

First Baptist Church in Needham

Third Sunday of Lent

Edition 52



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Worship and Prayer Resource

Sunday, March 7, 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 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

John 2:13-22

The Passover was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.

Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

The religious leaders then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?"

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

The leaders then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?"

But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection

God of my heart,
Be in my decision making.
Draw near to my choices.
Forgive my mistakes.
And as you do,
Flip every table, habit, belief, or point of view that needs adjusting.
With hope I pray for a better day.²



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

³ Lisle Gwen Garrity. "Overturn." Digital painting with collage. Inspired by John 2:13-22. | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

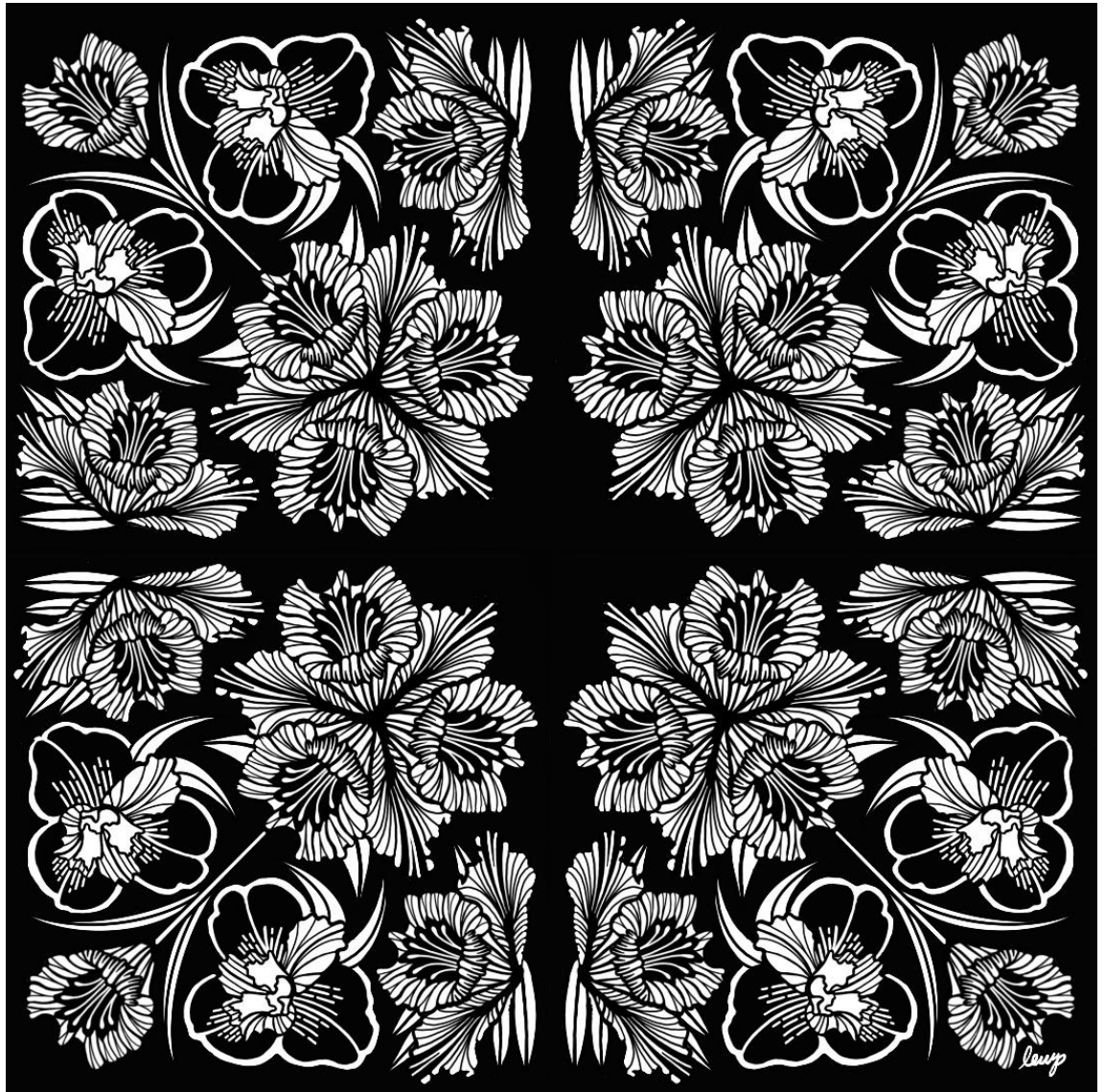
For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For religious leaders demand signs and Gentiles desire wisdom, but we proclaim

Christ crucified, a stumbling block to religious leaders and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

⁴



⁴ Lauren Wright Pittman. "The Cross Remains." Digital drawing. Inspired by 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

Reflection

I know a God who knows holy rage—
A God who stands with the underdog,
Who passionately protects the suffering,
And who overturns systems of corruption.

I know a God who leads by example—
Feeding the hungry,
Welcoming the children,
Offering water to the Samaritan,
Eating with the tax collector,
Healing the sick,
Preaching from the mountaintop,
And offering second chances.

I know a God who knew that I would lose my way,
And still said, “This is my body broken for you.”
I know a God who knew my capacity for mistakes,
And still said, “I’m going to prepare a place for you.”
And because of this love,
I know that God shows me the way,
Again and again and again. ⁵

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. ⁶

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



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.

