



Brookline Community Church
Worshiping Apart
Reverend Catherine Merrill, Minister
June 7, 2020 • Trinity Sunday

This week we'll worship together via Zoom (detailed instructions for how to join the service are in the email that brought this pdf). Once the service and coffee hour are over, I'll send out a link to the Zoom service.

Prelude: [*Come Thou Font of Every Blessing* by Taryn Harbridge](#)

[No lyrics, just let it help you get settled for worship]

Centering Ourselves for Worship:

[Join Cindy Perkins, today's lay leader, in our centering prayer.]

Lord, Lord, Open Unto Me!

Open unto me — light for my darkness.
Open unto me — courage for my fear.
Open unto me — hope for my despair.
Open unto me — peace for my turmoil.
Open unto me — joy for my sorrow.
Open unto me — strength for my weakness.
Open unto me — wisdom for my confusion.
Open unto me — forgiveness for my sins.
Open unto me — love for my hates.
Open unto me — thy Self for my self.

Lord, Lord, open unto me!¹

¹ Today's centering prayer was written by Howard Thurman, who was an African-American author, philosopher, theologian, educator, and civil rights leader.

Hymn: *Holy, Holy Holy* by Steven Curtis Chapman

[[Click here](#) for a video that will give you the lyrics and someone to sing with.]

If you have a favorite hymn you'd like to include in our worship service, just send it along and I'll look for a good place for it.

Invitation to the Table:²

This morning you are invited for Holy Communion
in the Body of Christ.

That Body of Christ is not the loaf of bread
you see on my plate on your screen.

The Body of Christ
is not even the bread on your table.

The Body of Christ is us
as we are strengthened by sharing together
this meal of hope and grace and presence.

The parables on the table this morning
include a mask and a glove,
symbols of care for the Body of Christ.
As Jesus might have said —
the Realm of God is like a mask of compassion
on the Bread of Heaven and a
gloved hand lifting the Cup of Blessing
so that all be served and safe.

We pause to honor with tender memory
the holy table in our church home
and to consecrate with love for all God's children
these many holy tables in our home churches.

² Today's communion liturgy was written by Maren Tirabassi , "Holy Communion Liturgy for June 7, 2020, often called Trinity Sunday," Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted May 28, 2020, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2020/05/28/holy-communion-liturgy-for-june-7-2020-often-called-trinity-sunday/> (accessed June 4, 2020).

Prayer of Consecration:

Leader: We Are the Body of Christ dispersed and gathered at the same time, which is always true though we do not always see it. Like the grains that become one whole loaf, like the notes that are woven into song, like droplets of water that are blended in the sea, we, as Christians, one body shall become.

In your many kitchens, and living rooms, rest your hands lightly upon these elements which we set aside today to be a sacrament. Let us ask God's blessing upon them and upon us and upon all those who are in our prayers this morning.

Leader: Gentle Host, rest upon us as you rested upon water and light,

All: earth and creatures,

Leader: human beings, all in your image,

All: and holy Sabbath.

Leader: Send your Spirit of life and love, power and blessing upon your children who are staying at home so that this Bread may be broken and gathered in love and this Cup poured out to give hope to all.

All: Risen Christ, live in us, that we may live in you.

Leader: Breathe in us, that we may breathe in you.

All: Amen.

Words of Remembering

Leader: We remember the Creator blessed all creatures and all human beings with plants of the ground and fruit of the trees. We remember the Sarah's hospitality to angels, manna in the wilderness, oil that never gave out, and the Psalmist speaking down the ages, "Taste and see that God is good. We remember.

We remember a twelve year-old at a Passover in Jerusalem, a meal cooked by Peter's mother-in-law, a small boy's lunch, Zacchaeus feast, Martha's one-dish hospitality, a story about a fatted calf and dancing, another Jerusalem Passover, broken bread in Emmaus, and fish on the beach. We remember.

