



Brookline Community Church
Worshiping Apart
Reverend Catherine Merrill, Minister
November 1, 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: [Come, Come Ye Saints](#) by The O'Neill Brothers

[An instrumental piece to help you get settled for worship]

Centering Ourselves for Worship¹:

[Join Ann Desrochers & John Panto, today's lay leaders, [in our centering prayer](#).]

Come to the table as all saints come,
as God's people always do,
with love hope and questions –
bricks without straw? fiery furnace?
no-wine? five-loaves?

Come to the table with your mourning –
old or new or delayed –
and your celebration of memories,
and your imagination of possibilities

¹ Today's open and closing prayers as well as the communion liturgy were inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "Holy Communion Liturgy for All Saints Day, November 1, 2020," Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted October 23, 2020, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2020/10/23/holy-communion-liturgy-for-all-saints-day-november-1-2020/> (accessed October 26, 2020).

for times yet to come,
because here you are welcome,
in a weeping, laughing communion of saints,
in a weeping, laughing communion ... of us.

Amen.

Lifting Up Our Joys & Concerns:

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

Eternal God,
author of our past and promise of our future,
we lay before you our private fears and our concerns
for the world,
knowing that you hear our cries.

We pray for:

- For a friend of the church, who is facing a tough diagnosis
- For the challenges of a new path during a time so full of challenges
- For those in surgery and recovering from surgery
- For feeling pulled to pieces

Bring your loving presence ever closer in this time of need.

We lay before you our private joys and what we would celebrate with the world

We pray for:

- For Barbara being voted onto the Hillsborough Association's Committee on Church and Ministry. They are lucky to have her.
- For the sisters who check in on us
- For the invitation to be faithful servants of God

Join with us in celebrating how our hearts have been lifted.

Especially today we pray for those whom Jesus

called blessed:

- for the poor in spirit . . .
- for those who mourn . . .
- for the humble and meek . . .
- for those who thirst and hunger for righteousness . . .
- for the pure in heart . . .
- for those who show mercy and those who make peace . . .
- for those who are persecuted because of Christ . . .

Pour out your blessings upon them and us
that we may be strengthened in every hardship
and joyful at the recognition of every blessing.

We call to mind before you all those who have died:
those who taught us the faith . . .
those who spoke your truth in the face of evil . . .
those who cared for the weak and the suffering . . .
and those whom we loved and cherished the most . . .
Thank you that their pain is ended
and their joy made complete.

Covenanting God,
in baptism you claim us and show us how to live.
Keep us in your care until that day
when all creation sings your praise
and you lead all your children
to the springs of the water of life.
Through Jesus Christ, our Brother, Redeemer, and Lord. Amen.

[\[Let's recite Psalm 23 together\]](#)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

[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: *Psalm 23 The Lord is My Shepherd*

[\[Click here\]](#) 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.

Words of Remembering:

Leader: There is a sacred story that goes way back,
older than ancestors, older than anything here,
to wind blowing over waters.

God's love was in a garden,
and a flood-drenched rainbow.
God's love was in a desert tent,
barley fields for gleaning,
a slingshot,
a mythically big fish
and a new-thingled way in the wilderness.

There is a sacred story that goes back
to a mother in a barn,
a foster father and skyfully distanced angels.

We love stories, especially this one
of the baby named Jesus, loved
by a cow, three magi, and many shepherds,
who grew up, healed people,
told awkward parables,
and made people angry.

At Passover he broke unleavened bread.
and poured wine and himself –
for saints who slept when he needed friends.

Leader: But the Shelter-in-every-place of Love
gave that time full of death
a hope of waking to Resurrection
and an Emmaus of self-understanding.

**All: And so now we come,
 clothed in our own sad times,
 and our cloud of witnesses to hope –
 all the saints we have known,
 the saints we will know,
 and the saints we are.**

Prayer of Consecration

Leader: Bless us and bless these gifts.
May the Spirit rest upon this time and this table,
surrounded tenderly by our memories of saints
as on sacred times and tables long ago.
(breaking, touching or lifting bread)
so that this loaf may be broken love,

(pouring, touching of lifting cup)
and this cup a well of blessing,
for we pray in the words of our ancestors
that we claim as our own ...

Prayer of our Savior ... Amen

Sharing of the Elements

Leader: Taste and see that God is good. Eat this bread.

**All: Sharing love, we will never be hungry.
(Let us eat the bread)**

Leader: Happy are those who take refuge in God.
The cup on your table is blessed.

