



*Brookline Community Church*  
*Worshiping Apart*  
*Reverend Catherine Merrill, Minister*  
November 15, 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:** [Is My Name Written There?](#) by Alae Piano

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

**Centering Ourselves for Worship<sup>1</sup>:**

[Join Nancy & Bill Dunbar, today's lay leaders, [in our centering prayer](#).]

Leader: O God of Hope, it is in our lives that we become aware of your life.

**All: It is in the rhythms of the world that we hear your pulse, your breathing, your footsteps.**

Leader: We have built this time of worship not as a vault to contain you,

**All: but as a reminder of the sanctuary that is the whole world you have made.**

Leader: We have built the space of worship in our lives not because this is the only place we find you,

**All: But because here we are reminded to look for you, on the sidewalks we pass,**

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<sup>1</sup> Today's open and closing prayers were inspired by Ruth C. Duck and Maren Tirabassi's *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*. (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1990), 178-179.

Leader: on the highways we travel, the rooms in which we live,  
**All: the sky and the sea and the land which embrace us.**  
Leader: We thank you for the lives you have given us  
**All: for the senses which are ours through which to experience life,**  
Leader: and for our human souls which reach out toward you, even now.  
**All: Thank you for your loving presence in this world and this time.**

**Everyone: Amen.**

### **Lifting Up Our Joys & Concerns:**

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

Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying,  
O God of hope, awaken us to your new world.

We pray for all who yearn for your light to break forth  
in places of sickness, toil, or danger,  
that we may find our way to your glorious realm  
through our love for one another.

We pray for those weighed down with concerns,  
For Maurice, who took his own life, gratitude that his struggle is over and  
for Maurice's mom, Patricia, who was with him on his long tough road.  
God's grace & healing for us all,

For Leon, Cindy's friend, whose colon cancer has spread everywhere

For folks who are sick in any form

For growing awareness that we need to bring vigilance to the information  
we're consuming so we're not manipulated

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Your coming is the dawn of a new day  
that brings hope and healing to our lives.  
Fill your church with the light of your love  
that we may be still and know that you are God  
and stand in wonder of your majesty.

We pray for those lifted up with joy,  
For Luca, and all our young nieces and nephews, celebrating birthdays  
without the ordinary hoopla

For little Grant coming home from the hospital for the first time

For the beautiful weather so late in the season,

For learning something new and not getting injured by power tools,

For getting injured by power tools but not having it turn into a disaster

For making an effort to turn off the news in all its formats and focus on today

For our ability to bring joy into one other person's life, to combat the darkness that seems to be gathering

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Rouse us to live in this present age  
in light of our hope for your return.

Inspire us to encourage each other to tend the earth  
and to press harder than we think we can  
to work toward your new creation.

O God of hope, **awaken us to your new world.**

Give us the courage to acknowledge human frailty, limitation,  
and even death,  
with confidence in your eternal plan.

For we dwell forever in light with you,  
our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. **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](mailto:minister@bccnh.org) or call/text (978) 494-6953.]

**Hymn: *All My Days by Maranatha!* Singers**

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

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 90:1-12**

[Psalm 90:1-12 [read for you](#)]

A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Lord, you have been our dwelling-place  
in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

You turn us back to dust,  
and say, 'Turn back, you mortals.'  
For a thousand years in your sight  
are like yesterday when it is past,  
or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream,  
like grass that is renewed in the morning;  
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;  
in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger;  
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.  
You have set our iniquities before you,  
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath;  
our years come to an end like a sigh.  
The days of our life are seventy years,  
or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;  
even then their span is only toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger?  
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to you.  
So teach us to count our days  
that we may gain a wise heart.

**Scripture Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18**

[Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 [read for you](#)]

Be silent before the Lord God!  
For the day of the LORD is at hand;  
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,  
he has consecrated his guests.  
At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,  
and I will punish the people  
who rest complacently on their dregs,  
those who say in their hearts,  
'The LORD will not do good,  
nor will he do harm.'  
Their wealth shall be plundered,  
and their houses laid waste.

Though they build houses,  
they shall not inhabit them;  
though they plant vineyards,  
they shall not drink wine from them.