We remember communal dining inspired by the Holy Spirit, Peter's unkosher dream that meant all God's children are accepted, Paul's communion on a sinking ship and a vision of the fruit of the trees in the New Jerusalem. We remember.

Our tables are a various as these and they are as truly the meal of grace blessed by Creator, Christ and Indwelling Spirit.

Sharing of the Elements

Leader: Let us at our many tables receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

All: We become the Body of Christ in the Bread we share.

Leader: Let us in our many places receive the gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

All: We are one in Christ in the Cup we share.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: In thanksgiving for this meal of grace, rejoicing that, in the holy dispersion of virtual worship, we claim the risen Christ's love is not limited by buildings made with human hands, nor contained in human ceremonies, let us pray ...

Leader: O Holy One, our tongues have tasted the good news and our lives are filled with the Spirit that hovered over creation and blew fresh hope on Pentecost.

All: Creator open our hearts.

Leader: Word, speak peace in our voices to all the people in all the hotspots and hurts of the world. As we journey masked through our lonely or dangerous or over-busy day,

All: Holy Spirit, fill us with this blessing — that it is good. Amen

Hymn: *Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken*

[[Click here](#) for a video that will give you the words and someone to sing with.]

Lifting Up Our Joys & Concerns:

Lord, Lord, open unto me!

Open unto me how to navigate in a time where events seem overwhelming.

Open unto me how to believe when a pandemic burns, the economy falters, when justice and peace disappear from the streets.

Open unto me how to recognize my place in my community when nothing seems familiar.

Lord, Lord open unto me the joys of this week:
Be with me, O Lord, in all of these joys:

For irises blooming in our gardens;

For evenings cruising on Lake Potanipo;

For older relatives doing well at home;

For birthdays to celebrate, on time and a little after the fact;

For neighbors safely returned from Florida;

For the creatures we live with (even if we have to live with the shedding).

For young neighbors stopping by to say "hello";

For saying grace before dinner as a family (sometimes more than once in same meal);

Lord, Lord open unto me the concerns of this week.

Be with me, O Lord, in carrying these concerns:

The burden of racism and the burden of those who believe it is solved;

The small acts of kindness that are swamped by the big acts of disruption;

The loss of routine that makes life feel stable;

The mental health of those caring for the elderly;

Bev, Carol's friend, who is nearing the end of her journey with bone cancer;

Donna and her family who continue to search for the path forward;

Clarence's brief stay in the hospital is the last one for a while;

The elementary teachers packing up their classrooms and sending their students on to the next grade without the familiar rituals;

The lessons of history still to be learned.

Lord, Lord, open unto me your promise

That you will be with me until the end of the age.

For that promise, and all the promises you have made and kept,

I bow my head in gratitude. Amen.



Let us pray as your Son taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

[For next week, please feel free to send me your joys & concerns and I'll include them in our prayers: minister@bccnh.org or call/text (978) 494-6953.]

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Reflection on the Scripture:

When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted (Matthew 28:17). There are only eleven of them now; one of the original twelve so despaired of his betrayal of Jesus that he took his own life. They've made the tedious trek from the great and powerful city of Jerusalem, back to rural Galilee, to a mountain, that honestly probably wasn't much of a mountain, given the geography. They see Jesus, well after his crucifixion and resurrection, and they worship him. But some doubted.

They can't have doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead. That has been established by then. They must have doubted themselves. Whether they were even vaguely capable of going over the next hill and making even tepid disciples of 1% of the next village, let alone disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). They couldn't have doubted that Jesus had risen; but they surely hadn't forgotten how they had betrayed him.³ They had to be doubting their own abilities to do what Jesus was commanding them to do.

After this past week, watching our country fail, we can understand how they feel. So many of us feel that George Floyd's death was avoidable and the police officers involved should be arrested. And we believe that the system of policing in this country has different rules for black and brown people, a corruption that needs to be eliminated. And we believe that looting and burning is immoral and counterproductive and those who do that should go to jail. And we believe that

³ Stanley Hauerwas, *Matthew*, in *Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 248.

mass protests and civil disruptions are legitimate forms of protest. We believe all that at the same time and we're told that peaceful protest is the only acceptable form of protest, by the same people who said that kneeling during the national anthem is an insult to the military who are now being asked to use force against American citizens. We don't doubt Jesus. But we certainly doubt our own ability to teach what Jesus taught: Love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.

