



The worship service will be recorded and then edited so you get the best of both worlds, the service and the music videos. There's [a play list that will weave them together](#), so you can just press "play" and go from beginning to end!

Prelude: [Take Thou Our Minds by Ben Ko, William H. Foulkes](#)

[A gentle song to help you get settled for worship]

Centering Ourselves for Worship, Psalm 34:1-8:

Leader: I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
let the humble hear and be glad.

**All: O magnify the LORD with me,
and let us exalt his name together.**

**I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.**

Leader: Look to him, and be radiant;
so your faces shall never be ashamed.

**All: This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,
and was saved from every trouble.**

Leader: The angel of the LORD encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers them.

**All: O taste and see that the LORD is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.**

Hymn: *O Taste and See* by Brian and Jenn Johnson

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

Children's Message (for kids of all ages):

Who's your role model?

Lifting up Our Joys and Concerns:

The response to "Merciful God," is "**hear our prayer.**"

Sisters and brothers,
confident in God's love in Jesus Christ,
let us pray for the world and for our needs, saying,
Merciful God, hear our prayer.

God, you have called forth the church to embody
your way of life.

Help those who profess faith in Christ to be
faithful disciples

and live according to your Word.

For all who follow Jesus Christ,
Merciful God, **hear our prayer.**

Your children imitate you by speaking truth,
showing forgiveness,

and dwelling together in loving community.

For our neighbors and our neighborhoods,
that we may live in peace and justice,

Merciful God, **hear our prayer.**

God, the people of earth hunger for the spiritual food
you provide

that gives meaning to life.

But many also hunger for good bread, for safe
drinking water,

and for the bare necessities of life.

For those who struggle against the dehumanizing
power of poverty,

For all those weighed down with concerns we pray,
For the Friends and Family of Lorna Turk, Russell's cousin's wife, who passed away this week,
For the woman and her daughter who Jill met who were looking for a place to stay that night,
For the Friends and Family of Betty, Donna's aunt, who passed away this week,
For Robert, Candy's cousin, who was helping a woman who had run out of gas on the side of the road and was hit by another car. He hasn't regained consciousness since the accident,

Merciful God, **hear our prayer.**

God, your world is filled with the delights of natural beauty,
For the planet Earth, our home,
that people may dwell in peace with the land,
honoring its beauty, conserving its resources,
and respecting its power,
knowing the joy of life on this plant, we pray,
For James Hoff's, Donna's dad's, wonderful 88th birthday celebration week
For Donna & Peter's 33rd wedding anniversary
For John & Sharon's 33rd wedding anniversary
For Melanie & Scott's 39th wedding anniversary
For Jean, Candy's grandmother, who's home from the hospital recovering from liver failure

Merciful God, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God,
hear the prayers of your people
and grant that what we ask in faith
we may receive according to your gracious love,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **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 (857) 259-7269.]

Hymn: *Be Thou My Vision* by Keswick Live

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

Be Thou my vision O Lord of my heart
Be all else but naught to me save that Thou art
Be Thou my best thought in the day and the night
Both waking and sleeping Thy presence my light

Be Thou my wisdom be Thou my true word
Be Thou ever with me and I with Thee Lord
Be Thou my great Father and I Thy true son
Be Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

Be Thou my breastplate my sword for the fight
Be Thou my whole armor be Thou my true might
Be Thou my soul's shelter be Thou my strong tower
O raise Thou me heavenward great Power of my power

Riches I need not nor man's empty praise
Be Thou mine inheritance now and always
Be Thou and Thou only the first in my heart
O Sovereign of heaven my treasure Thou art

High King of heaven Thou heaven's bright Sun
O grant me its joys after victory is won
Great Heart of my own heart whatever befall
Still be Thou my vision O Ruler of all

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:25-5:2

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Reflection on the Scripture:

Let me tell you what I know about the lady ahead of me at the pharmacy counter in Hannaford's. She was born in 1935, in March. No, in November. It's her husband that was born in March. They have two doctors in Florida and at least three more in Maine. I know all their names. She only takes two medicines, and one of them they got a call about, that it was ready for pick up. But no, there was medicine for her husband but not for her. And not a medicine she had ever heard of.

And now let me tell you about the length of line behind me at the pharmacy counter in Hannaford's. It was long. Like 7 or 8 people long. And the air

conditioning in Hannaford's was keeping the air cool enough, but not dry enough. And my leg was really aching and there was nowhere to sit down. And I was sweating into my mask.

I will not tell you what I was thinking, because this is a family service and the language I was using my head would have grieved the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).

