



We need to talk about the Blood

1 Peter 24: 19-25

Sunday, 5/3 @ 10am, on-site & online via Zoom

Connect at www.NeedhamUCC.org



The Congregational Church of Needham, *United Church of Christ*

1154 Great Plain Ave, Needham MA 02492 / Tel 781.444.2510 / www.NeedhamUCC.org / IG @NeedhamUCC

Rev. John Gage, *senior minister*
Valerie Becker, *director of music*
Darlene Wong, *director for children & youth*
Robin Bevilacqua, *church operations manager*
Cindy Sullivan, *financial administrator*
Tom Mollerus, *moderator*
Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

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Welcome! Please take a moment to let us know you're here, whether you are an official church member, a frequent guest, or a first-timer. **Scan this QR code with the camera on your phone and follow the link to sign-in.** *There's a paper sign-in sheet in the foyer, if you prefer.*

Our Church Covenant *At the Congregational Church of Needham, United Church of Christ, we strive to be a joyful, welcoming Christian Community. We seek to be faithful in a world torn by suffering, injustice, oppression, and war. We are inspired by God, Christ's Ministry, and the examples of other faithful people. We join together in worship and song, fellowship, study, and mission to embrace the risks and challenges of continuing Christ's ministry. We struggle to live out our faith in the world by furthering justice and peace, witnessing to the truth, and proclaiming God's love and mercy for all people.*

Our Open and Affirming Covenant *We believe that all people are created in the image of God, who loves each of us as we are. Following the example of Jesus, we welcome and affirm all people, including those of every age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; every racial, ethnic and cultural identity, and country of origin; every faith background, family configuration and economic situation; every mental and physical ability and health status; every life experience and circumstance. We strive to be an example of God's extravagant welcome and to live these beliefs in our worship, language, actions and relationships. We invite all people who desire to join us in this journey of faith to share in the full life and ministry of this church.*

If you are a guest with us today, a special welcome to you! We'd love to know that you're here. Please sign in using the QR code at the top of this page or the physical attendance sheet in the lobby. If you'd like to learn more about our church or what it means to be a member here, please reach out to Rev. John at revjohn@needhamucc.org.

Children of all ages are always welcome in worship! Quiet books and pew pals (soft toys) are available in the narthex/foyer just outside the sanctuary doors. All accessible bathrooms have **changing tables**.

WIFI in the sanctuary: UCC_Guest, password: needhamucc

FOR TODAY:



Yes! There is Sunday school today. Kids in Pre-K–Grade 5 will be invited to come forward for the “Time Especially for Children” during worship, then head out to Sunday School in the Reception Room (in the hall just outside this sanctuary) with our Director for Children & Youth, Darlene Wong, and their volunteer teachers.



For today's celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion / The Eucharist / The Lord's Supper, those in the sanctuary who wish to participate will be invited to come down the center aisle to receive a piece of gluten-free bread and a small sip of non-alcoholic juice in a compostable cup. Folks participating online, we hope you prepare something to eat and drink to participate with the body. **ALL ARE INVITED TO SHARE, INCLUDING CHILDREN.** You need not be a member of this church or any church to participate but simply desire to receive this blessing in your life.



Baby Basics Groceries Ongoing Food Collection

Every Sunday we collect specific proteins for the groceries we give to the families accessing diapers through Baby Basics every other month. In May, we're looking for small cans of **tuna in water**.

May 3, 2026: 5th Sunday in Eastertide

Precious Blood, ocean of divine mercy: Flow upon us! Precious Blood, most pure offering: Procure us every grace!
Precious Blood, hope and refuge of sinners: Atone for us! Precious Blood, delight of holy souls: Draw us! Amen.

– St. Catherine of Siena, Catholic laywoman, mystic, Doctor of the Church (14th C)

CHORAL INTROIT *Lift Thine Eyes, from “Elijah,”* by F. Mendelssohn

Chancel Choir

Lift thine eyes, O lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help.
Thy help cometh from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
He hath said, thy foot shall not be moved. Thy Keeper will never slumber.

