



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: [The Hope of Christmas \(instrumental\) by Andrew Poll Music](#)

Call To Worship¹

Leader: Youthful Jesus,
sitting among the teachers
asking and answering questions,
by your Spirit move us
to ask the deep question of faith,
that we may grow in the asking,
in your name. Amen.

Hymn: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus by Meredith Andrews

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):

Finding what we've lost

¹ Today's Call to Worship, Prayer of Joys & Concerns and Prayer to Send Us Back Out into the World are from Brian Wren, *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayer for Public Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

Hymn: Angels from the Realms of Glory/Emmanuel by Paul Baloche

(YiFan found so many wonderful hymns for this week, I thought I'd give us some extra music on the Sunday after Christmas!)

Pastoral Prayer:

Jesus of Nazareth, born among us,
crucified and risen,
we remember with gratitude,
the parents who raised you,
and the faith in which you lived and died:
Jesus, faithful Jew, we praise you.

Going with your family to Jerusalem,
standing in the Temple courtyard,
hearing the chanting of psalms,
smelling the smoke of sacrifice:
Jesus, faithful Jew, we praise you.

Schooled in the practice of your faith,
knowing from an early age,
that God is Holy, Unique and One,
and that you belonged by birth,
to God's own chosen people:
Jesus, faithful Jew, we praise you.

Sharing in the Passover meal,
hearing and telling the story
of slavery, deliverance, and covenant;
learning to love Adonai God
with heart and would and mind and strength
and your neighbor as yourself:
Jesus, faithful Jew, we praise you.

Puzzling your parents
By speaking of God's holy Temple
As your Father's house,
And honoring your father and mother
By accepting their loving authority
As you grew in wisdom and years:
Jesus, faithful Jew, we praise you.

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.]

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.

Hymn: *Christmas Melody* by Chris Tomlin

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:41-52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

Reflection on the Scripture:

I lost a kid once. We were on the beach in front of the apartment building where my sister's family lived in Hong Kong. It was the Mid-Autumn Festival, where people celebrate the harvest, gathering together as a family for the harvest, and offer prayers for future abundance. We were on the beach at night with approximately a million kids and families. The kids had those skinny glowsticks that you can connect together to make necklaces or bracelets. My sister warned the kids and I that we had to pay attention and not get separated because it would be really hard to find each other in the dark. Anna was in second grade and Ben was in kindergarten. There were a million people and Anna got about six feet away and we lost her. For all of five minutes. For the longest five minutes in my life.

And when we were back together, we wanted to shake her and yell at her and hug her tight and handcuff both kids to us. And every parent who's ever misplaced a kid knows that feeling. We can all connect with Mary in this story. But we connect with her as if Jesus were our kid. And Jesus isn't our kid. Jesus

is the Son of God. The story ends by saying that *Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor* (Luke 2:52). Jesus' human nature allowed him to grow and learn. So let's see what we notice in this story when we stop seeing Jesus as our kid.

Mary doesn't see Jesus growing up. We are still carrying an image of Jesus as that cute baby in Bethlehem. And we're hesitant to let him grow into the full-grown man he will become, who will challenge our expectations and our own sense of ourselves. Instead of following Jesus out into the world, we want to keep him close to us so we don't have to change the way we live our lives.²

We search for Jesus even though we know where he is: he is in his Father's house, working on his Father's business. We search for Jesus because we want him to fulfill our expectations. But we're not going to find him in sentiment for the ways things used to be or the way we wish things could be. Jesus is making plain the way to God, even if that means our expectations have to change or even be shattered.

And maybe it's good news for us in this week after Christmas that our search has ended. But our search doesn't end where we expect. Mary and Joseph searched for three days and found him alive and well. But they didn't find him where they expected, with the extended family or in the pilgrims' caravan. They found him alive and well in the Temple in Jerusalem among the teachers of the law.

In this story from Jesus' young life, before he has formally entered into his ministry, we see the signs of Easter. Jesus is found in the Temple among the teachers of the law, the very company where it all ends as Jesus is tried, convicted and handed over to be killed. And yes, after three days, Jesus is raised and we are all born to new life. It is a new and meaningful life, the life God intends, but not the life we expect. Easter is with us through our entire journey with Jesus. Easter is where we are heading and to get there we will have to go through Good Friday. The more we pretend that isn't the case, the more we search for Jesus in the wrong place.

