

First Baptist Church in Needham

Easter Sunday

Edition 56



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Worship and Prayer Resource

Sunday, April 4, 2021

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

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492

www.fbcneedham.org



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.

I 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 136:1-9, 23-26

O give thanks to the LORD, for you are good, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of gods, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

who alone does great wonders, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

who by understanding made the heavens, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

who spread out the earth on the waters, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

who made the great lights, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

the sun to rule over the day, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

the moon and stars to rule over the night, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

It is God who remembered us in our low estate, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

and rescued us from our foes, for God's steadfast love endures forever;

who gives food to all flesh, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of heaven, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection

I know the feeling of hard days and long nights.

I know the grief of the tomb,

And the particular ache of saying goodbye.

I know the pain of Good Friday,

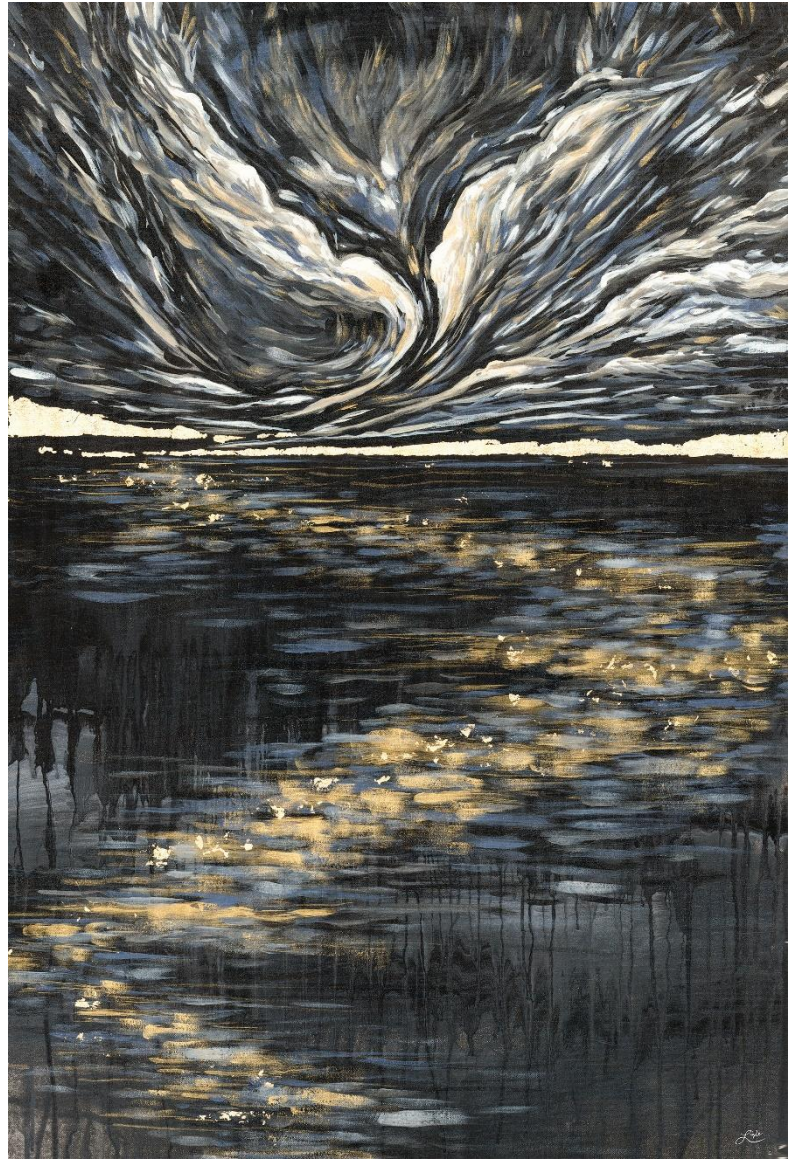
And I know the darkness before dawn.

And still, And still,

I believe.

