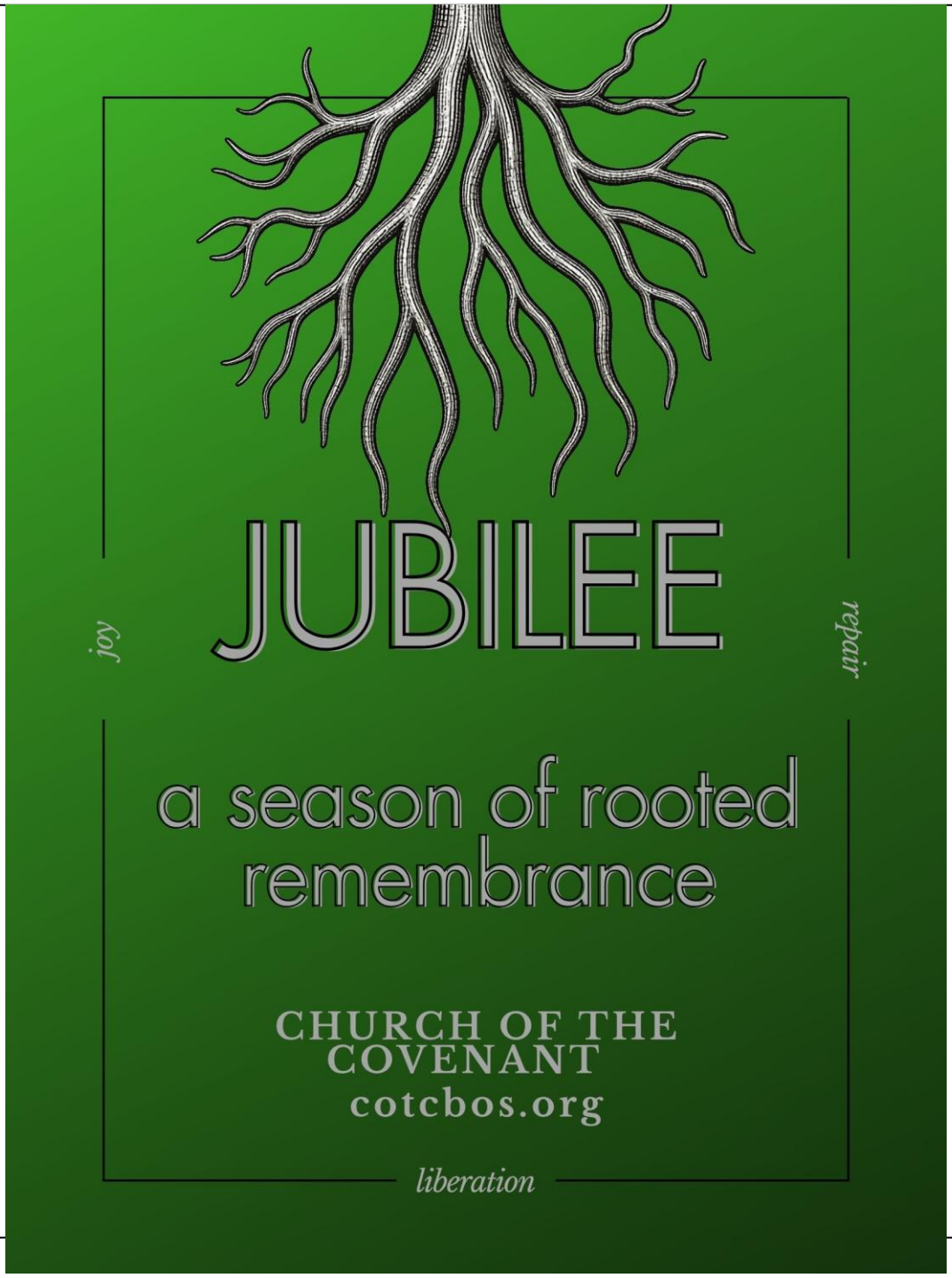
Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



World Communion Sunday
All-Ages Service
October 4, 2026

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

Church of the Covenant
Season of Jubilee
World Communion Sunday

October 4, 2026, 10:30 am Zoom Link

Welcome and thank you for worshipping together for this "hybrid" service where some will be in the sanctuary at 67 Newbury Street, and some in the sanctuary of places far and near. For those joining online, we begin on Zoom at the above link. Please keep your mic muted during the service.

If you would like a prayer of Celebration or Concern to be prayed aloud today, please take a moment at any time to write it into the Red Book at the back of the sanctuary. For those online, you will be invited to place a prayer in the chat. We will not be passing the mic during Celebrations & Concerns today.
**You are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude *Allegro from Trio Sonata #5* J. S. Bach

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.
Many: And also with you.