**All: Drinking deeply, we will never thirst.
(Let us drink from the cup).**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: Spirit of Christ, stay with us where we stay, as familiar as our daily
plates and cups.

**All: Go with us where we go, safe and full of love as the mask across
our lips.**

Leader: May we, your eager and sometimes awkward saints, carry in us a
Communion from which all can share –

All: comfort for loss, courage for speaking, compassion for healing.

Leader: We give you thanks for both the shelter and the road. Amen.

All: Amen.

Those We Remember

Rev. Tom Atherton

Beatrice Maude Charewicz, Linda's
mom

Jean & Duke, David & Dougy
Connors

Hazel Corey

Ron Dean, a long-time church
member

Tasha Feller, Candy's friend

Peter Fleming, Lisa's friend

Bruce Garvin

Win Hall

Cindy Hanks, Ann's friend

June Hoff, Donna's mom

Terry House, Bill's brother

Shirley Jeffreys

Jerry King, Jon's dad

Rebekah Mani, Sanjay's friend

Louise Price

Ray Richeson, Jocelyn's uncle and
Jane's brother-in-law

Nell Smallwood, Bill's mother

Dylan Szabad, Charlene's son-in-law

Irene Thompson

Pat Tiner, Candy's mother-in-law

Archie & Theresa Vachon

Eddy Whitcomb

Tre Rouse

Andrea, Catherine's friend

Dennis, Donna's cousin
Don, Marjorie's brother-in-law
Ellie, Linda's aunt
Jackie, Lucille & Tina, Carol's friends
Jim, Kym's in-law
Kenny, Amy's uncle
Marie, Susan Haight's ex-sister-in-law

Wayne, Tony Tiner's uncle
Those killed and injured in the explosion in Beirut
Those who have been lost in natural disasters, fire, hurricane, earthquake, flood
Those who have died from suicide and those they leave behind
Those who have died alone

Those lost to Covid-19



Hymn: *Remember Me* by Mark Schultz

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

Scripture Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

[Revelation 7:9-17 [read for you](#)]

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’

And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing,

‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.’

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?’ I said to him, ‘Sir, you are the one that knows.’ Then he said to me, ‘These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason they are before the throne of God,
and worship him day and night within his temple,
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;

for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’

Reflection on the Scripture:

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

The Book of Revelation is hard to tackle. It’s full of symbolism, and the symbolism was written in another age. So not only do we have to time travel back but we then have to unwrap what the symbols meant. There are all sorts of accounts of what the symbols mean, but I would be cautious to put too much weight on any one interpretation. Part of why we use symbols is to convey more than facts. Symbols convey emotions and imagery.

John of Patmos, different from the author of Gospel of John, different from the author or authors of the three letters of John that appear later in the New Testament, John of Patmos has been given a revelation that showed to him how this world was going to end and what was going to come next. There are things

which appear in groups of seven and something world changing happens after the seventh thing is broken or opened or whatever. The imagery is pretty violent and certainly frightening. It's very emotional to see the world that we love in all its frustrating preciousness breaking into pieces that can never be put back together.

Today's reading about the saints is a break in the narrative. We get a peek into what is on the other side of death. Everybody's there, from every nation, no one left out. There's no hunger or thirst, everyone's wearing a new white robe. They're not roasting in the sun. The palm branches are symbols of victory or peace, we remember them from Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

To be entirely honest, I'm not sure this is my idea of how I want to spend eternity. For me, there would be more libraries and coconut cake. I am the kind of person who will spill on her shirt when she eats, so my new robe would not be so snowy white about 15 minutes after I put it on. I had a funny reaction to the image of standing before the throne of the Lamb, because my dodgy knee couldn't handle standing for any length of time. Then I realized I was assuming that the limitations of this earthly body would follow me there. Or that some Sub-Angel Third Class wouldn't get me a chair.

So we can all compare our images of the afterlife, some would have more heavy metal music, some would have an open road and a convertible, some would have a gospel choir that needed a soloist. But notice this. Our sacred texts not only argue that there is something more than this life, but they draw back the curtain and let us see. By using symbolic language to touch our emotions, they give us room to interpret the message. You will not be alone. Your needs will be met. You will be singing. You will be at peace and not under someone else's control. Every tear will be wiped away. You will be with God. Whatever we personally envision that puts us into that state, it's a pretty good state to be in.

