



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: [O Saviour of Sinners](#) by New Scottish Hymns Band**

[Feel free to sing along to help you get settled for worship]

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

[Join Cindy Perkins and Sanjay Cherian, today's lay leaders, [in our centering prayer](#).]

Leader: Gracious and Loving God, sanctify our hearts by the truth, for your name

**All: Get us ready to work with you for unity, justice, peace, and love.**

Leader: May the world look at us and see the source of power,

**All: May the world be attracted to who you are and see the beauty of who you are.**

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<sup>1</sup> Today's Centering Prayer and Prayer to Send Us Back out into the World were inspired by Minchang Lee, candidate for commissioning/membership as a provisional elder, who offered the *UMC's Daily Prayer during this COVID-19 Crisis* on May 13, 2021.

Leader: We want to be people that you have been sent.

**All: We want to be good news people.**

Leader: We want to be good deeds people.

**All: We want to be salt and light people.**

Leader: Please continue to send us to your people and use us for your glory.

**All: In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.**

### **Lifting up Our Joys and Concerns:**

[Rev. Cath [sharing our joys and concerns.](#)]

Once, dear God, we could hear you

walking in the garden

at the time of the evening breeze.

Now, you call across the distance, "Where are you?"

And we echo back the same question,

"Where are you?"

You wait and watch for us;

we wait and watch for you.

When we are lifted up with joy,

we hope that you are singing with us.

We pray

For four 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes in the Soap Box Derby

For the heady smell of lilacs as we're out and about,

For Russell & Susan's family flying up from Florida for the weekend (for the first time in a looooooong time)

For people recovering from Covid, especially those we love

We pray that in their joy they remember what it was like

to walk in the garden at the time of the evening breeze.

When we are weighed down with concerns,

We hope that we feel your presence a little more closely,

We pray

For the friends and family of Keith Barron, longtime member of this church, who passed away on Saturday morning

For relationships that are being rebuilt in the face of grudges

We pray that they are comforted as you have comforted us all along, walking with us when the leaves rustle in the trees.

Help us to see beyond the temporary to the eternal  
so that we do not lose heart.  
Through the life, death, and resurrection  
of Jesus Christ,  
help us to trust that our frailty  
is received into your hospitable house in the heavens.  
Renew us day by day  
until we come again into your presence,  
where the weight of your glory  
lifts us in grace and light.  
In Christ, we pray. **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: *Forgive Me Lord***

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

### **Sacrament of Communion<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Invitation to the Table**

Leader: Come, you who are waiting,  
from the depths of sorrow and pain,  
or the heights of joy.

Come, you who've waited,  
for a graduation like it used to be,  
a memorial service to say good-bye,  
a church service to be  
something different from what it is –  
a gathering with passing the peace,

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<sup>2</sup> The communion liturgy was inspired by Maren Tirabassi's "Holy Communion Liturgy for June 6, 2021," Gifts in Open Hands Blog, posted May 28, 2021, <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2021/05/28/holy-communion-liturgy-for-june-6-2021/> (accessed May 30, 2021).

singing the hymns,  
easy interaction with children.

Come, from personal waiting for a job  
or a day off, to get pregnant without fears,  
or to meet friends for a night out,  
and from the community waiting  
that is in the atmosphere, in the strangeness  
as we want and fear personal contact.

Our souls wait for God,  
more than those who watch for the morning,  
and, as light comes, God is here.

### **Words of Remembering**

Leader: We remember a time Jesus was at table,  
but life was so complex and confusing,  
he and his followers didn't have a chance to eat.

**All: We have been confused like that.**

Leader: We remember a time Jesus' family  
was so worried for him  
they wanted to take him far away  
from all choices and risks,  
to remove him both from danger  
and from people he loved.

**All: We have felt torn apart like that.**

Leader: We remember Jesus opened up family  
to mean those sitting that table  
as well as precious ones from the past.