I believe that again and again,

The sun will rise.
Again and again,
God will draw near.
Again and again,
I endeavor to march toward justice.
Again and again,
The tomb will be empty.
Again and again,
Love will win.
Again and again,
God will lead God's beloved
children thorough the night.
Again and again,
And again and again,
I am loved and will be loving.
The journey will not be perfect.
I will need to rise before dawn.
I will need angels along the way.
But again and again,
The sun will rise. ²



3

Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised;

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

³ Lisle Gwynn Garrity. "The Promise." Acrylic and gold leaf on canvas. Inspired by Mark 16:1-8. | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Use with permission.

he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."

So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection

Had I been there that first Easter morning,
It is likely that I would have been with the disciples—
Hiding out in fear,
Locked behind doors,
Alone with our thoughts in the upper room.
I wish I could say that I would have gone with the women,
That I would have been brave and determined.
I wish I could say that I would have held onto my faith,
But the truth is, I'll never know.
What I do know is that Jesus came back for all of us—
Not the few who had maintained faith
Or the few who stayed with him until the end.
He came back for the broken and the afraid,
For the cowardly and the greedy,
For the women in the garden,
And for the disciples hiding in the upper room.
He came back for those who betrayed him
And those who worshiped him.
He came back for you and for me.
And so I pray today –
Knowing that no matter where I am on the spectrum of faith,
Jesus lived, loved, and returned for me. ⁴

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,

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

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.

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:

There are a million ways that you speak to me,
God of the garden and God of the empty tomb.
You speak to me in rituals, both formal and organic—
In drops of water on foreheads and pools of water plunged under,
In vows said at the altar,
Through pieces of bread dipped in ordinary wine,
And through shared candlelight on Christmas Eve.
You speak to me in nature—
Your artistry showing up in starry nights,
In the smell of pine,
In rushing water and in most every sunrise.

You speak to me through my relationships—
The comfort of a loved one,
The laughter of my friends,
The security of those who support me and cheer me on.
You speak to me in so many ways, and I am grateful for them all.
However today, I just need one.
That would be enough.
So lean down and breathe life into these sacred texts and spaces in my heart.
I am craving to hear your word like never before.
I am craving to understand, to see myself in the story.
I am craving proximity to you.
There are a million ways that you speak to me.
Today, I just need one.⁵

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:*

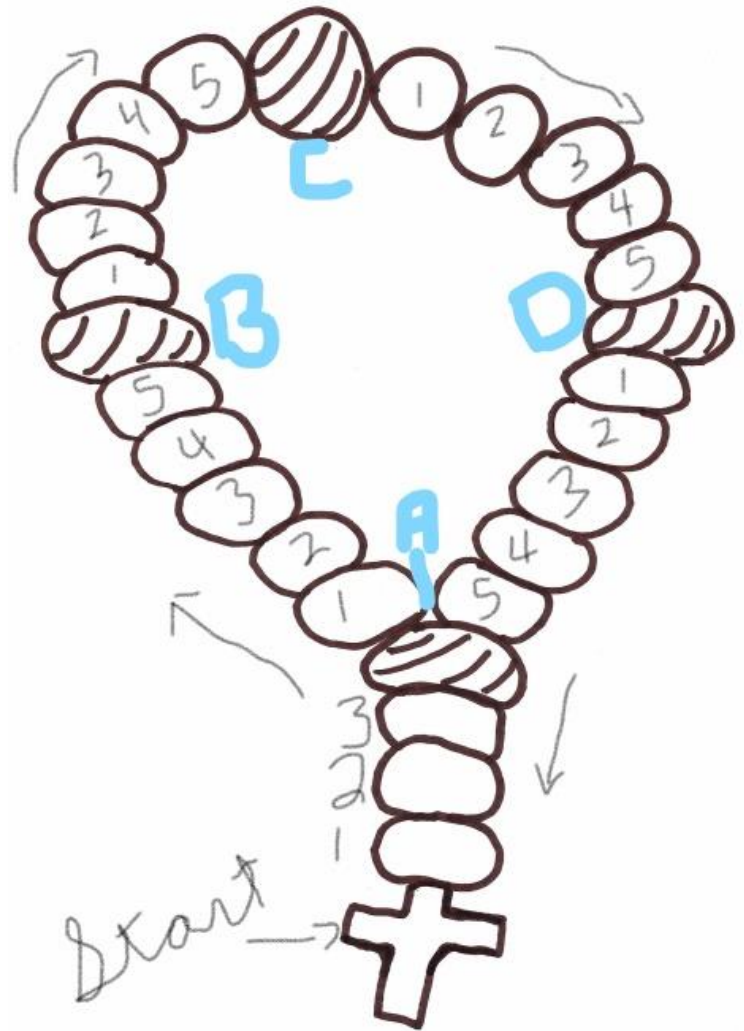
Bead 1: Creator God, hear my prayer.