The great day of the LORD is near,  
near and hastening fast;  
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,  
the warrior cries aloud there.  
That day will be a day of wrath,  
a day of distress and anguish,  
a day of ruin and devastation,  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
a day of clouds and thick darkness,  
a day of trumpet blast and battle cry  
against the fortified cities  
and against the lofty battlements.

I will bring such distress upon people  
that they shall walk like the blind;  
because they have sinned against the LORD,  
their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
and their flesh like dung.  
Neither their silver nor their gold  
will be able to save them  
on the day of the LORD's wrath;  
in the fire of his passion  
the whole earth shall be consumed;  
for a full, a terrible end  
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

### **Reflection on the Scripture:**

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

Zephaniah lays out what God will be looking for when God comes again. God will scour the streets, with a lamp, so God isn't going to miss or overlook anything. God is looking for people who are not indifferent to God's loving presence. God is looking for people who are not resting complacently on their dregs (Zephaniah 1:12), like wine that is about to go off.<sup>2</sup> Silver and gold are not going to save them if they are indifferent. Psalm 90 argues that we have only

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<sup>2</sup> Denise Dombrowski Hopkins, "Proper 28, Exegetical Perspective, Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18" 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), 293.

limited time on this earth, and we appear to spend most of it indifferent to what God is asking.

Take today's readings together and you see what the problem is. Humanity does pretty much everything we can come up with to separate ourselves from God. And we do it not because we want to go against God, but because we're paying attention to our own comforts, to our own preferences. We like the idea that we're in charge, we're not dependent on anyone or anything else. We like that idea so much that we're going to tell ourselves that "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm." (Zephaniah 1:12). We commit iniquities and secret sins (Psalm 90:8). We like our version of reality, and we're blind to what's actually going on (Zephaniah 1:17).<sup>3</sup>

Indeed we make such a mess of it, that in the end, the only thing that is going to save the world is for God to intervene. And that sounds like a good idea, until we realize that God's intervention is going to be a wholesale clean up. There is going to be blood and ashes and flesh and dung.<sup>4</sup> And chances are pretty good that some of that is going to be ours. If we remain indifferent to God. If we think our silver and gold are going to save us (Zephaniah 1:18). If we don't use our time gaining a wise heart (Psalm 90:12).

That's why stewardship matters. Yes, I would like to have the lights on and the heat up and my salary paid and all the organizations that Outreach supports taken care of. All those things matter, especially Outreach's work. But stewardship matters because it forces us to confront our indifference. Deciding what we will pledge is a decision to engage in the world as God asks us to, as God expects us too. Our pledges take us away from the fantasy that it doesn't really matter how we live our lives. Our pledges say that how we live matters to us, matters to people who depend on us, matters to God. How we spend our silver and gold, how we spend our time, matters. Because how we choose to spend these most precious resources allows us to reflect our understanding that being indifferent to God is not an option.

What many people hear in today's reading is the pain that is coming. Zephaniah says the day of the Lord is coming. *That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.* (Zephaniah 1:15-16).

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<sup>3</sup> Margaret Odell, "Commentary on the First Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18", Working Preacher "Lectionary Commentaries for November 19, 2017, Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost", [https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp\\_print\\_all.aspx?lectionary\\_calendar\\_id=732&print\\_type=comm&is\\_spansh=0](https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp_print_all.aspx?lectionary_calendar_id=732&print_type=comm&is_spansh=0) (accessed 22 June 2020)

<sup>4</sup> Eric Mathis, "Commentary on the First Reading: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18", Working Preacher "Lectionary Commentaries for November 16, 2014, Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost", [https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp\\_print\\_all.aspx?lectionary\\_calendar\\_id=504&print\\_type=comm&is\\_spansh=0](https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp_print_all.aspx?lectionary_calendar_id=504&print_type=comm&is_spansh=0) (accessed 22 June 2020)

But in our indifference, in our numbness, that's what every day is like when we don't follow what God is asking, to Love God and Love our Neighbors.

When we are alive, when we live as God asks, we escape that pain of separating ourselves from the source of love and justice and mercy in this world. We are the ones who offer that love and justice and mercy to the world. We do that by how we greet people, by wearing masks, by how we buy the electricity that powers our homes and our churches, about who we vote for. We do that through how we spend our silver and gold and our time.

