

First Baptist Church in Needham

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Transition Edition 3



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One in the Spirit: Prayers through Our Transition

Sunday, July 18, 2021

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

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492

www.fbcneedham.org

¹ Photo: "Good Shepherd," Boston University School of Theology, Boston, MA (2019). ©Holly C Benzenhafer 2021.

Scripture

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

You make me lie down in green pastures; you lead me beside still waters; you restore my soul. You lead me in right paths for your name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Thanksgiving is an all-season virtue. When we are thankful, our perspective on life is transformed. We see the wonders of life and discover hope in the midst of tragedy. We experience our lives as part of a larger tapestry of relationships in which nothing can separate us from the love of God. The guidance and energy we constantly receive, mostly in sighs too deep for words, dreams, inspirations, and synchronous encounters from our very first breaths in our parents' arms, will be our companions throughout life's journey and beyond the grave. God's care is not arbitrary but consistent and continuous: "Whether we live or die, we belong to God" (Romans 14:8).²

² Bruce G. Epperly, *Become Fire! Guideposts for Interspiritual Pilgrims* (Vestal, NY: Anamchara Books, 2018), 57.

We Hold in Prayer...

If you have general or specific prayer requests - joys as well as concerns - to share please contact Holly or Daryn to pass them along.

**As a community of faith in transition, we offer our hearts and voices in prayer
where we are, as we are, along this changing path
entrusting the Spirit's moving among us
and responding far beyond our individual reach and influence...**

Prayers of Gratitude & Thanksgiving

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...**

With Harry for being able to go to the Senior Center, visit his dance group, and go to the grocery store and see good friends for the first time since COVID.

With Barbara in thanksgiving for her children's visits and that she can now have visitors to her room.

With Dorothy in gratitude for a life that's pretty even with few ups and downs and for her wonderful family.

With Peggy for time with family and her safe return.

With Harry for a new cell phone that enables him to hear calls much better.

With Pastor Daryn for time away to see family and in joy for Fayrah's safe travel in Rome, Italy.

With Pastor Holly in celebration of her dear friend, Hank, who was approved to go forward with ordination in the Ohio United Church of Christ.

Praise God, from whom all blessing flow....

Prayers of Personal Concern, Healing, Solace, & Courage

**Faithful God, you know me inside and out,
all my hopes and dreams, fears and failures.**

You hear your children cry out for healing and consolation, courage and strength.

Send your Spirit in the sharing of the concerns of our hearts as I pray...

With Barbara as she awaits gall bladder surgery.

With Harry who has started daily treatments for leukemia and his children's attentive care and accompaniment of him.

With Liz for her cousin Dan undergoing surgery.

With Bev for Trevor as he recovers from a corneal abrasion and as she continues to care for him each day and navigate medical concerns and appointments.

With Bev and Pastor Daryn for Marilyn Blake's family in their grief and remembering the goodness of her life among us.

With Pastor Holly for the safe travel and new start for her friends Bethaney and Josh and their daughters who have moved from Boston to the Dallas, Texas, area.

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

Prayers in Our Transitions

God of Life, in all of life's turns – planned and unexpected – you are there.

**For the transitions that are hard for me to bear,
grant me the strength to be vulnerable and seek loving accompaniment.**

For the changes I anticipate, grant me hope and wisdom.

**Trusting your Spirit is moving to prepare a place in fellowship and community for
each beloved member of our First Baptist congregation, I pray...**

With Dorothy as members begin discerning new congregations and faith communities to visit.

With Mark for the Administration Ministry's developing process and for the Spirit's guiding presence in the meetings.

With Pastor Daryn, Pastor Holly for the thoughtful, intentional, and faithful work of the Administration Ministry with *Creative Callings*.

Prayers for the Community, Nation, & World

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...

For the people of Afghanistan as U.S. troops continue to leave.

For the people of Haiti, South Africa, Hong Kong, Syria, Turkey, and Israel-Palestine and all people living in places of deep social and political unrest, instability, violence, and fear.

For the families and recovery teams in Surfside, Florida, who continue the anguishing waiting and work to find the still unaccounted people killed in the condominium collapse.

For people around the world who continue to have inadequate access to COVID vaccine and limited medical care as the virus continues to spread and threaten more mutations. And for people in our own country who have abundant access to vaccines and remain unvaccinated by choice – that their decisions not place others at undue risk of infection, hospitalization, and death as the Delta variant threatens to surge here, too.

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

For the prayers of my heart that you, Holy One,
know even when words cannot hold them...*Hear my prayer, O Lord...*

+++ Offer your own prayers here. +++

Hear my prayer, O Lord...as I pray the prayer your son taught us saying:

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.

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.

One in the Spirit: Transition Prayer Resource

As we move through our congregation's transitions to new communities of faith and pastoral care, we honor the ties that "bind our hearts in Christian love." These spiritual ties connect us to one another as we celebrate, offer gratitude, and bear the burdens of each soul together. Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly will continue Calls of Caring and the *One in the Spirit: Prayer Resources* mailings in this interim time.

Creative Callings

Collaboration, Innovation, and Prophetic Witness



Boston University School of Theology
Center for Practical Theology

Creative Callings Year 2, Session 3

ADMINISTRATION STEWARDSHIP & PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT *through* TRANSITION

With the congregational vote on Sunday, June 27, 2021, the Administration Ministry is tasked with developing a plan for closing the church. We now shift to the third session of Year Two with *Creative Callings*. As the Administration Ministry continues to meet to develop a plan to bring before the congregation, each member of the congregation is also encouraged to do your own good work of prayerfully discerning what community of faith you may wish to visit or consider joining. Pastor Daryn and Pastor Holly are available to offer spiritual and pastoral accompaniment and reflection upon request.

Offering

Your continued financial support of the daily work and ministries of FBC Needham is vital. Offerings can be turned in at the church office, through the church website online, or via mail. May the act of giving be a spiritual practice that accompanies your daily prayer and worship.

Mail Checks to:

First Baptist Church in Needham
858 Great Plain Avenue,
Needham MA 02492

Online:

Go to <https://www.fbcneedham.org>
Click the **Take Action** link & follow the
directions.

Make checks payable to: First Baptist Church in Needham.
Please indicate it is your offering or pledge on the check.
