



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: [Now Let Us From This Table Rise by Highland Baptist Church Kitchener](#)

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

Centering Ourselves for Worship, Psalm 34:9-14:

Leader: O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,
for those who fear him have no want.

**All: The young lions suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.**

Leader: Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
Which of you desires life,
and covets many days to enjoy good?

**All: Keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.**

Leader: Depart from evil, and do good;
All: seek peace, and pursue it.

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

What would heavenly bread be?

Hymn: *Psalm 34:11-14* by Seeds Family Worship

[[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:¹

Loving God, you are

Bread of Life,

The Door,

The Way,

The Truth,

The Word.

You are ours and we are yours.

You call us and claim us, love us and lead us.

You have fed us in our times of joy,

Opened the door to new opportunities that added sparkle to our lives,

We pray for those lifted up with joy,

For Armando's 29th birthday (again)

For Kelly's, Linda & Bob's daughter's, 29th birthday (again)

For Susan's safe return from a long roadtrip with her daughter and the grandkids that ended at their home in Florida,

For George Razzaboni's continuing recovery from a kidney stone

For all the school supplies we gathered to give the SHARE so local kids will start the school year with what they need (over 1,100 items!)

For Eric and PR, Barbara's sons-in-law, who both had birthdays

Loving God, always be the bread of life, the Door for us.

You have offered us the Way, the Truth, the Word,

When we were weighed down with concerns,

And it helped to know that we were not alone.

We prayer for those weighed down with concerns,

For Cassie, Amy's mom, who is home from an overnight stay in the hospital

Loving God, always be the Way, the Truth, the Word for us.

¹ Today's Prayer of Joys & Concerns was inspired by Rev. Leigh Goodrich, Faith United Methodist Church, South Burlington, VT in the UMC Daily Prayer from August 8, 2021.

When we continue to complain:
The bread is stale,
The door is stuck
The way is weedy,
The truth, unclear,
The word, a mystery.
Clear our minds,
Purify our hearts,
Remove the weeds,
Give us eyes to see the unclear,
And minds to comprehend the mystery,
That we too might be taught by God,
And led by the Spirit,
As we eat the bread of eternal life that is Christ,
Amen.

Let us pray the Lord's Prayer together:

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 (857) 259-7269.]

Hymn: *I am the Bread of Life* by Steve Angrisano

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

Scripture Reading: John 6:51-58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.'

Reflection on the Scripture: How metaphorical is it?

We have an image of the sacrament of communion. We tell ourselves *it is freely given for our spiritual nourishment*. When I offer the sacrament in the church, we wheel out a table that has “Do this in remembrance of me” carved into the front of it. I often say, “On the night on which our Lord was betrayed, he took bread and after giving thanks broke it saying, ‘This is my body which is broken for you. Take, eat, in remembrance of me.’” And then I say, “In the same manner also he took a cup saying, ‘This is the new covenant in my blood. Drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again.’” When I do I’m pulling together a collection of quotes from Matthew, Mark and Luke.

I like those words. They are ancient. They are modern. They invite me to remember and to connect myself to something that happened thousands of years ago and something that is happening today. I can connect with them in church and I can connect with them at home, especially when I share a meal with my family and we say grace, remembering where our meal comes from.

Do I think that I am eating a human body and drinking human blood? I don’t. I think that the bread and the juice stand in for Jesus’ body and Jesus’ blood. Just like they did at the Last Supper. I think it’s a miracle that I get invited to God’s table at all. I don’t really need something to happen to bread and the wine to make me realize that the moment is very special.

This ritual that we follow as a church feeds me, satisfies me, wakes me up to the presence of God in the world. Jesus is the Bread of Life, The Door, The Way, The Truth, The Word. I know those are all metaphors, trying to get me to better understand Jesus, better incorporate Jesus in my life. Then I read today’s passage from John and I have to wonder if I’ve been taking it too lightly.

In John’s Gospel, Jesus talks about eating flesh and drinking blood (John 6:53). And the word he uses for “eating” is the crunching, grinding, spitting kind of eating you did when you mom told you to eat with your mouth closed. It’s the kind of eating that animals do.² And the word for flesh is living flesh, not dead meat.³ That doesn’t feel like a metaphor. That feels a bit too real, a bit too cinematic to be a metaphor. In today’s reading, Jesus says *Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me,*

² Robert Hoch, “Gospel: Commentary on John 6:51-58”, Working Preacher “Lectionary Commentaries for August 15, 2021, Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost”, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/?print-all=50240%2C50241%2C50242%2C50378%2C50244> (accessed 7 August 2021).