The moment came when I thought the woman at the pharmacy counter was going to get all snippy, all brittle and armored and i-dotting, t-crossing, doing her job and no more. And I wasn't going to blame her. Instead, she softened, the pharmacy woman got completely gentle with the lady at the counter. The pharmacy woman took a business card and wrote down two things for the lady to do, circled the phone number on the front, promised to do a couple things herself so the lady's prescription would be ready as quickly as possible. And the lady left the pharmacy with something tangible that would let her stay in control of what was going on for a little bit longer.

We know the rules. We hear readings like today's from Ephesians and we think, "yeah, yeah" *be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another* (Ephesians 4:32). We know we're not supposed to be big balls of *bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice* (Ephesians 4:31). And yet, how easy is it to completely run out of patience in the line at Hannaford's?

During the Children's Message, I said one of my heroes was my first boss who taught me something about programming, that it was easier to read than to think. When you're taught how to program computers, everyone *always* tells you to comment your code. What no one really explains is that your comments should outline what you mean for the software to do. Because when it breaks and doesn't do what you meant for it to do, someone is going to look at what you wrote. They won't need much help figuring out what it's doing, because it's doing it wrong. What they need help with is understanding what you meant for it to do, instead of the broken, crazy thing it's doing at the moment. That's why you need comments in your code. So that someone later one, maybe you, maybe someone else, can see what you were aiming for.

So amidst all the rules that are spelled out in the reading from Ephesians, we see what all the rules, what all the programming, was aiming at. *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.* (Ephesians 5:1-2). Because we can have all the rules in the world. We can put away falsehood (Ephesians 4:25), we can be angry but not sin (Ephesians 4:26), we can give up stealing (Ephesians 4:28), we can let no evil come out of our mouths (Ephesians 4:29), even as our ice cream slowly thaws in the cart. But the rules don't help us, if we don't stay focused on what we're aiming at, living in love, as Christ loved us.

In thinking about the pharmacy woman, I doubt very much she was thinking about Ephesians. I mean maybe she was, but I doubt it. She was thinking about all the rules of the pharmacy, about what information she could give out and what information she could confirm. She was thinking about moving the ever-increasing line along. She was thinking about how much she could trust the elderly lady's description of what needed to happen. But somewhere in there, she was also thinking about how the pharmacy is one part in letting us take care of our health. She was thinking that if an 87-year-old woman was standing there in Hannaford's, providing the full names of five doctors and two medicines clearly, then the pharmacy lady had something to work with in order to follow all the pharmacy rules and still get to a good outcome. And, I imagine, perhaps because this is what the pharmacy woman made me realize, that we all hope to be 87 years old someday and we might need a little kindness and forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32) when we tried to pick up our prescriptions.

We all have rules we live by. Some of them are Biblical. Some of them are about how it's easier to read than to think. Or always having \$20 in your wallet. Or always parking facing out. It's so easy to focus on the rules, and forget what they're pointing at. Part of today's lesson from Ephesians, part of what today's Psalm 34 are pointing at, is that we are saved. We poor souls cried, and were heard by the LORD, and were saved from every trouble (Psalm 34:6). And that changes things. But if we're not careful, we're going to gather up all the rules we live by, big and small, we're going to get tight and brittle, and we're going to have all our "i"s dotted and "t"s crossed and we're going to go right back to who we were before God turned out lives around. The world is going to be a snippier place where all our jobs are getting done, and no one will be living in love.

So please, yes, think about the rules, speak the truth to our neighbors (Ephesians 4:25), don't let the sun go down on your anger (Ephesians 4:26), don't grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). But if you stop there, you may revert to who you were before God saved you. Instead, do what you need to do to imitate Christ, to live in love, to let a 87 year old woman continue to care for her own health, and a fifty something year old woman shift from annoyed to beloved. Because that is what the rules are meant to do.

Hymn: *Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly* by Pat Barrett

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

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given

**As Christ loved us and gave himself up for us,
let us offer ourselves to God.**

Receive these gifts, O God.

**May our lives be a fragrant offering that is pleasing to you,
in union with Christ's offering for us. Amen.**

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

(A riff on Psalm 34:1-8 for this week.)

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, we bless and praise God, sharing aloud how grateful we are to have been saved,

All: Sometimes we give hope to others who have been knocked down by sharing our own experience of being down,

Leader: We know what it's like to need more help than we can muster,

All: So we shouldn't be ashamed to share what it felt like to get the help we needed.

Leader: We cried out to God, even if we were alone and our prayer was just a silent "please"

All: and God sent an angel to camp on our doorstep and watch over us.

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, we will urge someone else to give asking God for help a try.