We have learned in these days  
of virtual family, masked family,  
essential family, six-foot-away family,  
church family,  
that every one has a place,  
as at the Passover table,  
when he blended loved ones together –

**All: We want to be that kind of family.**

Leader: Let us hear those words again,  
around this table, with this family,  
This is my Body broken for you,  
this, here and now and always,  
the Cup of the new covenant.

**All: We hear these words today.**

## Prayer of Consecration

Leader: The psalmist knows that when we wait on God from our depths, we begin to name for ourselves all that we have done which we truly wish we had not done, all that we are complicit with and do not challenge, all that we have left unsaid and undone which could have made a difference in the lives of God's children. We know that God does not mark up against us our regrets, but forgives us fully. And we know that if the expectations of our lives are swept away, we have a table from God, a meal not made with hands, that feeds us hope and steadfast love.

Leader: Rest your hands lightly upon your elements of Communion. We ask God's grace on us and on all those who are in our prayers this morning and God's blessing on our elements and our hands.

**All: God, in whose open hand we place our own, whether we have met you long ago or in this very moment, we pray that you send your Spirit of life and blessing upon all of us gathered anywhere, in any way, so that this Bread may be broken and received in love and this Cup poured out to give the world hope. Risen Christ, as you have faith in us, may we have faith in you. Breathe in us, that we may breathe in you. Amen.**

## Sharing of the Elements

Leader: We are welcome to this gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

**All: We are Christ's family in the Bread we share.**

[Eat the bread]

Leader: We are welcome to this gift of God, the Cup of Blessing.

**All: We are Christ's family in the Cup we share.**

[Drink from the cup.]

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: Let us pray in thanksgiving for this meal of new covenant, rejoicing that we have embodied the love of the family of Christ's available on every human table, never hoarded for "family first," but wide as grace itself.

**All: Spirit of Christ, you have blessed our hands and our hearts. May this family loaf give us courage to speak faith and act love, not only in places set aside, but in your precious world, and may drinking deeply renew our covenant with all life. Wrap your hopeful presence around all whose bodies, spirits and hearts need healing, and let us live your compassion in the days to come. Amen.**

## Hymn: *We are Forgiven by Elevation Worship*

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

## Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:8-15

[Genesis 3:8-15 [read for you](#)]

They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The LORD God said to the serpent,

'Because you have done this,  
    cursed are you among all animals  
    and among all wild creatures;  
upon your belly you shall go,  
    and dust you shall eat  
    all the days of your life.  
I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
    and between your offspring and hers;  
he will strike your head,  
    and you will strike his heel.'

## Reflection on the Scripture:

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

"It's not fair!" If you ever been in charge of a human age 8-18, you've heard "It's not fair!" If you've ever been an adult in the workplace, you've said it, out loud or inside your own head. But when we encounter it in church, in our sacred texts, it's seems wrong in a different way. The world is just getting started and we go from "it was good" to exile in three chapters? We want to talk with folks about our faith, how it changes and strengthens us, and we have these stories where everyone seems set up to fail, everyone fails, and it really looks like God had a role in it. It's kind of hard to argue for "God is love" when you have a tough story like Genesis 3 describing God's actions.

Wouldn't it be easier to invite people to be a part of Home, Health and Hospice, or Marguerite's Place or His Mansion? They're all about helping people who have hit a really tough patch in life. Maybe. But they have their own tough stories, about not being allowed to die at home or being beaten up by your partner and the parent of your children, about an addiction that has taken over your life so

completely you have to step away from whatever you had left to face it. They have some pretty tough stories as part of their invitation to join them too.

So let's look at our story, of Adam and Eve and the serpent. It may feel like the story isn't fair, but maybe the story isn't about fairness. Maybe it's about something bigger.

We recognize ourselves in Adam and Eve.<sup>3</sup> Eve takes initiative and Adam follows someone else's lead. We all done both. They were free to act as they wished, but they were also unable to control the results of their actions. They act, the world is suddenly in turmoil, and they move to protect themselves. Discovered, called to account, they point fingers at each other, becoming more isolated, more separated from the ones they were formerly really close to. They try to cover the truth about themselves, hiding it from everyone, from themselves, from others and from God.

