



Brookline Community Church
Worshiping Apart
Reverend Catherine Merrill, Minister
June 21, 2020

Every part of worship has a video, so we've gathered them [together in a play list](#). [If you click on "Play All"](#), they'll play from the beginning of the service to the end! And you can just follow along, never clicking on another link. Or you can go through clicking on all the individual links – your choice.

Prelude: [Be Thou My Vision](#) by Celtic Worship

[No lyrics are posted, but feel free to sing along if that helps you get settled for worship]

Centering Ourselves for Worship:

[Join John Nicholson, today's lay leader, [in our centering prayer](#).]

Let us thank God for soap —
not the utilitarian squirt of something,
but the soft smooth surface
curved edges, like life,
nothing squared off.

Let us pay attention to something in our hands
reminding us there is so much
in our hands.

We don't clean them just for ourselves,
And like so many of the things in our hands
which are slippery and easy to drop,
holding on too tightly will leave them empty.

We can take the time
to sing "Happy Birthday"
to the basin
and whoever it applies
in all this wide, wide world,
while paying attention
to things that are around us
not rushing through life
using, using, using.

Be safe. Wash your hands.
Remember what Jesus asked us to do:
All the common things you can love?
love them.¹

Hymn: *Psalm 69* by Sons of Korah

[[Click here](#) for a video that will give you the lyrics and someone to sing with. For those of you who are trying to remember, there are some psalms which are ascribed to the Sons of Korah, which is where the singing group gets its name. Psalm 69 is a nice psalm to read if you'd like one for when you're feeling overwhelmed]

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.

Lifting Up Our Joys & Concerns:

[Rev. Cath [sharing our Joys & Concerns.](#)]

Loving and merciful God,

We thank you for those you have chosen
to speak your reconciling word in this age,
and we pray for the faith to receive it.
Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, caring God:
you hear the cries of the poor,
you see the tears in the eyes of all who mourn,
you know the pain of those in anguish,
and you come to the side of the lonely.
Call your church to compassion and service.
Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

¹ Today's centering and closing prayers were inspired in large part by Maren Tirabassi, "SpaceX," Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted June 10, 2020, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2020/06/10/soap/> (accessed June 13, 2020).

Blessed are you, listening God:

You hear our cheerful shouts when we are lifted up with joy:

Carol's mom's 70th birthday;

For families being able to visit their loved ones in nursing homes;

For the growing awareness of racism and police brutality in our country,
that it might lead to permanent change

Help us to celebrate fully all the moments of joy we are offered.

Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, God of justice:

you desire that all be one.

Erase prejudice and class divisions,

bring strength to those who are persecuted,

and heal those who believe that destruction is the path of righteousness.

Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, God of compassion:

You stay with us when we are weighed down with concerns:

For Clarence, who went to the hospital with a high fever and a bladder
infection. He's now in rehab to build up his strength.

For all the people who need to be seen, may we see them and their
challenges with humility and mercy;

For our own needs to be witnessed, that we may be seen with compassion
and love;

For the financial health of our church, may it continue to allow us to do the
work God is calling us to do;

Help us to stay strong and connected with each other and with you,

When our concerns are overwhelming.

Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

Blessed One, turn us to your ways.

Make us bold.

Increase our passion for what is good.

Inspire us with the witness of those who have gone before us,
whose faith shines through the ages.

Hear us, O God; your mercy is great.

Into your hands we place the welfare of all for whom we pray.

We trust in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

[The Lord's Prayer]

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.]

Hymn: *Faith of Our Fathers* by Fountainview Academy

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

Scripture Reading: Matthew 10:24-39

[Matthew 10:24-39 read for you]

'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

'So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

'Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Reflection on the Scripture:

[[The video of the reflection.](#)]

Jesus says *he has not come to bring peace, but a sword* (Matthew 10:34). He says *not to fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul* (Matthew 10:28). He says *even the hairs of your head are all counted* (Matthew 10:30) by God. In the reading from Matthew today, Jesus was preparing his disciples for the fierce opposition they would face. I mean, if they call Jesus Beelzebul (Matthew 10:25), the devil himself, then they can't think highly of his followers.

When Jesus talks of taking up the cross (Matthew 10:38), it doesn't appear to be a reference to Jesus' own crucifixion which occurs chronologically much later. This doesn't appear to be foreshadowing, or someone writing in a hint of Jesus' own ending in the middle of the story. It appears that Jesus is speaking metaphorically, urging all his followers to be as ardent as the revolutionaries whom the Romans were making an example of by crucifying them throughout Israel.² Jesus is urging his disciples to be that passionate, that committed, as ready to face such violent resistance as those who were trying to toss the Romans out of Israel.

But we don't face that as Christians. We face indifference. We face "I'm spiritual but not religious." We face "I want my kids to be able to make their own decisions about religion when they're older." We'd love to tell in the light what Jesus told us in the dark and proclaim from the housetops, what we heard whispered (Matthew 10:27). It's just that we don't have anyone to listen to us.