As I was getting ready to write this reflection, we learned that a dear family friend had died. Andrea was older than me, younger than my parents. A fellow Wellesley woman. A vital, energetic, caring person who carried so many people on her shoulders and never forgot a birthday. Her gifts were so beautifully wrapped that it was almost a crime to open them, except they were always so thoughtfully and lovingly chosen. She could talk with anyone and laugh with everyone. I will miss her so much.

Our sacred texts include a glimpse of life beyond this one so we can imagine what it is like on the other side of death. They help our imaginations open up to possibilities that our loving God is offering us, comforting us with. I appreciate that this week. Because the thing I cannot imagine is this world without my friend in it. With help, I can imagine us together again, white robes and all, even if it is just doing the billing for our crazy little summer water company. But I can't really get my head around stuffing all those water bills without her. For all of us who

have lost someone, and we all have, our imagination fails when we confront this world, this world which is more colorless, less vibrant, without the people we have lost in it.

The symbolism in the book of Revelation is meant to touch our emotions, which is probably why all the so-called logical explanations of what all the symbols mean falls so flat. Revelation helps us get past the block we have when we try to imagine this world without someone we've loved. Its promise is that we don't have to keep trying to imagine it. Someday, we will all be together again and the challenge that we can't get past, that we are apart, will disappear. Revelation assures us that we can stop trying to use our imagination and just return to what we know is true. We are all together, singing, and our tears are wiped away. Hallelujah. Amen.

Hymn: *Children of God* by Phil Wickham

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

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given

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

We magnify your name, O God,
and together exalt your name,
for you are so good to us
and gracious beyond measure.

In this life you lead us, comfort us, guide us,
and redeem us in countless ways.

In death you usher us to even greater blessing,
bringing us through the great ordeal,
embracing us in your endless light,
and welcoming us to your table of goodness and plenty.

These gifts we bring are but a token of our thanks,
seeds to be planted for the growing of your kingdom,
in which we have sure and certain hope.
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

[[Let's pray together.](#) Thanks, Ann & John, for being our Lay Leaders this week!]

We come to the table as all saints come,
as God's people always do,
with love hope and questions –
We step into the coming week
With love, hope and questions.

We come to the table with our mourning –
old or new or delayed –
and our celebration of memories,
and our imagination of possibilities
for times yet to come,
We step into the coming week the same way.

We come to this table and we step into the coming week
Confident that we are welcome,
That we have a place
in a weeping, laughing communion of saints,
in a weeping, laughing communion of people,
that Jesus calls together
not because we are perfect,
but because we are his.

[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: [Sound of the Saints](#) by Audio Adrenaline

[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 (11/1/20)

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.

- Friends & family of Jerry King, Tre Rouse, Tasha Feller, Pat Tiner, Terry House, Rev. Tom Atherton, June Hoff.
- 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 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 a friend of the church, who is facing a tough diagnosis
- For the challenges of a new path during a time so full of challenges
- For those in surgery and recovering from surgery
- For feeling pulled to pieces
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers;
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning

Thank you, Lord, for waking me up this morning, giving me a new start and another day to live for you. The light of day reminds me of the overwhelming love you give to us — such that you even call us your children. Let me live this day in gratitude, showing your love in all that I say and do; for the sake of your son, Jesus, in whose name I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

God of the heavens, I cannot count the stars you have strewn across the sky, nor can I measure the grace you have poured out upon me. Thank you for the gifts of this day, for they show me your generosity. Thank you for its challenges, for in them I find your wisdom and strength. Bless all those I have met today, and forgive me for the ways I have caused harm. Keep me in your care this night; and if I do not awaken in the morning, receive me into the glorious company of all the saints. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

This week's readings describe the coming realm of God. How does the reality of heaven shape your life in prayer and in service?

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.

	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs. Expenses +/-
September	\$74,646	\$64,492	\$10,154

Take Home Meal: Buffalo Mac and Cheese (with whoopie pies!)

This month we're offering Buffalo Mac and Cheese. And for a little bit more, you can add in dessert, whoopie pies! Get a whole home-made meal ready to enjoy, with no clean up! Such a treat!

No Christmas Faire in 2020

But we are doing some fundraising to help replace the money it generates. We have delicious homemade strawberry and apricot jam that is available for sale now until it's gone (\$5/jar).

We have a Firepit Raffle "Basket" that we will be selling tickets for starting Sunday, Oct. 18 (if you can help sell some tickets that would be great!). Tickets are 1/\$5 or 5/\$20. One or two sale items and one or two other raffle items may be added soon. The raffle ticket drawing will be held on Sunday, December 6th. Please [email carolcherian@gmail.com](mailto:email_carolcherian@gmail.com) if you have any questions or are interested in helping out.