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*

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:

The good news is that God took on flesh and walked this earth to show us the way.

God took on flesh so that we could see what it looks like to disrupt and overturn systems of corruption.

God took on flesh to teach us another way.

God took on flesh to point us to restoration.

God took on flesh so that we might learn to forgive and seek forgiveness.

Friends, we are held, loved, and forgiven by a just and merciful God.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.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...

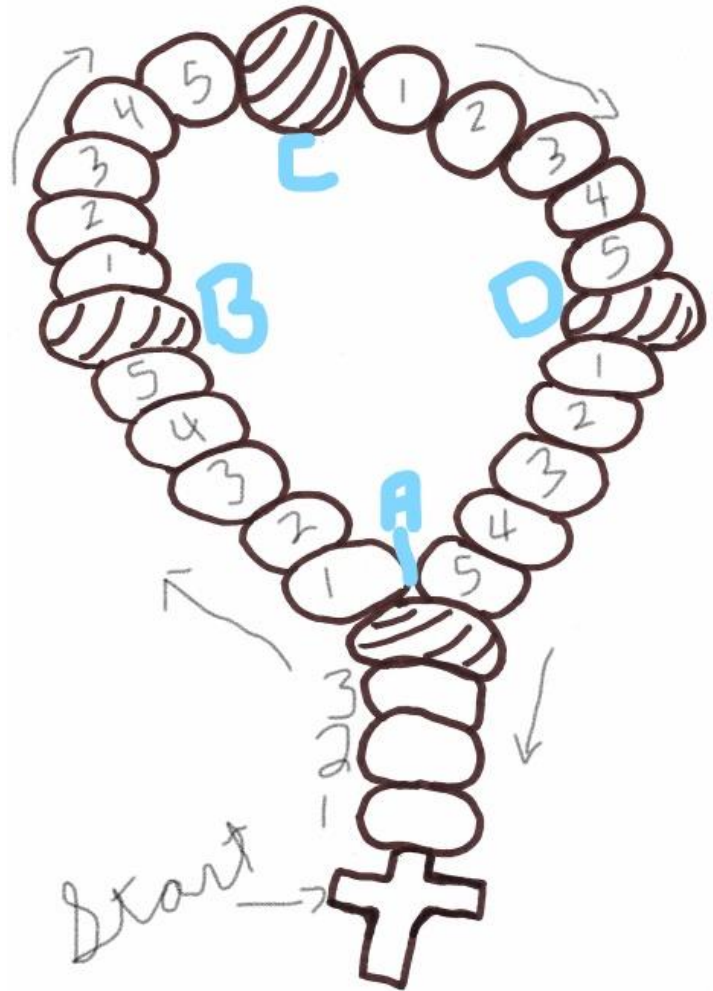
*Place your finger on the **first three beads** above the cross saying:*

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.*



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...*

⁸ "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 Ernie and Harry in receiving their second COVID vaccinations and many people now receiving their first shot.
- Bead 2:** With Clif for his restoration of health and full feeling in hands and feet, and for the benefits of modern medicine.
- Bead 3:** With Marty and Louise in gratitude for Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly and for Marty's backyard neighbor who takes such good care of her.
- Bead 4:** With Louise for family who care for her and treat her to dinner.
- Bead 5:** With Clif, Louise, and Harry for the early promises of spring as daffodils break through the ground.
- 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 Harry for Zoom dances and meals with friends and family that help pass the time.
- Bead 2:** With Jessica that her family is doing well.
- Bead 3:** With Clif for Ernie's continued treatments and others struggling with health/medical concerns.
- Bead 4:** With Liz in her care for family and church family who are loving her through her difficult season of letting go and changes.
- Bead 5:** With Pastor Daryn, Pastor Holly, and Harry 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 Spiro for his colleague's restoration and relief while in hospital with COVID complications.

Bead 2: With Marty and Ernie in concern for Liz as she continues to navigate her housing transition.

Bead 3: For teachers, students, parents, and administrators trying to make wise and safe decisions regarding returning to in-person classes and the real dilemmas each group faces in the process.

Bead 4: For families and individuals who continue to struggle with unemployment and underemployment and live on the verge of financial crisis daily.

Bead 5: With Pastor Holly as we observe a year in COVID shut-down this week alongside communities and countries around the globe filled with individuals who each personally endure the strain and hardship of this transformative year.

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 Clif in hope and anticipation of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine being approved for use and the number of people getting vaccinated continuing to rise.

- Bead 2:** With Pastor Holly for the people of Jackson, Mississippi, who have gone without water – for drinking and otherwise – since the ice storm a few weeks ago. For the refurbishment of city waterlines and the concerted communal effort of organizations, churches, and individuals to bring aid in the meantime.
- Bead 3:** For the people of Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Afghanistan as they continue to live through generational turmoil, violence, and military actions.
- Bead 4:** With Clif for cruise line workers and the people of the Philippines and throughout the world who have been sent home with no work and are running out of money.
- Bead 5:** For the wellbeing of organizations in Needham who continually work to provide care, support, and aid to members of our community.
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

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

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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.



“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

Zoom Link: Mark and Peggy are inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: FBC Needham Lenten Devotional, Study, and Fellowship

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

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)

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Dial by your location

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+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 821 3075 0040

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

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.



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.