

# First Baptist Church in Needham

## Fourth Sunday of Eastertide

Edition 59



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### Worship and Prayer Resource

Sunday, April 25, 2021

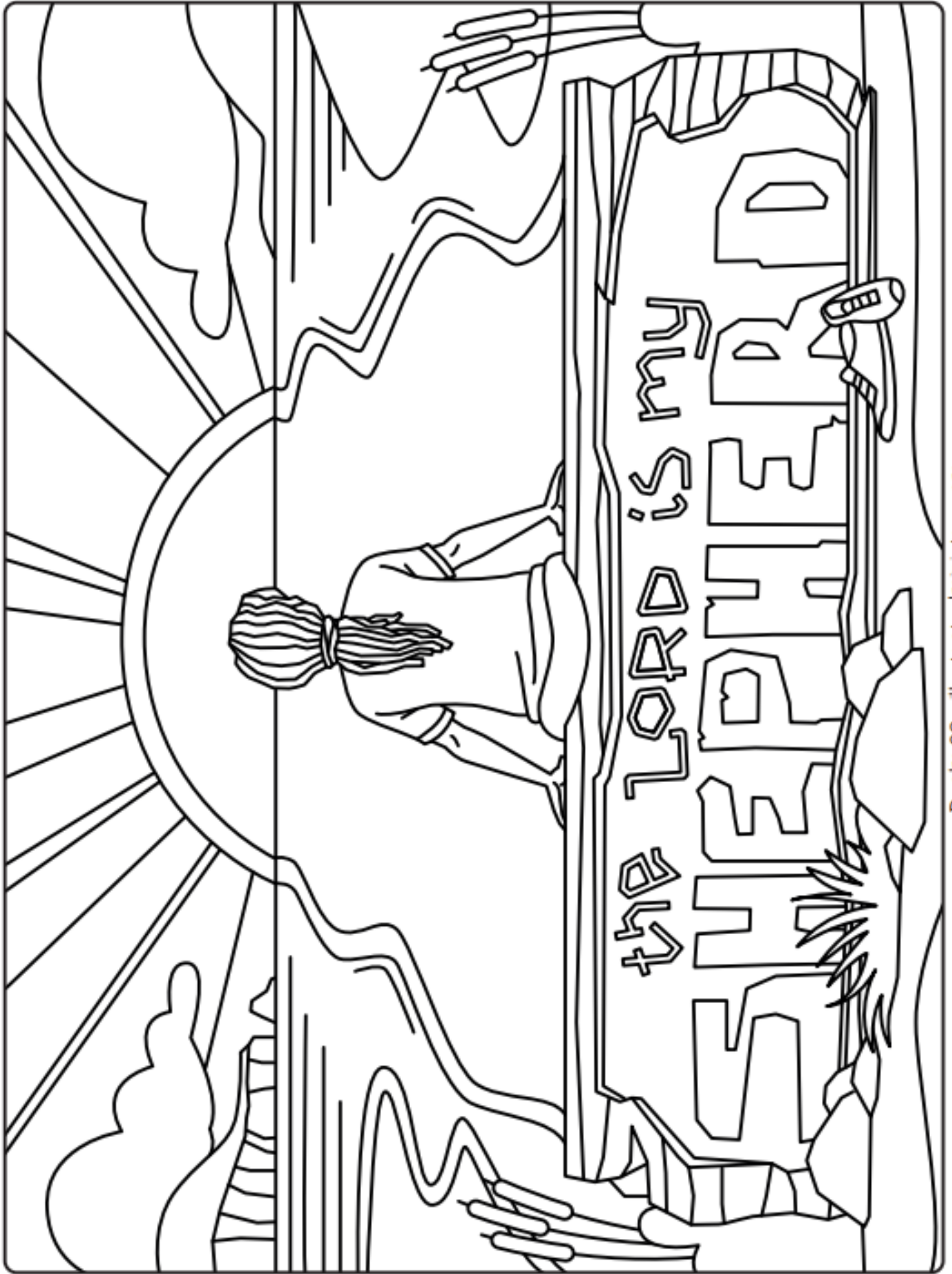
*(for whenever you are so led to pause, reflect, and pray)*

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492

[www.fbcneedham.org](http://www.fbcneedham.org)

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<sup>1</sup>Latimore, Kelly. Good Shepherd, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-image/act-image-link.pl?RC=57121> [retrieved March 23, 2021].



## 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

### 1 John 3:16-24

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us--and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before God whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and knows everything.

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from God whatever we ask, because we obey God's commandments and do what pleases God. And this is God's commandment, that we should believe in the name of God's Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as Jesus commanded us. All who obey Jesus' commandments abide in God, and God abides in them. And by this we know that God abides in us, by the Spirit given to us.

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

## Reflection

Shepherd of all,  
by laying down your life for your flock  
you reveal your love for all.  
Lead me from the place of death  
to the place of abundant life,  
that guided by your care for me,  
I may rightly offer my life  
in love for you and my neighbors. .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from a prayer in *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers* (2002). Year B - Easter - Second Sunday of Easter : Revised Common Lectionary (vanderbilt.edu)

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH PRAYER BEADS:

We continue the ancient practice of holding a strand of beads to help focus the mind and body during prayer in Eastertide. 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. 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 through the light and life of Eastertide. May the prayer beads nurture and support this sacred worship. –*Pastor Holly*

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

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## 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:*

O God, Jesus remained with his disciples after his resurrection,  
teaching them to love all people as neighbors.  
As his disciple in this age,  
I offer my prayers on behalf of the universe  
in which I am privileged to live  
and the neighbors with whom I share it.  
Open my heart to your power moving  
around me and beyond me and within me,

until your goodness is revealed in my love of both friend and enemy,  
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,  
and in the healing of all that is broken..<sup>3</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.