We have important good news to tell. Yes, we have fears, but we don't fear death. We fear, we are in awe of, the one who has made it possible to live courageously in the face of death.³ We fear betraying Jesus by denying him. Denying him means denying the one who makes it possible for us to confess our sin,⁴ our limitations and shortcoming that draw us away from the path he showed us. Our faith has taught us to recognize the façades of human power, even those rooted in the threat of death.⁵ We can share our conviction that God is present in this crazy, broken world, present in mercy and compassion.⁶ We just can't find anyone to talk to.

² Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew*, in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1993), 117.

³ Stanley Hauerwas, *Matthew*, in *Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 111.

⁴ Hauerwas, 111.

⁵ Stanley Saunders, "Commentary on the Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39" from "Lectionary Commentaries for June 22, 2014: Second Sunday after Pentecost", Working Preacher, https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp_print_all.aspx?lectionary_calendar_id=481&print_type=comm&is_sp_anish=0 (accessed December 18, 2019).

⁶ Saunders.

You know who else fought indifference? Every parent ever. I don't know The Talk that parents give their black children, particularly their black sons. I know there are lots of versions of that Talk, depending on the kid's age. I know that black parents and children have The Talk more than once. I do know The Talk white, middle-class, teenage girls get about not getting pregnant. I know The Talk white girls get about how you should be treated if someone really loves you and it doesn't involve a fist. And I know that every parent was met with a teenager's indifference. Or seeming indifference.

So for every dad, on this Father's Day, every parent who has shared really good insight with their kids, every bit of advice you offered on standing up straight, and saving for a rainy day and changing the oil, and staying in school, and saying "yes, sir" and "no, ma'am" and making sure the cops can see your hands on the steering wheel, for all those parents who faced the indifference of their teenage kids who knew everything already, notice this. As George Floyd lay dying on that street in Minneapolis under Derek Chauvin's knee, he cried out twice for his momma. All those indifferent teenagers that we talked to. All those indifferent teenagers that we were. We heard The Talk.⁷ And we knew that whatever the content of The Talk, it meant that we were loved. Just by engaging with indifference, we show love. Whether it is our teenagers or the non-religious around us, engaging with indifference, even when it seems to make no difference, changes both parties engaged in The Talk. Even as we are losing our life, we call out for the people who spoke to us in love. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given

[[Let's pray together.](#)]

Loving and merciful God,
who gives life, nourishment, and strength to all creation,
we thank you:

Because we need not fear tomorrow
we offer ourselves, our time, and our possessions
to the work of the church.

Because we need not fear for our well-being
we give generously in the name of the One
who gave everything for us.

Bless our gifts that all may be nurtured in truth.
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

⁷ Sam Sanders, "Not Just Another Protest," *It's Been a Minute* podcast, June 5, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/04/869837008/not-just-another-protest> (accessed 17 June 2020)

Hymn: *Father I Adore You*

[[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, John, for being our Lay Leader this week!]

Merciful and loving God,
We head back out into the world full of miracles,
Like soap and the birthday song,
And your everlasting presence with us.

Thank you for all the smooth and slippery things
Which will pass through our hands and our hearts
This week
Like patience, and love, and endurance.

Help us to pay attention
To the common things and
The common people
You have put in our hands.
Help us to hold on just tight enough
That they know we are paying attention
That we are loving them
As you love us.
Always, and in detail, down the last hair.
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: God be With You by Jessy Dixon

[No lyrics, but feel free to sing along and let it help you gear up to return to the world.]

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.



PRAYER LIST (6/21/20)

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 Clarence, who went to the hospital with a high fever and a bladder infection. He's now in rehab to build up his strength.
- For all the people who need to be seen, may we see them and their challenges with humility and mercy;
- For our own needs to be witnessed, that we may be seen with compassion and love;
- For the financial health of our church, may it continue to allow us to do the work God is calling us to do;
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers;
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning

In your good time, O Lord, in your great mercy, come to me with your never-failing help. As this day unfolds, let me see in my friends, family, and neighbors the face of your loving-kindness toward them; in my own face, let me see only what is yours. Be my strength and solace in these hours, and lighten the paths of all I encounter. I pray this in the strong Word that created and upholds the universe: in Jesus' name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

For this day of familiar tasks and new responsibilities, I give you thanks, O God. You have shown me wonders, provided for my needs, helped me to navigate through conflicts and celebrations large and small, and stayed by my side. To you is due all of myself—body, mind, and heart—and I lay myself to sleep now trusting in your eternal care. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

If, like Jeremiah, you were to name the “burning fire shut up in my bones”—the calling you have been given—how would you name it? When you express your “burning fire,” what does it sound like? What are the words to describe it? Is it a color? or a dance? How many ways does it take shape in your life?

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!

The church's financial obligations continue. If you are able, please mail your offering to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

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 10-2:00 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, like last 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	Eggs
Ground Beef/Turkey	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>