WELCOME

Rev. John MacIver Gage

CALL TO WORSHIP

1 Peter 2:9-10

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

One: Come, people of God, let us sing the praises of the One who has called us out of darkness into Their marvelous light!

Many: For once we were not a people at all, but now we are God’s people. Let us worship God together.

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

HYMN

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less (see below)

GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN PEACE (“Peace be with you / And also with you”)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

El Señor Resucito

A - le - lu - ya! A - le - lu - ya! A - le - lu - ya! A - le -
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

lu - ya! A - le lu - ya! A - le - lu - ya! El Señ or re - su - ci - to!
lu - ia! Al - le lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Yes, the Lord is ris'n in - deed!

READING FROM SCRIPTURE

from the Letters of the Early Church, 1 Peter 2:19-25

TIME ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

SERMON

We Need to Talk About the Blood

Rev. John MacIver Gage

HYMN

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (see below)

SHARING THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

For today's celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion / The Eucharist / The Lord's Supper, those in the sanctuary who wish to participate will be invited to come down the center aisle to receive a piece of gluten-free bread and a small sip of non-alcoholic juice in a compostable cup. Folks participating online, we hope you prepare something to eat and drink to participate with the body. ALL ARE INVITED TO SHARE, INCLUDING CHILDREN. You need not be a member of this church or any church to participate but simply desire to receive this blessing in your life.

SINGING WHILE WE SHARE

Eat This Bread

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to God and never be hungry.

Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in God and you will not thirst.

SHARING OUR PRAYERS (“O God, hear our prayer”)

SINGING THE LORD’S PRAYER (see below)

INVITATION TO DEEPER RELATIONSHIP

Feeling like you might like to make this congregation your church home? Curious to learn more about who we are and how we practice our faith and what membership means here? Reach out to Rev. John at revjohn@needhamucc.org

PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

SINGING OUR THANKS AND PRAISE

**O Morning of our hearts, we sing;/ our endless Alleluias ring!
Amid the shadows of our gloom / new hope, new life, an empty tomb!**

WE ARE BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

POSTLUDE



Help Us Nurture Faith with the Youngest Among Us

Every Sunday we need two non-related adults—a teacher and an assistant—to staff our Sunday School classroom. Ms. Darlene Wong, our Director for Children & Youth, is our teacher. Will you be the assistant? No experience is needed. Please [sign up here](#) to help.

Questions about our Children & Youth Ministries? Email Darlene Wong at childrenandyouth@needhamucc.org

OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED: May 3, 2026



Today!

Family Promise Metrowest: Walk to End Homelessness

Sunday, 5/3 @ 12 Noon at Natick High School

15 West Street, Natick

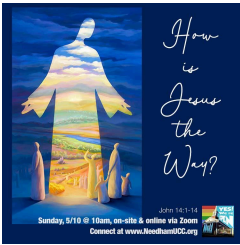
The work of Family Promise to provide temporary and transitional housing and services to avoid housing insecurity prevented 205 children from spending a night unhoused in 2025. The upcoming Walk To End Homelessness is their single biggest fundraiser. You can use the following link to join or donate to the Congregational Church of Needham team: <https://givebutter.com/fpm2026walk>



Notes of Hope: A Benefit of Immigrant Justice

TODAY, 5/3 @ 4-6pm, in Fellowship Hall (via the Linden St entrance)

Our congregation is partnering with the Needham Area Immigration Justice Task Force to host this fundraiser for Metrowest Worker Center (CASA), a worker-led organization supporting immigrants and their families in our area during these trying times. It's an afternoon of music trivia (with professional DJ Tables), prizes, and light refreshments. You can buy single tickets for \$50 (or a table for 8 at a discount) at <https://givebutter.com/notes-of-hope-qnx4ul>



Coming Up Next Sunday

How Is Jesus the Way?