Christmas Blues Service

Jazz Sanctuary service at First Congregational Church, Concord will offer a Blues Christmas service for this year which has so many of singing the Blues. It will premiere on [their YouTube channel](#) on November 15th, and be available after that to stream and enjoy.

Register to Vote

The Town of Brookline has put out guidelines on the variety of ways you can register to vote. You can certainly register to vote on election day, but to avoid standing in line, you can do it ahead, either in person or by mail.

For more information, see the information on the [town website](#).

Volunteer at the Polls

The polls for the general election on November 3 need volunteers. If you are able to volunteer, in this time when so many of our neighbors cannot, please contact the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Patricia Howard-Barnett at (603) 673-8855 x4 or patti@brooklinenh.us

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

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.

Covid-19 Information

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/>

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:

Juice and Juice Boxes	Chips
Butter and Margarine	Cereal
Cheese (sliced, shredded or block)	Cat Food (Dry and Wet)
Cheese Crackers (like Cheese Nips)	Tissues

Also, a big thank you to mask makers who donated masks to the food pantry already. They have been a huge help for people. If anyone has more to donate, we are running low. We still have several kid masks, but could use more for adults.

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.

Video Discussion Group

Starting on October 18, I'd like to try a video discussion group using the Nooma videos by Rob Bell. We'll watch them together (they're 10-15 minutes long) and then we'll discuss them. Filmed beginning in 2001, released in 2013, they're meant to give church groups a jumping off place for discussion of what it means to be Christians today.

They're not church-y, but they are Scripturally based and really thought provoking. I think you'll find the discussions interesting and challenging. If you find the discussions are interesting, there are 24 videos in the series. We can certainly do another set later.

I know that some folks like to think about a video before having to discuss it, so I've included links to each of the videos, so if you'd like to watch them before seeing them with the group you can. But you certainly don't have to. We'll start each session watching them together.

I've designed the four-part series around the Patriots schedule. All the sessions will use the same Zoom link.

Sunday, October 18, 4:30-6:00pm: [Nooma 001 Rain](#)

Sunday, November 1, 4:30-6:00pm: [Nooma 018 Name](#)

Sunday, November 8, 4:30-6:00pm: [Nooma 005 Noise](#)

Sunday, November 22, 4:30-6:00pm: [Nooma 006 Kickball](#)

Zoom Meeting:

This link should get you in:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85827353669?pwd=bUYzNTZ4QIBJSm5GZG81a3NXUWZwUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 2735 3669

Passcode: 746626

Dial by your location

- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

SHARE CHRISTMAS



Please consider giving in the following ways:

Purchase a gift card for a child in any increment to Amazon,
Target, Walmart or any local store

Purchase a gift card for a single adult in \$25.00 increments to an
area grocery store, Walmart or Target.

Make a monetary donation for Share to buy Gift Cards.

**Place in Box in front hall at the church
Or
Mail to church at PO Box 507 Attn Outreach
By November 10th**

**Thank You
Outreach Board**

Brookline Community Church 2021 Pledge Form

Where is Brookline Community Church headed?

- Deepen our faith through ministry, witness, and shared learning experiences
- Share the fellowship bubbling up among us more broadly within and without
- Learn and practice invitation in traditional and unexpected ways
- Experiment with turning our faith into actions that benefit our community

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ - _____

Street Address: _____

Where are you feeling called in 2021? What new things could BCC do to meet your faith and fellowship needs, especially during this time of pandemic? What talents are you willing to share in God's service?

Financial Support:

In response to God's gift of love through Christ and because I desire to support the church's ministries, I plan to give:

\$_____ each week / month / other _____ (please circle one)

or

\$_____ as a one time gift

I understand that this is an estimate of my ability to give and that if circumstances change, I can put a note in the offering or contact Treasurer Rena Duncklee to adjust my pledge.



Please return your completed pledge form by November 22nd, in the offering or by mail to:

Brookline Community Church
Attn: Treasurer, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033

Pledge On-line:

If you would like to set up and control the amount of your weekly or monthly pledge, you can do so [on-line](#). Just click "Sign In" and then "Register for a New Account" and you can set up your recurring pledge for next year. (If you'd rather set up your pledge via text, text "GIVE" to +16035064455. You'll get a link back, which you can use to sign in and register for a new account, set your PIN and set up your pledge)