

First Baptist Church in Needham
One in the Spirit: Transition Prayer Resource

November 2022



Transition Edition 17
(for whenever you are so led to pause, reflect, and pray)

858 Great Plain Avenue · Needham, MA 02492
www.fbcneedham.org

A Letter from the Pastor

*From God's abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another.
- John 1:16 (NLT)*

*God makes our dreams one size too big so that we can grow into them.
- a bulletin board at FBC Needham, courtesy of Laurene Ingham*

Beloved FBC Needham community,

How is it that we are able to enter into a season of Thanksgiving year after year, into times of gratitude over and over again? You'd think it might get old - that the act of giving thanks would grow tiresome. Sure, there are definitely times when it is difficult to find gratitude at the ready – when one shoe drops after another, one world calamity after another, one personal grief, loss, diagnosis after another...

Yet, somehow in the middle of everything, gratitude surfaces, bubbling up to the top of the murky and sometimes turbulent waters of life, bringing us up with it.

In every day, we each experience something of goodness. It may be small, it may be quiet, and ordinary, but there is something good for us to find, to seek, to be grateful for there. I know this because I know that God is there – in each day – with us through whatever comes our way; and that means love is there - in every day. That is a beautiful thought indeed – every day we have love, and therefore something to celebrate with each rising of the sun.

As Christians, we bear witness to God's abundant goodness poured out to the world in the life of Jesus Christ - that incarnation of blessing. We are awake and aware of what happens when blessing is offered selflessly, when healing is given, when community is created, when forgiveness is abundantly shared, when resources are gathered together and multiplied to the needs, benefit, and sustenance of all – there is a newness of life and meaning. Jesus didn't just make these things happen all on his own in every case. Jesus also made miracles happen with what others were willing to offer. The disciples' small gifts of fish and bread, for example, when they were combined, fed the needs of all who gathered. Likewise, Christ can use whatever we offer to yield blessing – even the small and imperfect things. Because whatever is offered out of an abundance of goodness, will yield blessing after blessing.

We all have an abundance of goodness that has been offered to us, freely by God. It has been demonstrated for us by Jesus in his own living. We have known it through the love and compassion and care we have received over the course of our living. We see it in the beauty around us – in the wonders of creation, in the unexpected surprise of a kind word, or generous gift. We are so fortunate to be able to name these blessings.

From God's abundant goodness we have all received one gracious blessing after another.

As a church, we have received the abundant goodness of generations upon generations toward new manifestations of blessing. We continue to receive the abundant goodness of all of those who contribute to our ministries through their offerings of time, talent and treasure. And so we know that whatever happens on the other side of this transition, we will be able to offer blessing out of our abundance. What will you offer from your own store of abundant goodness so that others might know something of blessing?

In this season of stewardship and thanksgiving, I invite you to consider a gift to First Baptist Church in Needham beyond your ordinary or regular giving. I know that giving to a church that is developing a plan to close sounds ludicrous. And yet, I think we are still growing into God's dreams for us, that have always been abundantly good. I trust that whatever those dreams are, the realization of them will be a blessing to our community and ultimately to the world.

Be a part of that blessing.

In Christ,
Pastor Daryn

------(cut here and return to the church office at 858 Great Plain Ave, Needham, MA 02492) -----

STEWARDSHIP FORM for 2023

(Please make every effort to return your form by Dec 1, 2022)

Out of the abundant goodness I have received, I pledge _____ to First Baptist Church in Needham and the dreams it is called toward in its next iteration of faithful ministry.

My pledge for 2023: _____

My one-time extraordinary gift of blessing: _____

My gift toward the Front Porch Restoration project: _____



God is Great, God is Good



i am thankful for....

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

+ We Hold in Prayer +

My 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...

In celebration of all those in our circles with November birthdays, including Pastor Daryn! We're so glad you were born into this world and celebrate your presence in it and with us ...

In heartfelt gratitude for our First Baptist Church in Needham community! ...

With Andrew, we celebrate his niece, Amy Beaven's accepted to nursing school. We give thanks that Andrew's sister Jan and her husband are doing okay in the wake of Hurricane Ian, and we give offer gratitude that Andrew's sister Wendy Beaven is enjoying retirement from teaching, and is granted time to enjoy traveling across the Southwest United States with her husband, Horace "Bevo" ...

