



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: [There is a Redeemer](#) arranged by Mark Hayes

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

Centering Ourselves for Worship, Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15:

[Join Candy Tiner and Amy Razzaboni, today's lay leaders, [in our centering prayer](#).]

Leader: It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

**All: to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,**

Leader: to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

**All: For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.**

Leader: The righteous flourish like the palm tree,
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

**All: They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.**

Leader: In old age they still produce fruit;
they are always green and full of sap,
**All: showing that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.**

Hymn: *Have You Heard the Good News* by Divine Hymns

[[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.]

Lifting up Our Joys and Concerns:

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

Gracious God,
we thank you for your great power and might,
for you are moving all history
toward your good purposes and plans.
Though nations wield economic, political, and military power
that seems to rule the day,
we trust that you are stronger still.

We thank you that our systems of oppression and injustice
are ultimately doomed to failure.

We pray, then, for oppression to come to an end
and for injustice to cease,
so that people everywhere may live in peace and dignity.

We pray for all those who sit in the seats of power
to learn your ways of mercy and kindness.
In our community, teach us to work together for the common good,
caring for our neighbors
and growing in understanding across every divide.

Gracious God,
we know that you are at work
among the least, the lost, and the last,
in the things that are unseen,
and that your heavenly reign does not swagger,
but is subtle—
coming among us in uncommon and often unnoticed ways.

Give us eyes to see and ears to hear
how and where you are moving and changing all things.
How you are with those lifted up with joy, for whom we pray.
With open eyes and ears and hearts, let us pray
 For everyone getting their second shots; keep 'em coming,
 For having enough shade to fit everyone on the side lawn
 For the musicians getting together to rehearse
 For Joshua & Kelly, John Panto's son & daughter-in-law, getting ready to
 welcome their first child

Gracious God, humble us so that we can learn
from those who are meek in all the earth.

Give us eyes to see and ears to hear
how and where you are moving and changing all things.
How you are with those weighed down with concerns, for whom we pray.
With open eyes and ears and hearts, let us pray
 For the friends and family of Tony, Linda's uncle, who passed away this
 week,

 For James Hoff, Donna's dad, who has cardiac surgery scheduled for June
 16th,

 For Brenda, Barbara's neighbor, who's having knee surgery

 For all those countries struggling to get their populations vaccinated,
 especially as the U.S. hopes it's turning the corner,

Gracious God, help us to look for your kingdom in the ways of children
and others who are vulnerable among us,
to seek you at the margins among those overlooked
or ostracized.

Gracious God,
when our lives are dry and brittle,
we trust that you can restore us to life,
making us green again and fruitful.

For anyone who has come to an ending,
whether sought or undesired,
we pray that a new beginning will open
that promotes new growth and flourishing.

Finally, dear God,
no matter how small our faith is,
we pray that you will give us good growth
in our discipleship to you
so that we may be faithful ambassadors of Christ,
sharing his love
and working for the reconciliation of the world.

In Christ's name 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 or call/text (978) 494-6953.]

Hymn: *All Things New* by Travis Greene

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

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-17

[2 Corinthians 5:6-17 [read for you](#)]

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Reflection on the Scripture:

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

In 2019, I went down to Camp Tevya to hand out fliers for the Spaghetti Supper, to make sure that the Ghost Train Trail Race runners knew they could get a homemade supper at the church. I had never been to the race before and didn't know what to expect. What I found was a large number of folks, mostly women and their kids, welcoming runners, helping point them to places to camp and set up their running stations.

Over the course of the next hour, these women answered all my questions. I was so curious about how running for 24 hours would appeal to anyone, how anyone would physically do that. They talked about getting to a point where everything but the trail and your body moving along it just drop away. They answered all my questions and more.

They also talked about loving Brookline, loving the community and the natural surroundings and how they were worried that the thing they loved would disappear if the Conservation Commission wasn't supported, and supported with their time and advocacy. Which they said not all their friends wanted to hear.