5/10 @ 10am, LIVE! on-site & online via Zoom at <http://zoom.us/j/907548568>

It's the Bible verse that launched a million bumper stickers: At the Last Supper table in John's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Which, ok, so Jesus is the way. But *how* is Jesus the way? Is he *in the way*, like a bouncer guarding the velvet rope to heaven's VIP section, making sure none of the riff-raff gets in? Or maybe it's meant to be more descriptive than prescriptive, an experience and not a formula,

so that whenever/wherever/however/whoever connects with the divine, *that* is Jesus at work. (John 14:1-14)



Annual Women's Retreat: Friday & Saturday, 5/8 & 9

Open all women—cisgender & transgender—as well as nonbinary people who feel aligned with a women-centered space

Join us for an overnight stay and three meals at the Craigville Retreat Center in Centerville on Cape Cod. The theme this year is "What Matters." The space can hold up to 23 people in a dorm-like setting and the cost per person is \$160. Events include meals together, beach walks, yoga, music, group discussions, a craft, a communion service and overall camaraderie. To reserve your spot, please mail or drop off a check made out to the Congregational Church of Needham, with

"Women's Retreat" in the memo section, as well as a note listing your email address, phone number, and any food allergies or dietary restrictions you may have. Since space is limited, reserve your spot now. Two weeks before the program you will get an email with more specifics. Questions? Feel free to reach out to Stephanie Oddleifson, a member of the planning team, at soddleifson@gmail.com.



Rescheduled!