††† Offer your own prayers of gratitude and thanksgiving here. †††

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...

For Linwood Bunce, Pastor Daryn's father, whose surgery for treatment for prostate cancer is scheduled for December 28th. God grant peace in anticipation of this surgery, to Linwood, his wife, Anita, and their family. Provide the physicians with the wisdom and skill they need toward a successful procedure ...

For Andrew, who fractured his ankle. We pray for an easy recovery, and for the care of community in his time of need ...

With Anne Wile, whose son, Greg, fell and hurt his knee. God grant him a swift recovery, and the support he needs as he heals ...

With Holly, as she continues to recover from wrist surgery; grant her patience as she balances the healing process with the obligations of work and modern methods of communication via computer and phone ...

For Anthony, as he travels to the Philippines, may his visit with family and friends be filled with beauty and moments of celebration. Blessings to the school and community that are honoring Anthony with gratitude for his generosity, philanthropy and care. We share in their gratitude, and pray for a safe return trip home to Needham at the end of this beautiful time for Anthony and his niece, Charmaine ...

For Liz's cousin, Ruthie, who is undergoing treatment for cancer, provide for her every need ...

For Fayrah, who is battling a mysterious illness and fever. God, grant peace to her family as they wait at a distance to receive a diagnosis. Calm Fayrah's anxiety around missing assignments and making up work, and provide the physicians and those attending her with the knowledge and discernment they need to find answers ...

With Louise Mason, prayers for her family and friends ...

With Louise, who has entered into hospice care. For the gift of her life, resilient and beautiful tough-as-nails fortitude and spirit. We pray for her as she grows tired, we continue to pray the following prayer for Louise ... "for an ease to her weariness, and for rest for all in her that longs for breath, for peace. Settle her into the comfort of your love, be ever present with her in this time, and offer your solace and the assurance of unfailing and unending care" ...

††† Offer your own prayers of concern, healing, solace, and courage here. †††

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...

For the adult adoption process as Wren and Andrew continue to move toward finalization. God grant wisdom as the process unfolds, and bring them towards the realization of family and support that is life-giving and good for all ...

For our Administration Ministry's continued good and dedicated work in preparing the next steps of our transition, and wisdom for us and for the legal counsel that is accompanying us through our process ...

For First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain and their discernment alongside us in hopes toward beautiful possibility for a united mission and ministry ...

For each congregation member's prayerful discernment of the next step in your spiritual journey and the communities of faith who will be blessed by your presence among them going forward...

††† Offer your own prayers for our transition here. †††

Hear my prayer, O Lord...

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 victims of the bombing in Istanbul, Turkey, and their loved ones – those who have endured terror, who are living in the aftermath of this hateful act, and navigating grief. God assure them that you are with them and that your love is greater than the hatred and disregard for humanity they have witnessed. Call us into new ways of being, O God, that acknowledge the sanctity of human life, and of all of creation. These acts of terror against your beloved children, are acts against you, your love and goodness, your mercy and compassion. Though they break us and our world apart, you are constantly working to mend us back together. Hold those lost to this violence in your love and care for all eternity, and allow those living with pain in their hearts to know that the world over, there are prayers lifted for them, and hearts that care for them and grieve with them ...

For the families and loved ones of Devin Chandler, D'Sean Perry, and Lavel Davis, Jr., who were killed in a mass shooting at University of Virginia, and for the victims injured in this shooting, God be with them. May they know your presence and your provision in this time of deep sorrow and trauma. God, in the face of this violence and tragic loss of life, we mourn, and we ask that you would hold all those lost to this act of terror in your light and love. May those who mourn be strengthened by the outpouring of love and support witnessed in community, and may their hearts find all that they need to navigate this time of distress and grief ...

... We cry for justice, we cry for common sense gun regulation. We pray that violence, particularly gun violence, would not be the solution people seek in their distress, confusion, anger, or ignorance. God, we pray for the redirection and accountability of all perpetrators of violence. God, we do not understand the actions or intent of Christopher Darnell Jones, Jr., nor do we condone them, but we pray for him, and for his serious misguided choices - for his repentance for them, and for a change of heart and direction, for him and all those who contemplate and commit such heinous actions against humankind ...