I left there thinking how similar they were to church people. They had something in their lives that transformed them. They loved that something so much that they would go out of their way to welcome a round, older minister lady who was curious to learn more, making her feel accepted in the pack of long, lean greyhound bodies that were going to run for 24 hours the next day. They had something that mattered to them so much that they would contribute not only time and treasure. They would talk about how much it meant to them even when that made them unpopular with their friends and relations. The thing they loved mattered so much to them that they would talk to strangers about it, just in case the strangers hadn't heard. It mattered so much that they'd accept rejection rather than risk someone else missing an opportunity to experience what was so transformative for them.

I'm in no danger of running for 24 hours. But if I ever get to the point where I want to try, I know where I'm going to go first, because those women opened the door and opened their hearts for me.

Today's reading from 2 Corinthians is hard to read and harder to understand. The commentaries on it spent a lot more time than normal basically diagramming the sentences, so you could see what referred to what. There are parenthetical

sentenced jammed into the middle of other sentences.¹ Apparently, the Greek is a bit clearer than the English can be because of how Greek grammar works. That's never a good sign when you're trying to make a tight argument about what the text means.

So let's not make a tight argument, because the overall meaning is actually clearer than any individual sentence. Paul's arguing that before he understood he was loved by Jesus Christ, he looked at the world from a human point of view. From that perspective, Christians were a bit crazy, claiming that the Messiah, of all people, would have suffered a humiliating death. By human standards, Christians were dangerous, because they were arguing that it was not only o.k., but actually required, to give up living by the Law of Moses and start living a life imitating the life of Jesus Christ.

Then Paul encountered the love of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14). In the Greek, it's pretty clear that it means Christ's love for Paul,² not Paul's love for Christ, although obviously the love goes both ways. Paul encounters the love of Christ and the world is made new (2 Corinthians 5:17). It's like the moment of creation in Genesis, only just for him, and in his life, with the rest of world continuing on as before. Paul encounters the love of Christ, and his standards change. He has to let go of so much of what his previous standards are based on in order to align with God.

Experiencing the love of Christ, Paul sees that God is at work reconciling the world to Godself, making all things new.³ Whatever Paul was obsessed with before, needed to be set aside. Whatever we're obsessed with – youth and beauty, accomplishments and credentials, productivity and profit⁴ – need to be set aside. Through the scandal of the cross, God is making it clear that God chooses vulnerability, weakness, suffering, and death, all in order to bring new life.⁵ There's a lovely quote from the fourteenth-century mystic Meister Eckhart that says, "The spiritual life is not a process of addition, but rather of subtraction."⁶

¹ Floyd V. Filson, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: Exegesis," vol. 10 in *The Interpreter's Bible: The Holy Bible in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition for Each Book of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1953), 329.

² Hulitt Gloer, "2 Corinthians 5:14-21." *Review & Expositor* 86, no. 3 (1989): 397.

³ Elisabeth Johnson, "Second Reading: Commentary on 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17", Working Preacher "Lectionary Commentaries for June 17, 2012, Second Sunday after Pentecost", <https://www.workingpreacher.org/?print-all=31807%2C31805%2C31806%2C31803%2C31804> (accessed 27 February 2021)

⁴ Johnson.

⁵ Johnson.

⁶ Mark Barger Elliott, "Proper 6, Homiletical Perspective, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 (11-13), 14-17" in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year B, Volume 3*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 135.

It seems to me that if we are born again in Christ, and, like Paul, we find it transformational, we want to talk about it to others, in ways that open doors and open hearts. And doing that risks rejection. And yet, there are plenty of other organizations, like the Conservation Committee, like those runners down at Camp Tevya, that have the same desire to open doors and hearts and face similar rejection. I agree that there is something extra challenging because Christianity has had 2,000 years of assuming that it knew better than everyone else what was good for them, claiming to act based on Christ's love while failing to condemn those who acted cruelly. I know it's hard to share an experience as indefinable and intangible as being loved by God. But for me, personally, it's easier to articulate being loved by God than it is to explain why I would want to run for 24 hours. So as you think about how you put into words this faith thing you want to share, maybe we need to think about how others are doing something similar, something difficult, facing similar rejection.