On this Trinity Sunday, the Scripture reading from Matthew reminds us that Jesus has commissioned us to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). For many, that doesn't sound like there is one God, but rather three. It's something we're used to, this three in one, one in three. So we don't really think about it. One God makes much more sense. If Jesus was a part of God from the beginning, that implies that there was something in God that was missing from the beginning. That God could be affected by something outside God's self. And in this broken world full of suffering that we inflict on each other, we need God to be unchangeable, to be the one whole thing.⁴

The early Christians struggled with how to express this three in one, one in three. Here's what they figured out. From the beginning, God has been in relationship. Unity with God means your identity is not swallowed up and annihilated, but established. God exercises power by selfgiving. So when Jesus meets the coercive power that wants to take his life, Jesus doesn't protect his identity by trying to hold on to it. He serves us by showing absolutely that God will sustain who he is, not just in a single point in history but forever.⁵

Jesus invites us into that relationship, into that mutuality and power. Jesus assures us that by being in relationship with God, with Jesus, with the Holy Spirit, our identity is preserved, God will sustain us through God's unending power of self-giving.⁶

So as followers of Jesus, we are in relationship with George Floyd. We are in relationship with George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbury, Sandra Bland, Michael Brown, Pamela Turner, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Laquan McDonald, Antonio Arce, Atatiana Jefferson, Breonna Taylor, Sean Reed, and Walter Scott. We are in relationship with the 111,000⁷ people who have died in the U.S. of Covid-19. We are in relationship with the millions of people out of work.

⁴ Stephen B. Boyd, "Trinity Sunday, Theological Perspective, Matthew 28:16-20" in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A, Volume 4*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 46.

⁵ Boyd, 48.

⁶ Boyd, 48.

⁷ Wikipedia, *Covid-19 Pandemic Data*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:COVID-19_pandemic_data, (accessed June 6, 2020).

Yes, we are in relationship with all of them. And we have to live our lives showing that we recognize that relationship. No wonder we doubt ourselves. The list of the dead, injured and damaged is never ending. It's a gap that can never be closed.

And as followers of Jesus, we are in relationship with Derek Chauvin who knelt on George Floyd's neck. We're in relationship the White House staffers who thought a photo shoot in front of an Episcopal Church was worth pepper spraying non-violent protestors. We're in relationship with every looter coming to a peaceful protest with demolition tools. We're in relationship with Amy Cooper, who felt entitled to call 911 when a birdwatcher in Central Park asked her to put her dog on a leash.

Yes, we are in relationship with all of them. And we have to live our lives showing that we recognize that relationship. No wonder we doubt ourselves. The list of those seeking to use coercive force against our neighbors is never ending. It's a gap that can never be closed.

As followers of Jesus we are in relationship with [Killer Mike](#) who stood with the Mayor and Police Chief of Atlanta and called for change. We are in relationship with [Kaleth O. Wright](#), Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force who described what he is doing to improve his community. We are in relationship with [Sheriff Christopher Swanson](#) of Genessee County, which includes Flint, MI, who wanted to show is relationship with the community. We are in relationship with the [Right Reverend Mariann Budde](#), Episcopal Bishop of Washington, DC, who spoke out against using a Bible and a church as a political prop after using mounted police and pepper spray to clear the churchyard of peaceful protestors.