We are hoping to wrap up our stewardship season next week. You all should have received a pledge form in the mail. If you didn't, let me know and I'll email you one. Fill it out and return it. I know 2020 has been a tough year and the economic pain looks likely to continue into 2021. So we all understand how prudent everyone needs to be in budgeting what they can for next year. Certainly the church's budget will be prudent. But we need to be alive to what God is asking of us as well. Not because the Day of the Lord is coming eventually. But that it might already be here. And what will matter is not what we have, but what we have done with what we have been given. It will matter how thoroughly we demonstrate that we are not indifferent to God's commands, but long to fulfill them. God has been our dwelling place for generations, Psalm 90 tells us. Let us celebrate having such a magnificent place to live.

**Hymn: *Is My Name Written There?* by The Saints Ministers**

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

**Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given**

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

O God of Hope  
you are our home and dwelling place forever.  
Thank you for giving your people a gift  
beyond all value,  
the treasure of eternal life.  
Bless our gifts that we offer you this day and every day.  
With them may we share your love with others,  
that all may enter into your eternal joy. **Amen.**

**Hymn: *Offering Song* by The Lads**

[\[Click here\]](#) 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, Nancy & Bill, for being our Lay Leaders this week!]

Leader: O God of Hope, it is in our lives that we become aware of your life, in the rhythms of the world, in the sky and sea and land which embrace us.

**All: But even more than that, in the eyes we meet, in the hands we hold, in the human stories that we hear and tell.**

Leader: There is where we find you the nearest, the most real.

**All: We hold a newborn child in our arms, and sense that we are embracing God.**

Leader: We listen to music, and sense we are listening to the language of heaven.

**All: We dance, and sense that we have experienced the fullness of prayer.**

Leader: It is in our lives that we know you are alive. As we head back out into this coming week, we thank you for the lives you have given us.

**All: for our human souls which reach out toward you.**

Leader: Help us to find a way to stewards the gifts of time and treasure we have

**All: to share with the world your loving presence**

Leader: Here and now

**All: Everywhere and always**

**Everyone: 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: [End of the World](#) by Frank Edwards**

[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 (11/15/20)

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 Maurice, who took his own life, gratitude that his struggle is over and for Maurice's mom, Patricia, who was with him on his long tough road. God's grace & healing for us all,
- For Leon, Cindy's friend, whose colon cancer has spread everywhere
- For folks who are sick in any form
- For growing awareness that we need to bring vigilance to the information we're consuming so we're not manipulated
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers;
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

### **Household Prayer: Morning**

I give thanks this day for the gift of Christ and the privilege to follow in his way. This is the greatest life-giving treasure that I am called to steward; may I share this as freely as I have received it from the One who gave himself for the life of the world. May I be continually awakened to your love this day. Amen.

### **Household Prayer: Evening**

God, I do not like to confront what I cannot control; I shrink before my own limitations and human frailty. Help me to trust in your steadfast constancy and know that your sovereign goodness is all that I need. Teach me to number my days so that I may grow wise in heart, knowing that, no matter their length, I dwell in you eternally. Amen.

### **Questions for Reflection**

Human beings have been graced with the gift of persistence, imagination, and the capacity for extraordinary accomplishment. We have even been given life-giving gifts. Yet, as the psalmist reminds us, we are finite beings. When is our refusal to accept human limits productive, and when does this hinder our creaturely stance before God? Is knowing that God is God, and we are not, a message of eternal grace that we can hear? And in the face of tragedy and death, can we bear that grace in confidence and peace?

### **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](https://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 +/-
<b>October</b>	77,968	\$70,830	\$7,137

## 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: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 15<sup>th</sup>, and be available after that to stream and enjoy.

## 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:

Cooking Oil	Bread
BBQ Sauce	Canned Chicken
Laundry Detergent	Canned Ham
Bleach	Paper Towels
Vinegar	Tissues
Coffee	Sandwich Bags (and other zipper bags)
Peanut Butter Crackers	Trash Bags
Pudding (cups or mix)	Baked Beans
Butter/Margarine	

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 10<sup>th</sup> TODAY!!!!**

**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)