This one story, of Jesus as a twelve-year-old boy, helps us to see how often we want Jesus meet our expectations. We want him to be fully human and just like us and our own kids. We want him to be fully divine, and nothing like us and our own kids. In this story we see Jesus as both. He is human, growing in knowledge. He is human, going home with his parents to Nazareth and being fully obedient. But the human and divine are not mutually exclusive. The divine

² The bulk of this argument comes from Craig A. Satterlee, "Gospel: Commentary on Luke 2:41-52", Working Preacher "Lectionary Commentaries for December 30, 2012, First Sunday of Christmas", <https://www.workingpreacher.org/?print-all=33020%2C33024%2C33021%2C33022> (accessed 1 November 2021).

completes but does not obliterate, human nature in all its fullness and complexity.³

On that beach in Hong Kong, I made an assumption about my ability not lose a three-foot human weighed down with light sticks in less than twenty square feet of beach. I will never forget what it felt like to realize my assumptions were wrong. Too often we make assumptions about Jesus that lead us to look for him in all sorts of places where he's not because we prefer to hold onto our assumptions rather than to him. But we don't often experience the horror of realizing we made the wrong call. Perhaps by revisiting the story of the boy Jesus, we'll be able to find him more easily the next time we go looking.

Hymn: [Joy Unto the World by The Afters](#)

[Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts We've Been Given:](#)

Loving God:

We give you thanks for Jesus Christ,
the Word made flesh.

Receive the gifts we offer in union with Christ's gift for us.

Clothe us with compassion, kindness, humility,
meekness, and patience,

that we may be Christ for others.

In his name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: [When Hope Was Born by VOUS Worship](#)

³ William J. Danaher, Jr., "First Sunday after Christmas Day, Theological Perspective, Luke 2:41-52" in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C, Volume 1*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 168.

A Prayer to Send us Back Out into the World

Leader: Christ, alive among us,
as we draw near to you,
and embrace, bump, and bruise one another,
rule us with your peace
so that, clothed in love,
we may bear with one another,
forgive as we have been forgiven,
and be thankful
in your name. 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.”**

Postlude: Make Room by Casting Crowns featuring Matt Maher

Here ends our worship, now let our service begin.



PRAYER LIST (12/26/21)

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, Dave Larkin, Braedon O'Connor and Elly Austin.
- 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 Patty, Sue Laub's sister, who is in hospice after four years of cancer treatment
- For Clarence Farwell, now at home, still recovering from a stroke
- For Gary Levesque, Cindy's in-law, who courageously got himself with a broken knee from the backyard where he fell off a ladder to the front yard where folks could help him
- For Rachel, Sanjay's niece, back in the U.S., going through multiple diagnostic tests to find the source of the pain,
- For the friends and family of Doug, Donna's in-law, who passed away from cancer
- For Cindy, Candy's mom, struggling with the vertigo of Meniere's disease
- For Judith Atherton, wife of a former pastor of this church, recovering from cardiac surgery
- For those waiting for medical results
- For those suffering from addiction
- For those who have no one to pray for them, accept our prayers
- Individuals serving in our military & their families

Household Prayer: Morning⁴

Lord Jesus, as you listened to your teachers, may I also, this day, listen to others with care and grace, and receive whatever wisdom they may offer. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Loving God, you know every struggle I have faced this day: let me sleep in peace, confident in your great love in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

Consider Jesus as an adolescent, causing his parents to worry about him. Jesus asks his parents, “Why were you searching for me?” If you were a parent of Jesus, how would you answer that question? How do you answer that question for yourself?

Daily Awareness Reflection⁵

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 ...

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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 +/-
November	\$87,251	\$82,800	\$4,451

Please shop smile.amazon.com and choose Brookline Community Church as your charity to support the church. Thanks!

There are several ways to send your offering.

1. Text "GIVE" to 603-506-4455 for your first time. Click "Sign In" then "Register for an Account"

2. Scan the QR code



3. Mail to: Brookline Community Church, PO Box 507, Brookline, NH 03033.

Boy Scout Troop 260 Collecting Trees Door to Door 12/30 & 1/8

For a \$10 suggested donation, you can have your tree taken care of once you've enjoyed it for the holidays. Email brooklinetroop260@gmail.com or call (603) 235-1263. [More details.](#)

2022 Calendars on Sale from the Historical Society!

The Brookline Historical Society is selling 2022 Calendars for \$20 at the Library and the Hollis Pharmacy. Email info@brooklinehistory.org for more details.

Undecorate the Sanctuary on January 9th

If you can spare a bit of time after worship on January 9th, the Deacons would appreciate the help undecorating the sanctuary.

The Church is Looking for Someone to Plow

We're grateful for the many years the Farwells have plowed the church's driveway. But that era is coming to an end. If you have someone who might be a good candidate for the job, please email Susan Haight (sdlhaight@gmail.com).

SHARE-ing the Christmas Spirit with Outreach

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.

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.

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

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:

Spam	Coffee
Juice and juice boxes	Pet food
Canned carrots	Detergent
Rice or noodle sides	

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.