds, 25
Tralona Bartkowiak, 49
Suzanne Fountian, 59
Terri Leikre, 51
Eric Talley, 51

Kevin Mahoney, 61

Lynn Murray, 62

Jody Waters, 65

Bead 5: With Bev for area home invasions and violence and the general air of insecurity and fear such violations create for whole communities.
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.⁸

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

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.

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.



Holy Week Services

You Are Warmly Invited...

Join First Baptist Church Newton

for

Palm Sunday (March 28)

Zoom Worship Service

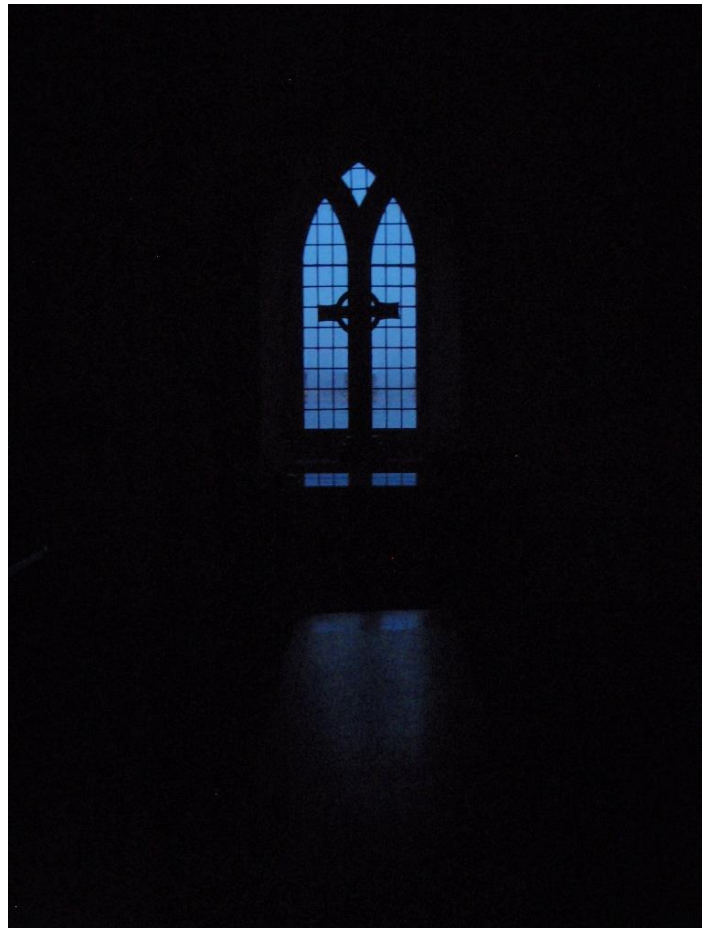
10:00 am

and

Maundy Thursday (April 1)

Zoom Service

7:30 pm



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We will enter Holy Week in shared community with FBC Newton. Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly will join FBC Newton's Interim Minister, Rev. Dr. Norman Bendroth, in worship leadership for Palm Sunday. The FBC Needham community is then warmly invited to share in FBC Newton's Holy Saturday Communion service.

Use the same Zoom link for both services:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91017256876?pwd=OWt6WkduMC95YjJWenRsejJYeXJkQT09>

Meeting ID: 910 1725 6876

Passcode: 848

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,91017256876#,,,,*848# US (New York)

+13017158592,,91017256876#,,,,*848# US (Washington DC)

⁹ "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**

¹⁰(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

¹⁰ "Lavra Easter Eggs." Kiev, Ukraine, 2010. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.