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.

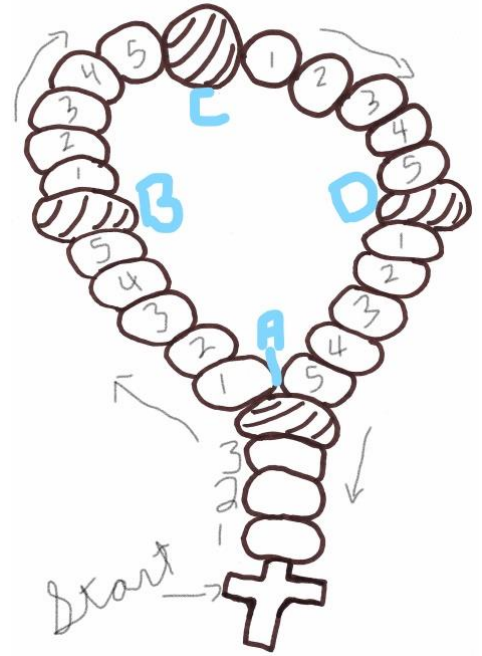
**Bead 2:** Loving Christ, hear my prayer.

**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...



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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from a prayer in *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers* (2002). Year B - Easter - Second Sunday of Easter : Revised Common Lectionary (vanderbilt.edu)

<sup>4</sup> "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 Dorothy and Harry for warming days to be outside and soak up the sun and enjoy spring flowers, forsythia and flowering crabapple, as they color the landscape.
- Bead 2:** With Liz for mild symptoms after her second COVID vaccine and Andrew celebrating his neighbor's first vaccine.
- Bead 3:** With Bev for good results from Trevor's recent tests.
- Bead 4:** With Pastor Daryn who was able to see her parents and grandparents last week and travelled safely two and from North Carolina.
- Bead 5:** For opportunities for Katie, Anna, and Fayrah to hang out and enjoy being together.
- Praise God, from whom all blessing flow....*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Liz as she continues to clean out her home (she is accepting boxes to help the process) and navigate the complexities of her housing future.
- Bead 2:** With Dorothy and Harry as walking itself is a falling hazard that curtails mobility and ability to get out.
- Bead 3:** With Harry as puzzles, walks, reading, emails, watching TV, and gardening fill long hours each day alongside concern to maintain physical and mental wellbeing as the pandemic continues.
- Bead 4:** With Louise when phone calls leave her out of breath.
- Bead 5:** With Pastor Daryn, Pastor Holly as the congregation moves from discernment to collective and individual decisions as we move with *Creative Callings*.
- Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer....*

### 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Marty as she continues to recover at home from her stroke under her son's loving care and offers gratitude for our concern and prayer for her wellbeing.
- Bead 2:** With Ernie as he has experienced a setback with his treatment medications that requires additional doctor visits and changing medications which leave him tired.
- Bead 3:** For Robin diagnosed with strep throat last week that she be restored to health, rest, and well-being.
- Bead 4:** With Pastor Holly for a colleague, Eileen, whose daughter, Victoria, is living with several serious that leave her in continual pain, seizure, and with a tenuous connection to life.
- Bead 5:** With members of the Asian American community and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) who have and continue to endure hate, abuse, disregard, and bigotry in this country we share that we who do not live their experience repent of our privilege to ignore their plight and our actions and inactions that furthered the hurt while committing to do the hard work to enact change within our communities and our selves.
- Lord, in your mercy, hear my prayer....*

### 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Andrew in continued concern for extremist groups and rampant violence gripping our communities, nation, and world that seems to be repeat the same abusive and death-dealing cycles generation to generation.
- Bead 2:** With Harry in gratitude for the ingenuity of students like the ones he has worked with this semester at Olin College of Engineering and for all students, teachers, and school and university staff who have creatively and persistently found ways to continue learning, research, and scholarship throughout COVID.
- Bead 3:** With our Sikh brothers and sisters, especially the Sikh community in Minnesota, as they grieve the deaths of loved ones and friends while facing daily discrimination, prejudice, and threat in our country.
- Bead 4:** With persons grieving loss, death, and upheaval in the wake of the estimated two-a-day mass shootings occurring in our country every day since February that they find healing, solace, and support while our government continues to debate the use of guns to kill humans indiscriminately.
- Bead 5:** For the people of India as contagious and deadly COVID double variants are sweeping the country leaving brokenness and grief in their wake.  
*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.

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## Announcements

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.**

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## Worship Resource 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.

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## Praying with Prayer Beads Continues in Eastertide



We extend our Lenten practice of praying with Prayer Beads into the Holy Season of Eastertide. This ancient practice allows us to follow the path of the beads as we hold the prayers of thanksgiving and concern, gratitude and sorrow, compassion, and celebration in community each week. 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. May this practice move us through this season of new life, faithful congregational decisions, and the moving of the Spirit.

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<sup>5</sup> "Lenten Prayer Beads" - ©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* Year 2: Stage 2 COLLECTIVE & INDIVIDUAL VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

Intentional Decisions – Faithfully Stepping Forward

**Community Conversation this Thursday, April 29, 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](mailto:pastordaryn@fbcneedham.org), or Pastor Holly, [pastorholly@fbcneedham.org](mailto:pastorholly@fbcneedham.org).

**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.

**Needham Community Council** – [www.needhamcommunitycouncil.org](http://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.