³ Jason M. Braaten, “Barley, Flesh, and Life: The Bread of Life Discourse and the Lord’s Supper.” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 78, no. 1-2 (2014): 72-73.

and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. (John 6:54-57).

If Jesus means it more literally than I usually take it, what changes? It means deciding what we *think* about the sacrament of communion is a lot less important. What we believe, what we intellectually agree with isn't the point. Jesus is making it clear that he intends to have all of us, body and soul. Jesus wants his truth to burrow deep within us, to consume us as we consume him, to flow through our veins, to be digested, to nourish every nook and cranny of our being. Jesus has come down from heaven with the intention of taking it all back on that last day. He wants all of us, and he want us to have all of him. Living forever is living a life where God is scandalously, intimately available to us.⁴ Remembering Jesus' death is a part of that. But it's only a part.

John's Gospel begins with that gorgeous prologue that includes *And the Word became flesh and lived among us* (John 1:14). "Flesh" here is the same word as Jesus is talking about eating in today's reading. The prologue also underlines *From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace* (John 1:16). Jesus came from heaven to give us abundant life, to join us together with him for that abundant life.⁵ Jesus came to abide with us and to have us abide with him, to abide in him

So maybe there is something more than just editing together some stories about Jesus that has John putting this account of eating and drinking after the Feeding of the Five Thousand. What does abundant life look like? It looks like no one in a huge crowd going hungry. You want to know who can offer abundant life? The guy who can feed 5,000 people with a couple of barley loaves and some fish. How does your life change when you realize that eternal life for Jesus starts today, on a hillside next to the Sea of Galilee, with a mob of people who asked specifically for the Bread of Life and were filled?

Jesus is explaining what happened with all those people and the bread and the fish. *Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them* (John 6:56). Yes, Jesus wants us to live forever. But that doesn't happen later. That's happening right here, right now. We don't have to remember it. Because Jesus abides with us and us in him, here, today. If that Bread of Life stuff is less about metaphor and more about metabolism, does that change what we're remembering, where we're abiding? It does for me.

⁴ William H. Willimon, "Proper 15, Homiletical Perspective, John 6:51-58" 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), 361.

⁵ Karoline Lewis, *John: Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentary*. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 95.

Hymn: *Abide with Me* by Audrey Assad

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

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens Lord, with me abide
When other helpers fail and comforts flee
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away
Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, o Lord, abide with me
Abide with me, abide with me

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given

Receive, O God, the fruits of our labor
and with these gifts accept the offering of our lives.
Unite us with Christ
that we may share in his ministry and glorify you. Amen.

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

(A riff on Psalm 34:11-14 for this week.)

Leader: As we head back out into the coming week, let's let go of the fear
that diminishes us,

**All: Because when we chose to follow Jesus' path, not even hungry
lions can keep us from all the good things God offers,**

Leader: We're invited to feast, we're invited to share in God's abundance,

**All: and all it takes is making sure that our words and actions match
our intentions.**

Leader: In the hustle and bustle of the coming week, the easy path will head
toward evil, and the bread will be the earthly kind,

**All: so we'll need to look for ways to pursue peace making, since it
may not be what we're expecting to see.**

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: Abide with Me by Matt Maher

[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 (08/15/21)

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 Cassie, Amy's mom, who is home from an overnight stay in the hospital
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

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.

Household Prayer: Morning⁶

Loving God, help me make the most of the time you give this day, to be wise in my decisions and careful in my actions. Let my life be a continual act of thanksgiving for your loving-kindness, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Loving God, if I have not lived wisely this day, show me my foolish ways. Fill me with the Spirit that I may know your will and live by your truth, for I long to be your faithful child and to abide eternally with Jesus Christ, your Son. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What does Jesus mean when he says his body is “true food” and his blood is “true drink” (John 6:55)?

Daily Awareness Reflection⁷

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 ...

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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!

Fire Department Chicken BBQ & Duck Race

Sat. Sept. 25, 5:00-7:00pm, \$13 for a half chicken, \$10 for a quarter chicken. Tickets [are available on-line](#).

Document Shredding at the Transfer Station on Sept. 18, 10:30am-Noon

3 sheets at a time at home? Pay by the ounce at Staples? Or let the nice folks from Millyard Bank who are sponsoring the event get rid of everything safely and quickly? I know which one I'm picking!

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