††† Offer your own prayers for our community, nation, and world here. †††

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...

For all the Saints, who from their labors rest ...

For Those Who Walked With Us

For those
who walked with us,
this is a prayer.

For those
who have gone ahead,
this is a blessing.

For those
who touched and tended us,
who lingered with us
while they lived,
this is a thanksgiving.

For those
who journey still with us
in the shadows of awareness,
in the crevices of memory,
in the landscape of our dreams,
this is a benediction.



A Gathering of Spirits © Jan L. Richardson

God, for all those who have blessed us in this life with their love and guidance, who have offered their goodness in some way to us, who have paved the way or accompanied us along the journey of our faith, our love and our living, we give thanks ... God hold these beloved in your light and love ...

(Feel free to name those you wish to remember in this season of All Saints and Gratitude)

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and hold all the prayers of our community...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.



Art by Elustando

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.** Office voicemail and email are being checked regularly.



Creative Callings Year 3, Pivoting **ADMINISTRATION STEWARDSHIP** **& PASTORAL ACCOMPANIMENT *through* TRANSITION**

With a congregational vote on Sunday, June 27, 2021, the Administration Ministry was tasked with developing a plan for closing the church. Our Administration Ministry has been diligently meeting to develop a plan to bring before the congregation, while **each member of the congregation has been encouraged to do their own good work of prayerfully discerning what community of faith they may wish to visit or consider joining.** Pastor Daryn has been available, and will continue to be available, to offer spiritual and pastoral accompaniment and reflection upon request as we move forward.

The Administration Ministry has been engaged in discernment with community partners and others in ministry around future possibilities for our resources and property. All along we have been engaged with the hopes that our resources will continue to meet the needs of our Needham community and will continue to uphold and honor the legacy of First Baptist Church in Needham's ministry within the community.

Recent discernment has led us into conversations with First Baptist Church in Jamaica Plain about the potential for a merger of our assets and ministries. This has been life-giving possibility to hold. On November 4, 2022, The First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain voted unanimously at a congregational meeting to engage in further discernment around the possibility of a merger between our congregations. On November 5, 2022, FBC Needham's Administration Ministry unanimously approved a recommendation "to pursue a mutually agreeable partnership in whatever legal form would be agreeable with FBCJP and enter into discussions and negotiations with them." Some implications of this partnership are that it would allow for our building and property to continue to steward inclusive, creative and meaningful ministry for the arts, social justice mission, and the overall wellness of our Needham community. It would facilitate an ongoing relationship with some of our most valued community partners, and community's social service providers, and would provide potential worship space for some of our neighboring Baptist and ecumenical colleagues who are in need of space for their ministries and the sharing of the Gospel – the good news of God's love.

The Administration Ministry is discerning with FBCJP what this might practically look like, and is in the beginning phases of imagining next steps with them. If it is determined that this is a feasible and agreeable way forward for both congregations, the next step would be a future congregational meeting, during which a vote would be taken to approve the recommendation of the Administration Ministry toward partnership. The Administration Ministry and your pastor will continue to keep you apprised of our process and provide support as you need it along this journey.

IMPORTANT DATES to REMEMBER:

Upcoming Administration Ministry Meetings:

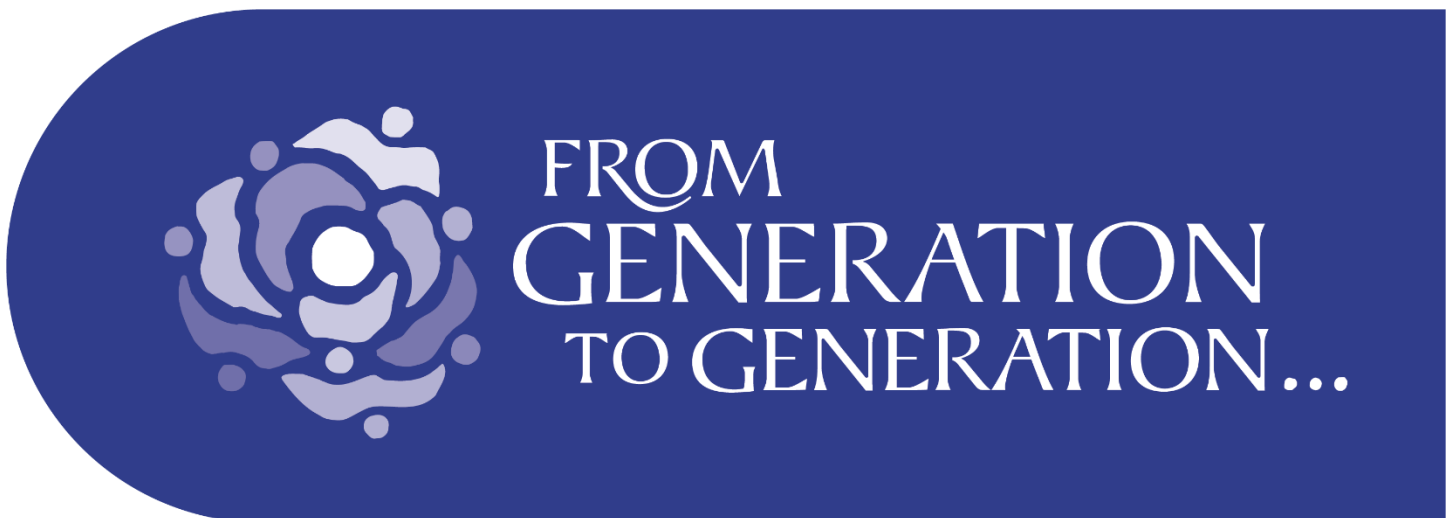
Monday, November 21 @ 6:30pm

Monday, December 19 @ 6:30pm

**Watch for the next Prayer Resource
due mid-December**

ADVENT BEGINS November 28th!

We will be sending out Advent resources featuring devotional guides from
Sanctified Art



DINNER CHURCH

In Our Transition, we've been gathering in Reflection, Prayer, and Communion the First Sunday Evening of Every Month. We've adopted a dinner church model for the foreseeable future. We will be gathering for sustenance and fellowship and continued prayer and reflection together at various locations. These gatherings are scheduled for our routine gathering time of 5pm.

Please see the following flyer for additional details.

Join us for Dinner Church!
First Sunday of the month at 5pm

Next Dinner Church Gathering:
December 4th @ First Baptist Church in Needham
(upstairs in the parlor)

Thank you to Mark and Peggy Hellberg for providing the meal for December!

Please note that we will not gather for dinner church in January



First Baptist Church in Needham
"One in the Spirit, One with Our Neighbors"

www.fbcneedham.org
churchoffice@fbcneedham.org



THE FRONT PORCH RESTORATION CONTINUES ...

Friday, November 11, 2022 – Brand new front doors, courtesy of master craftsman, Franjo Katic (pictured).





November 16, 2022 - Clif Holbrook (Member & House and Grounds) and Peter Bianco (Maintenance Officer) inspect the new doors



Next up: Yankee Steeple will be finishing up the columns and cornice, a fresh coat of paint and new railings! We're nearly there!

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. - Matthew 6:21

Dear family and friends of First Baptist Church in Needham,

I urge you to consider a financial contribution toward the restoration of our historic front porch. The town of Needham has contributed \$90,200 toward the project as a Community Preservation initiative. We are grateful for their support and enthusiasm! With the gift from the town, First Baptist will shoulder upwards of \$350,000 in costs toward the Front Porch Restoration, ensuring a visible marker of our legacy, and preserving this beautiful resource for our Needham community. I thank you for considering a significant gift toward our capital fund in addition to your regular giving. What a beautiful way to offer a piece of your heart toward the future life and witness of this historic and beloved monument.

With gratitude,
Rev. Daryn Stylianopoulos, Pastor

Offering

Your continued financial support of the daily work and ministries of FBC Needham is vital, particularly as we move through this time of transition, and as we prepare to restore the front porch of our historic building. We encourage each member of our community to continue in your regular giving toward the support of our continued ministry throughout our time of transition, and also to consider giving toward the Capital Fund for our front porch restoration. Offerings can be turned in during worship, 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. If it is an offering toward the capital fund, please indicate that intention on the memo line.