Guatemala Partnership February 2026 Delegate Report-Back

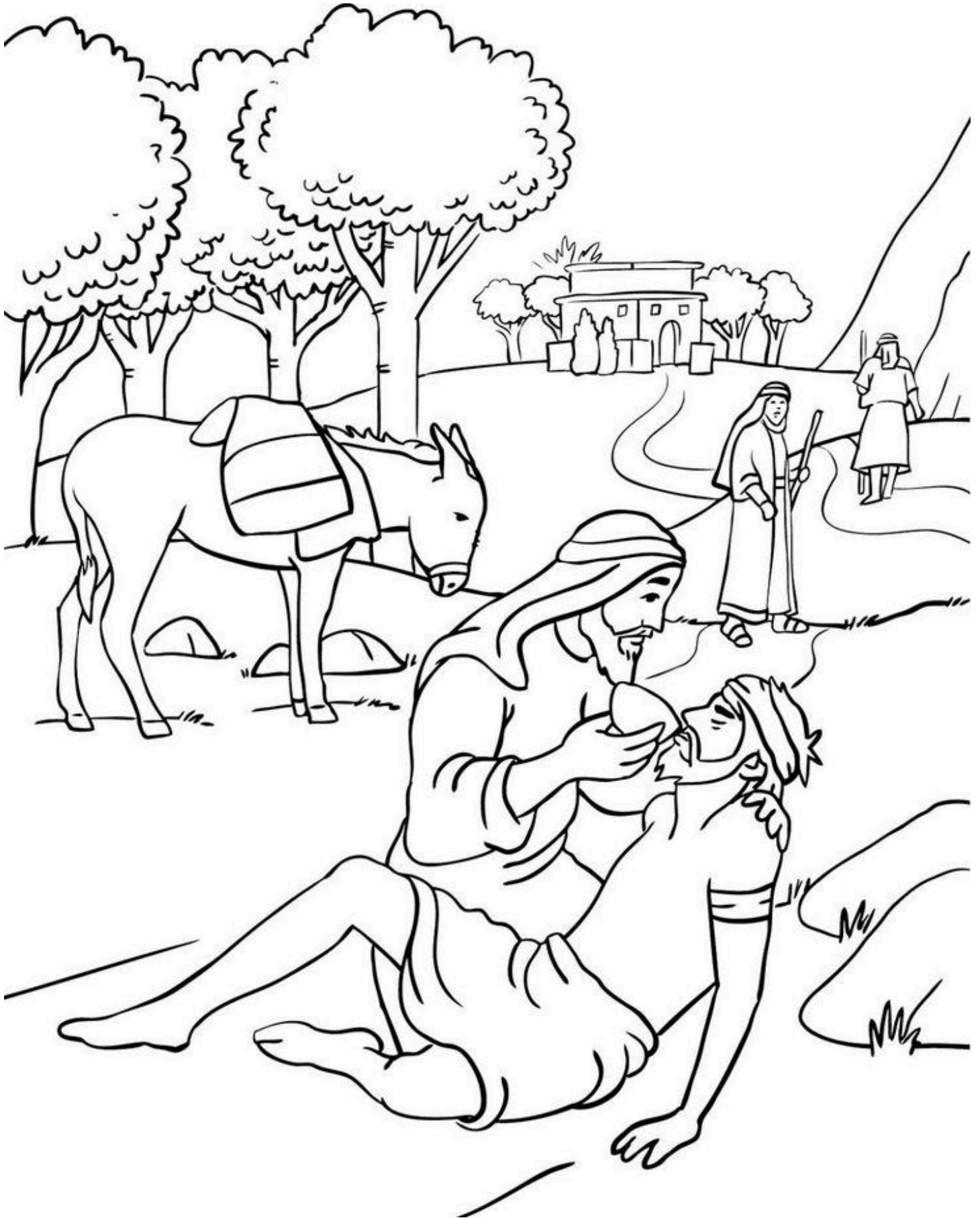
Sunday, 5/17 @ 7pm via Zoom at

<https://idc.zoom.us/j/96114795548?pwd=oEHqkcHrhkYa605GhDdVosyAfpIFPO.1>

With delegates from the East Coast to West, and ages 15 to 79, the travelers of our February 2026 delegation to our partner village of Santa Maria Tzeja brought their openness and diverse life experiences to the trip. We promise that the presentation will lift your spirits as you witness how

our church's remarkable outreach project of friendship and solidarity has been changing lives on both sides of the partnership for nearly 40 years.

Jesus teaches us to help those who are hurting.



My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

My hope is built on noth - ing less than Je - sus' blood and right - eous - ness!
When sha - dows veil his love - ly face, we rest on his un - chang - ing grace;
His oath, his cov - e - nant, his blood, sup - port me in the whelm - ing flood;
When Christ shall come with trum - pet sound, oh, may we then in him be found,

I dare not trust the sweet - est frame, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
in ev' - ry high and storm - y gale, our anch - or holds with - in the veil.
when all a - round my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.
dressed in his right - eous - ness a - lone, fault - less to stand be - fore the throne.

On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is
On Christ, the sol - id Rock, we stand; all oth - er ground is
On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is
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sink - ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.
sink - ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.
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sink - ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I sur - vey the won' - drous cross
 For - bid it, Lord, that we should boast,
 See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine,

on which the Prince of glor - y died,
 save in the death of Christ our God;
 sor - row and love flow ming - led down;
 that were a pre - sent far too small;

my rich - est gain I count but loss
 all the vain things that charm us most,
 did e'er such love and sor - row meet,
 love so a - ma - zing, so di - vine,

and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 we sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 or thorns com - pose so rich a crown.
 de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

The Lord's Prayer

Our God in heav-en, ho - ly is your
name, your reign come, your will done, on earth as in heav-en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread, and help us for - give, as
we have been for - giv - en. In the time of tri - al
lead us in - to light, for yours is the king - dom, and the pow - er, and the
glo - ry, for - ev - er. Our God, in heav-en,
ho - ly is your name, ho - ly is your name.

WORDS: Matt. 6:9-13, adapt. by Mark A. Miller and Laurie Zelman
MUSIC: Mark A. Miller