So if we recognize ourselves in this story from Genesis 3, if indeed, it seems familiar enough to call home, then the troubling aspect is not what Adam and Eve do, but what God does.

Maybe we could not predict the results of our actions, but God did. But even when the punishment for eating the forbidden fruit, was clear and known in advance, God wanted to remain in relationship with us, flawed as we are. God does not prevent or reverse our actions. Indeed, our world is the ambiguous, conflicted reality that results from deeply problematic human actions. But as God did in Genesis 3, God has empowered us to live and act in this crazy world. God gave us the tools to bless one another, "in God's image", in this fragile, conflicted reality.

It would have been so easy for God to shrug and wave from the gateway to Eden, wishing us well with our new knowledge and willingness to pass blame around. But what we forget in the Genesis 3 story is that God makes us proper clothes for the world beyond Eden. God helps us so we can bear and nurture life in our changed inner and outer worlds. More than that, God leaves Eden as well. God chooses to dwell with us in the disaster zone we call human history. God still prefers human companionship to human perfection, and abandons Eden rather than to deny involvement with us fearful, fractured, fragmented, furious humans.

God's role in human history is to restore people so we can love and bless one another, so we can fulfill our role to exercise dominion "in God's image" in human history. We got that role back in Eden, and even after we went into exile, that was still our job. We can respond to pain and chaos as God did: directly, honestly, truthfully, and with compassion. God shows us that response every

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<sup>3</sup> My argument is based on the conclusion to Lauree Hersch Meyer's "The Figleaf Coverup: Rereading Genesis." *Brethren Life and Thought* 36, no. 4 (1991): 271-279.

day, because we are still together. We can also bless one another as we choose companionship over perfection.

So, yes, it's not fair. It's not fair that dying at home should be so complicated. It's not fair that women have to take their kids to a hidden location to be safe. It's not fair that addiction can break off lives so full of promise. I would much prefer a world without Home Health and Hospice, without Marguerite's Place, without His Mansion. But given the world that we have chosen to make for ourselves, I am grateful for them, their work, and God's companionship. I am grateful that as broken as it is, the model my faith offers me is anchored in this reality, not a perfect vision that I'll never experience in this life. I am grateful that when I struggle to make things fair, I have plenty of people around me who are struggling too. Who are fighting for fairness, for companionship, for a world more like the Eden we left all that time ago. It may not be fair, but it is faithful to know that I am not alone.

### **Hymn: *Mistakes* by Unspoken**

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

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

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

In the spirit of faith, Great God,  
we thank you for the opportunity  
to give tithes and offerings,  
to participate in extending your grace  
to more and more people,  
and to give all glory to you. **Amen.**

### **A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World**

[\[Let's pray together.\]](#) Thanks, Cindy and Sanjay, for being our Lay Leaders this week!]

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, we know we will encounter some tough stories that need to be told, need to be listened to with respect.

**All: Sanctify our hearts by the truth for your name. Get us ready to work with you for unity, justice, peace, and love.**

Leader: In the coming days we will fall short of our goal of having the world look through us and see the source of power in this world,

**All: May the world be attracted to who you are and see the beauty of who you are.**



Leader: We know what we want,

**All: We want to be people that you have sent. We want to be good news people. We want to be good deeds people. We want to be salt and light people.**

Leader: In this coming week when what we want will get away from us like a snake moving through grass,

**All: Help us to still be part of your glory.**

Leader: Let us walk with you in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, unashamed.

**All: After all. Before all. In all. Beyond all.**

Leader: Amen.