We have doubts. But Jesus had none. All authority. All nations. All that he commanded. All the days of the age.⁸ Jesus had the disciples he wanted and he gave them a great and never-ending commission. He promised he would be with us always. So at this time when it feels like our country is failing, like we are failing Jesus, when we are all alone in the heart of pandemic, economic collapse and riot, know this. We are in relationship with God. God's self-giving love will guide us, give us companions on the way. The gap that can never be closed because of the relationships we are in, as immense as it is, is smaller than the gap between life and death, the gap that Jesus closed forever, for all nations, for all time. Full of doubt, we are the ones Jesus has chosen for this moment to live the truth of our relationship with God into the relationships we have with the rest of this world. Amen.

⁸ Meda A. A. Stamper, "Trinity Sunday, Exegetical Perspective, Matthew 28:16-20" in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year A, Volume 4*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 47.

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given

For all that you have given us,
we thank you, gracious God.
For day and night, evening and morning,
for land and sea, for fish and birds,
plants and animals, for humankind,
and for your Son, who came among us
with the gift of life abundant.
Let your Holy Spirit abide in our midst
and work through our gifts,
that all people may have joy and peace,
in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Hymn: *Bind Us Together*

[[Click here](#) for a video that will give you the lyrics and someone to sing with.]

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

[Let's pray together. Thanks, Cindy, for being our Lay Leader this week!]

Lord, Lord, open unto me!

Open unto me – love of neighbor
Open unto me – relationship with all races
Open unto me – doubts I can leave behind
Open unto me – the promise you will be with me

Lord, Lord open unto me!
Amen.

[CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: # 839 "God Be With You Till We Meet Again;
by his counsels guide, uphold you, with his sheep securely fold you; God be with
you till we meet again."](#)

[The Music Ministry crew made this bit of video for us, so we could all sing
together, with each other and our former selves!]

Postlude: [Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise](#) by Steve Green

[Lyrics that you can sing with or ignore; either way let it help you gear up to return
to the world.]

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.



PRAYER LIST (6/7/20)

If you know those on this list, call on them & tell them we are praying for them. If you know others who should be added to this list please give their names to the minister or a deacon.

- Rev. Tom Atherton, failing from Parkinson's
- Friends & family of Nell Smallwood, Beatrice Maude Charewicz, Bruce Garvin, Louise Price, Eddy Whitcomb, Shirley Jeffreys, Hazel Corey, Jerry King, Tre Rouse, Tasha Feller, Pat Tiner and Terry House.
- Luca, Amy's nephew, as his new treatment appears to be having effect
- Those affected by the corona virus and those working to limit its impact
- Those suffering from domestic violence, who are caught at home with their abusers at a time of rising stress, that they might find safe havens.
- For Nicu and the rest of the first medical reserve to be called up who are currently serving in New York City. May they be able to effectively do what they have trained for and return home safely.
- For everyone to stay as healthy as they can in the days to come
- For the friends & families of those who have died alone;
- For our church, that we remain patient with the process of re-opening;
- For the people of Hong Kong, struggling to protect the political system they want;
- For Donna's family as they seek the best path for dealing with her mom's dementia;
- The burden of racism and the burden of those who believe it is solved;
- The small acts of kindness that are swamped by the big acts of disruption;
- The loss of routine that makes life feel stable;
- The mental health of those caring for the elderly;
- Bev, Carol's friend, who is nearing the end of her journey with bone cancer;
- Clarence's brief stay in the hospital is the last one for a while;
- The elementary teachers packing up their classrooms and sending their students on to the next grade without the familiar rituals;
- The lessons of history still to be learned;
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers;
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning

God of the living, from whom all blessings flow, I welcome a new day with thanksgiving because you have cared for me through the night. Wherever you send me today, whomsoever I meet, be in my going and my meeting. Grant me wisdom to cherish what you give me and generosity to share what I receive. Fill me with the Spirit so that I may show courage, kindness, and a sense of humor in the face of the day's hardships. In Christ's peace, may I withhold harsh judgment against those who would do me harm. Show me ways that I may serve you throughout the day and into the night so that, waking or sleeping, I live for you; in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Ancient of days, these hours of light are passing into darkness. Thank you for being with me. Let me not forget the joys you put in my life today. Send your Spirit to fill my memories with comfort and peace as I prepare for the night. Where I have failed to please you, forgive me for the sake of your Son. If I have been of help to others, let them give thanks to you. May all night songs praise you; may we evening singers rejoice in your eternal glory. And I will celebrate with your whole creation in the name of Jesus Christ when the new day that you are bringing dawns. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

Review how you have learned about Earth throughout your life, giving thanks for each of your teachers and guides. In what ways does your way of living reflect gratitude for Earth? How might you enhance your care for God's creation?