We aren't running through the night alone. There are all these other folks doing the same thing, cheering us on, making a hard thing easier. If we can accept that we are working on a process of subtraction, that if we can keep going long enough the human standards will just drop away and it will be just the trail and us. And the love of Christ. A new beginning, available to all with open hearts and open doors.

Hymn: Sanctuary by Abby Robertson

[[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.](#)]

Gracious God, we give thanks in word and song,
To you who makes us glad and gives us joy
because of all that you have done.

We enact our thanksgiving
through these tithes and offerings.

May you put to good use
what we give this week.

May our gifts contribute to what you are doing
so that life may flourish.

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

(This is my riff on Psalm 92)

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

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, let us sing a little gratitude into our lives,

All: Reminding ourselves that God is with us day and night.

Leader: Our song can look like a wave in traffic or a quip held silent or a “hang in there” to the lady at the gym who’s doing her best,

All: Let’s make sure that we notice God’s work in the middle of all the chaos we’re causing.

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, let us look for those who are in right relationship with their God and their neighbors,

All: so we remember to look for what flourishing looks like when it is not added up by the dollar or the retweet.

Leader: Flourishing can look like still producing, still growing, even if we are well short or well past the age when anyone expects us to be productive.

All: When we flourish, we produce patience, understanding, compassion, all the slippery sap that makes life with each other flow more smoothly.

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, let us notice what it feels like when we pay attention to gratitude and flourishing life,

All: Because when we are grateful, when we celebrate flourishing life, we are offering God more room to grow in our lives.

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: [Good News](#) by Mandisa

[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 (06/13/21)

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 Tony, Linda's uncle, who passed away this week,
- For James Hoff, Donna's dad, who has cardiac surgery scheduled for June 16th,
- For Brenda, Barbara's neighbor, who's having knee surgery
- For all those countries struggling to get their populations vaccinated, especially as the U.S. hopes it's turning the corner,
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning⁷

New every morning are your mercies, Lord. And new also is this day, full of promise and possibility. Give me eyes to see your new creation that is already coming into being, even as I come and go among familiar places. I pray that you will help me to see others not from a human point of view, but to see them through your eyes of love, grace, and second chances. I will try to walk by faith and not by sight alone. And I will look for ways that I can be a part of Christ's ministry of reconciliation. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Gracious God, with the psalmist I say: It is good to declare your steadfast love in the morning and your faithfulness by night. For all the ways you loved me through the day that is past, I give you thanks. For your faithful watching over me tonight, I also give thanks. Like a bird asleep in its nest, secure on a sturdy branch, I – and all the world – rest in your wide embrace. Despite all evidence to the contrary, headlined in the news of this day, I trust that your kingdom is growing; that all of us are becoming a new creation through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

The passage from 2 Corinthians urges us to be reconciled, to engage in the ministry of reconciliation, and to be ambassadors for Christ. How can you join in a ministry of reconciliation as an ambassador of Christ?

Daily Awareness Reflection⁸

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 ...

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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 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

Take Home Meals on SALE!!!! 3/\$20

We will not be making any new Take Home Meals for the months of July and August this summer. And we're clearing out the freezers to make room for more meals in the fall. So any three meals are going for \$20, such a deal!

Trustees Work Party: What Saturday Works Best for YOU???

The trustees are looking to have a work party get together on an upcoming Saturday to lug the excess wood out of the basement and re-shingle the roofs over the parking lot side doorways. Please email Susan Haight (sdlhaight@gmail.com) if you're available on a Saturday.

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.

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.

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/>

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