All: We'll urge someone else to taste and see that God is good and offers us refuge from the battering of the world.

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: [Hymn of Heaven](#) by Phil Wickham

[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.

Psalm 34

The shaping of new life requires discipline and fidelity to principle. In Psalm 34, the moment of rescue is remembered. Furthermore the speaker counsels others on how to consolidate and sustain the new orientation. Constructed as an acrostic, the psalm is not an emotional outburst of gratitude but a quite disciplined statement for new world building.

This prayer is for those who find themselves resourceless against the power of this age, and then are remarkably released for new life.

Psalm 34 affirms that release to new life and new orientation is not just “freedom from.” It is also “freedom for.” The newly oriented we find after rescue must lead us to develop forms of behavior which sustain the gift of new possibility. If such steps are not done intentionally, very soon the recently poor and afflicted will be back in the old context of hopelessness.

On the one hand, the righteous are given well-being by God (vv. 1-7). That is, they are special objects of God’s intervention and know themselves to be recipients. That is why they are thankful. On the other hand, the righteous are responsible for shaping life (vv. 8-14). They know themselves to be summoned to take initiative in reordering social existence.

The righteous have discovered something remarkable and subversive about God. God’s peculiar inclinations are with the brokenhearted and the ones with crushed spirit. That is, God’s solidarity is not with the ones who go from success to success, but the ones denied success.

Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 133-135.



PRAYER LIST (08/08/21)

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 June Hoff and Dave Larkin.
- Luca, Amy's nephew, who's working with a new pediatrician who's helping him and his family
- 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 Lorna Turk, Russell's cousin's wife, who passed away this week,
- For the woman and her daughter who Jill met who were looking for a place to stay that night,
- For the Friends and Family of Betty, Donna's aunt, who passed away this week,
- For Robert, Candy's cousin, who was helping a woman who had run out of gas on the side of the road and was hit by another car. He hasn't regained consciousness since the accident.
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning¹

Loving God, as I break the fast of evening rest give me an appetite for your good gifts. Let my hunger be satisfied with the nourishing bread of life you offer in Jesus Christ, that I may receive strength for the journey this day holds. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Lord Christ, you are the bread that has sustained me. Let me rest in peace, trusting that the grace you have given me for this day will be renewed like manna in the wilderness, nourishment for the challenge of tomorrow and confirmation of the promise of eternal life. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What do you hunger for in life? Do you hunger only for things you truly need, or do you hunger for things you want but which may not be good for you or for those around you?

Daily Awareness Reflection²

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 ...

¹ 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.

² 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 +/-
July	\$46,712	\$48,793	(\$2,081)

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

Rev. Cath's knee surgery is scheduled for August 26:

Hopefully this time, we'll get it done. With six weeks of recovery, I should be back in the pulpit on October 16th. I'd appreciate everyone's prayers that the operation is successful!

Reaching Out with Outreach

Outreach has been busy so far this year. We collected items to benefit Marguerite's Place, Bridges & Harbor Cares for their veterans transitional facility in Nashua.

We were able to donate in total 7,955 items consisting of diapers, wipes, paper goods, cleaning supplies, bedding & gift cards to these organizations!!

We could not have done this without the generosity of our congregation, Brookline and Hollis communities and the advertising efforts of Megan & Candy.

If you are looking for organizations to donate to over the summer please check out the websites for The Brookline Food Pantry, Share in Milford and the Nashua Soup Kitchen for their wish lists.

As non-profit organizations are starting to open up again so are opportunities for volunteer and paid positions. If you are interested or have some time please consider checking out one of the organizations Outreach supports or contact an organization that interests you.

Visiting Angels of Nashua is looking for In-home Care Aides. Please see flyer attached with more information and how to contact them.

Please feel free to contact Amy Razzaboni at arazz3914@gmail.com or speak with any member of the Outreach Board with any questions or to get more information about our Outreach Organizations and other local non-profits.

What Community Events/Fundraisers Would Share the Spirit?

With the easing of Covid restrictions, we can start to think about events and fundraisers that would share our sense of the Holy Spirit's presence in our daily lives. We have plenty of willing hands, but we need some folks to get us running in the same direction. Breakfast Buffets? Spaghetti Supper for the Ghost Train Trail Race? Christmas Faire? Something we haven't thought of yet?

If you have ideas, speak to Rev. Cath, Ann Desrochers or anyone on the Cabinet!

Making Music with the Band!

The band is beginning to rehearse again. So they'd welcome singers and instrumentalists of any level to join in making a joyful noise before the Lord. Speak to Sanjay (scherian@charter.net) if you're interested.

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.

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.](#)

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