Daily Awareness Reflection

At the end of the day, I've been asking myself the following questions. I jot down the answers and ask them again the next evening. I've found it helps me to remain centered as well as increasing my awareness of God in my life. It takes about 10 minutes.

1. Slow down. Stop. Prepare yourself to pray by becoming aware of the love with which God looks on you ...
2. Note the gifts God has given you today. Give thanks to God for them ...
3. Ask God that this be a time of special grace and revelation ...
4. With God, review the day. Look at the stirrings of your heart, your thoughts, and your choices as the day progressed. Which have been of God? Which have not? What does God want to say to you about both? ...
5. Ask for forgiveness for failures/omissions, for healing from their effects ...
6. Look forward to the following day, and plan concretely with God how to live it according to God's desire for your life ...

From Elizabeth Liebert's *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), p. 31.

Announcements:

Please shop smile.amazon.com and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

June Take Home Meal: Mexican Lasagna

Our March meal was postponed, but it's making its appearance on June 19th. If you would like a meal, even if you signed up for it in March, we ask if you still would like to order, email Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com) with the number of meals you would like.

Also, as many of you are aware, the price of meat has doubled. Therefore,

-
- 1 meal \$12
- 2 meals \$22
- 3 meals \$30
- 4 meals \$40

We're still looking for ingredients. Contact Megan (kingmegan7@gmail.com) or Nancy (dunbar4@juno.com) for an up-to-date list of what we're looking for.

Help Lines

This time of isolation can be very difficult. You may know someone who needs some support beyond what you can provide. We're in this together.

- Suicide prevention: 1-800-273-8255
- Sexual assault: 1-800-656-4673
- Domestic violence: 1-800-799-7233

Brookline Food Pantry

Although we cannot be together physically at this time, Outreach is continuing to work with Rebecca Purdin through the Brookline Welfare office & CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) to address any needs in our community.

The Brookline food pantry is now open on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10:00-2:00 for drop-offs only. There is a list on the [Brookline Food Pantry's Facebook page](#) that is being updated as items are needed. In addition to Market Basket gift cards, this week, they're continuing to look for:

Dry cat food	Egg Noodles
Cat litter	Razors
Chips	Chili
Foil and Plastic Wrap	Soy Milk
Popcorn	Coconut Milk
Spaghetti	Tissues
Baby Formula (dry)	

Perishables:

Chicken

Ground Beef/Turkey

Eggs

American and Cheddar Cheese

If you know of anyone who could use some help from the Food Pantry, please let Rebecca or Amy know. We sense there's more need in the community than is currently picking up food.

Donations can be dropped off downstairs at the Town Hall during regular hours of operation. There are large boxes for donations if there is no one in the Food Pantry. There is also a drop off at the Brookline Post Office.

Thank you for your continued support to our church and our community.

Covid-19 Scams Targeting Seniors

The [NH Attorney General's office put out a press release](#) describing several scams that are targeting seniors. The claims range from needing personal information to get their Social Security payments, to being family members in need of cash to treat Covid-19 symptoms, to offers of fake medical products to prevent Covid-19, to needing personal information to get their stimulus checks, to fake charities. (Honestly, what are people like?!?).

Please pass the word to anyone who might be affected.

Covid-19 Information

Melanie, our state senator, asked to pass along the following:

- If people want to know the latest status of Covid-19 in NH and the Emergency orders to date, go to <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/>
- A great video explaining Covid-19, what and how we fight it and why what we are doing is so important: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgBla7RepXU>