Bead 2: Loving Christ, hear my prayer.

Bead 3: Abiding Spirit, hear my prayer.

^{d5} Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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...

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 Louise and Ernie for the beauty and promise of spring coming and the daffodils by the church door.

Bead 2: With Liz for the wealth of memories of people now grown, moved on, or long passed that generates when sorting through old documents and papers as well as ancient art and architecture – that we are part of a long, long story of human history far larger than ourselves.

Bead 3: With Bev and Trevor that each day together is sweet.

Bead 4: With Ernie that his seven tumors have all responded significantly to treatment (and one was determined to be benign), and that his treatments continue unabated, he can proclaim, “I’m 78, every day God gives me is good!”

⁶ “Lenten Prayer Beads”. Pen and ink drawing. ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.

Bead 5: With Louise for the pleasure of phone calls from Pastor Holly and Pastor Daryn each week.

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 Liz in deep gratitude for the continuing prayers, calls, expressions of concern, and direct help she receives from her FBC Needham community, the Community Council, and family as she works through each step of her housing concern day by day.

Bead 2: With Bev for Marty as she continues in rehabilitation and recovery from a stroke earlier this month.

Bead 3: With Barbara for the pleasure of the Worship Resource coloring pages and the creativity they offer each week, especially on long days.

Bead 4: With Clif for good weather to enable our outdoor prayer service on Easter.

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 Clif for his sister Janet who is the primary caregiver for her husband Charlie as they live with his health concerns and home renovations that will make this time of loving compassion and accompaniment easier.
- Bead 2:** With Harry in the death of his friend, Doris Lacey (age 93) that her family and friends be consoled as Doris enters God's nearer presence.
- Bead 3:** With Louise in the death of her son-in-law, David Eaton that her daughter and family know the Spirit's deep peace as David is caught up in God's eternal embrace.
- Bead 4:** For Bev in concern for a fourth COVID surge as the weather warms and people grow lax and weary in their vigilance—that we will draw deep upon patience, courage, and compassion in order to endure and truly stem the progression of the coronavirus.
- Bead 5:** With Liz and her extended family as they discern the best location and care of her cousin, Linda, who is currently in memory care in Florida.
- 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 in gratitude for the Stop Asian & Pacific Islander Hate vigils across the country and in Needham and in prayer that such vigils cease to be needed as hearts and minds turn from the hate, dehumanization, and violence that still ripples through our country.
- Bead 2:** With Ernie in concern for Pastor Holly's parents and all the people across the Southeast enduring continual severe, destructive, and deadly storms this spring.
- Bead 3:** For the family and friends of George Floyd and people of color who are again harmed and retraumatized by the public coverage of the court trial—that they each have safe and compassionate spaces and support to bear the generational hurt and grief as your Spirit does the work of racial healing in our country.

Bead 4: With Clif for people struggling with the complexities of living into a second year of pandemic amidst all the other layers of pain, violence, injustice, and anxieties already present each day.

Bead 5: For the people in Atlanta, Boulder, Virginia Beach, Myanmar, and places not known to us who are reeling from mass murder, heartless violence, and systemic injustices that daily keep us from fully flourishing as your children.

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: The Sun Rises – Christ is Alive!

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.⁷

⁷ 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.



FBC Needham Easter Morning Prayer Service

Sunday, April 4, 2021

10:00 -10:30 a.m.

**Gathering on the
Side Lawn**

^s(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.

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

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.

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.

9

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.

⁹ "Lenten Prayer Beads" - ©Holly C. Benzenhafer 2021. Use with permission.