**All: 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: [I Will Wait for You \(Psalm 130\)](#) by Shane & Shane**

[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 (06/06/21)

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 and Dave Larkin.
- 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
- 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 friends and family of Keith Barron, longtime member of this church, who passed away on Saturday morning
- For relationships that are being rebuilt in the face of grudges
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

### **Household Prayer: Morning<sup>4</sup>**

Morning has broken, loving God—the shards of light scattering the long darkness of night. Help me to carry into this day the sure knowledge of your forgiveness, steadfast love, and great power to redeem. May I do your will in all my daily interactions so that your grace extends to more and more people. I begin in thanksgiving, your glory all around. Amen.

### **Household Prayer: Evening**

Spirit of God, come as the evening breeze, carrying away the cares and little failings of this day. Help me put to rest the worries I have, the lists I keep, the regrets I weigh. You know me through and through – I cannot hide from you. May I lie down tonight covered in your forgiveness and love and redemption, and dream of things eternal. I pray in Christ's name. Amen.

### **Questions for Reflection**

As we age, we can see how our physical bodies do indeed suffer the wear and tear of life (“our outer nature is wasting away,” as Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 4:16). Yet Paul says it is possible for our “inner nature” to be renewed every day. In your life, what contributes to your renewal? How are you being prepared “for an eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:16–18)?

### **Daily Awareness Reflection<sup>5</sup>**

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 ...

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<sup>4</sup> The Morning & Evening Prayer and Question for Reflection are reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion*. Copyright 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2015), 31.

## Announcements:

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 +/-
May	\$34,212	\$35,905	(\$1,693)

Please shop [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

You can now use the Amazon Shopping app on your phone and still support the church through the Smile program.

How it works:

1. Open the Amazon app on your phone
2. Select the main menu (=) & tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs & Features
3. Select "Church of Christ" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the app

## Greeting from the Open and Affirming Team

It has been over a year since we began the stay at home precautions due to Covid. We have greatly missed our church family. Last year we had just started to have conversations with our fellow members to listen to your thoughts and concerns around the Open and Affirming process. Due to Covid, we were not able to continue the one-to-one conversations, and we stopped our team meetings as well.

We have recently started to meet again as a team and are hoping to resume the one to one conversations with our fellow members. We will be reaching out to all members of the congregation throughout the spring and summer.

However, to help facilitate questions and suggestions we have also created a question box to gather any questions or suggestions you may have. It is located on the table in the upstairs hall as you enter the sanctuary. In addition, we welcome your comments via email or post. These can be addressed to ONA c/o Brookline Community Church, 2 Main Street, Brookline, NH 03033. This will help us to facilitate conversations and will help us through the process.

We look forward to our conversations as we thoughtfully explore the process of Open and Affirming together.

## Habitat for Humanity Build in Nashua

Although they are not accepting volunteer builders at the moment, we have provided a financial donation to Habitat for Humanity in Nashua. They are currently working on a duplex for two female veterans and their kids. Habitat would welcome financial contributions at this time as well.

## **One Free College Class for 2021 NH High School Graduates:**

The Community College System of NH (CCSNH), the Foundation for New Hampshire's Community Colleges, and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) have partnered to provide "A Gift to the Class of 2021."

Every 2021 graduate from any New Hampshire high school or home-school program is eligible to register for one free class at any CCSNH college this fall. The gift covers tuition for a three-credit course and fees, up to \$755 per student! [Learn more.](#)

## **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 our community's needs.

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, they're looking for:

Pickles	Apple or Cranberry Juice
Parmesan	Paper Towels
Cookies/Cookie Mix	Coffee
Cheese Nip (or similar) Crackers	Disposable Razors
Jello/Gelatin (any flavors)	Dry Cat Food
Sardines	Dry Dog Food
Cereal (especially Raisin Bran or "Fun" Cereals)	Dish Soap
	Zip-style Bags

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.

Non-perishables can be dropped off at Brookline Town Hall (downstairs near the Town Clerk's Office), at the Brookline Post Office, or at the Cozy Tae Cart any time those places are open.

As always, perishable items such as bread, cheese, butter, eggs, meats, and milk can be donated during open pantry hours: Tues and Thurs, 10am - 2pm.

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

## **Help Lines**

You may know someone who needs some support beyond what you can provide.

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