Experiencing God

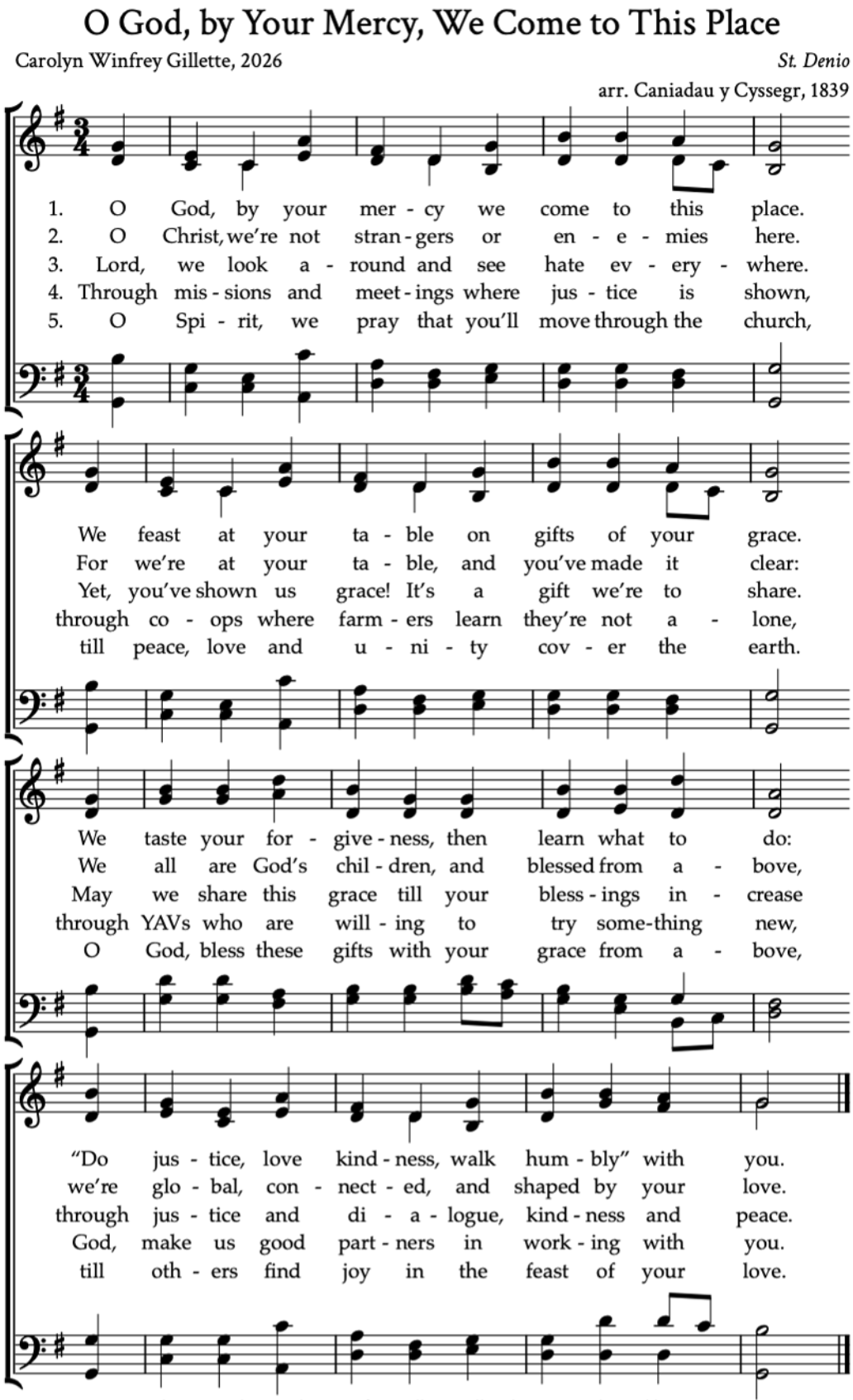
*** Call to Worship**

One: We come seeking peace, in our hearts and minds and for the whole world.
Many: But we wonder if peace is possible.
One: All people need a home, a place without war or violence.
Many: We hope that peace is possible.
One: All people need a community without hatred or cruelty or injustice.
Many: We need peace to be possible.
One: All creatures need a world that is healthy and whole.
Many: And we believe that peace is possible.

*** Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ,
Many: Thanks be to God!

* Opening Hymn



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Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com | New Hymns: www.carolynshymns.com

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: **Help us, O God. Many people in our world are suffering. There is enough for everyone but sometimes we do not share. You teach us to tell the truth but sometimes we tell lies instead. You tell us to love our neighbors, here and in every place, but we pretend our neighbors are strangers to us. Fill us with love like Jesus. Give us peace and make us peacemakers. Give us courage to share and to tell the truth. Help us to be who you created us to be, in family with people around the world, in family with all of creation.**

One: Let us open ourselves to God now in silent prayer…

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Beloved, this is a season of jubilee! God's love for us is bigger and stronger than our minds can hold. God helps us imagine and take action to make the world a better place. Let us celebrate together:

Many: **In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole. Alleluia, Amen!**

*** Sung Response** NCH (black) 236 *Halle, Halle, Halle*

Readings from Scripture

Hebrew Bible Reading – Micah 6:6-8

"With what shall I come before the Holy One
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before God with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
Will the Holy One be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
God has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the Holy One require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

One: God is still speaking, the word of God,
Many: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response NCH (black) 236 *Halle, Halle, Halle*

Prayer Stations

Music during Prayer Stations
Andante and Adagio from Trio Sonatas #4 and #1 J. S. Bach

Moment for Mission – World Communion Sunday Special Offerings
Neighbors in Need (UCC) and World Communion Offering (PCUSA)

Call to Offering
Online Giving Option: http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html
Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General. For World Communion Offering, choose "Peacemaking Offering."

Offertory *Imagine* John Lennon

*** Communion Doxology** Tune: *Old Hundredth*
Though what we have in truth is small,
God's grace shall be enough for all.
So as we bless and break this bread,
Each heart be filled, each mouth be fed.

*** Prayer of Dedication**

Celebrations & Concerns
One: God, in your grace,
Many: Receive our prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation

*** Communion Hymn** *I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table*

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.

*** The Great Thanksgiving**

One: May God be with you!
Many: And also with you.
One: People of Jubilee, let us lift up our hearts!
Many: We open our hearts to the Spirit who fills us with hope.
One: Let us give thanks to God, our light.
Many: It is right for us to offer our thanks and praise to the Holy One.
One: It is right for us to thank and praise you, God…
…And so, with your people here on earth, with all the ancestors, and all the saints and the great company of heaven, we glorify your name, praising you together:
Many: Holy, holy, holy One, God of heaven and earth. All creation is full of your love and grace. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace. Hosanna in the highest!
One: Holy are you, O God…

*** The Prayer of Jesus**

Our God, in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

Communion Meditation *Let Us Break Bread Together* arr. John G. Barr

Post Communion Prayer

*** Closing Hymn** PH (blue) 514 *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*

Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy:
Bread is broken, the wine is poured, Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Refrain:
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
Pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one, at the table He sets the tone,
Teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express. *Refrain*

Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere! *Refrain*

*** Charge & Benediction**

*** Exchange of the Peace**

(Please exchange greetings of Christ's peace and reconciliation)

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: And also with you.

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Worship Participants

Worship Leaders – CYCE Families and Teachers, Rev. Kate Carlisle, Rev. Rob Mark
Minister of Music – Thomas Handel
Moment for Mission – Christine James
Covenant Choir
Vocal Soloist – Kathryn Barry
Communion Servers – Mocky Day, Karen Henry, Debbie Howland, Byron Sipe
Usher – Trudi Veldman
Digital Minister – Sandra May
Audio Visual Tech Team
Sexton – Jesús Vargas

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE COVENANT! We are so glad to have you worshipping with us today! If you are new to our community, we hope you will feel at home and welcome during this service. If you have any questions about who we are as a community of faith, please reach out to an usher in person or our Digital Minister in the chat.

WORLD COMMUNION OFFERING TODAY! The first Sunday of October is **World Communion Sunday**, celebrating "the oneness of the family of God" as believers from many traditions share in the Lord's Supper together. In the US, the roots of this observance in the Presbyterian Church date from 1930s; today, it is celebrated across the globe. The PC(USA) **World Communion Offering** supports the denomination's mission to cultivate reconciliation, advance racial and gender justice, and promote peacemaking, global witness, and ecumenical/interfaith relations. It is rooted in the belief that the "Table of the Lord" is a place where all peoples are reconciled, and that peacemaking is a central part of the church's witness. Through its **Neighbors in Need** offering, our other denomination, the United Church of Christ, asks for gifts in support of justice and compassion ministries in the US, with one-third going to the Council for American Indian Ministries and two-thirds to other UCC justice ministries. The UCC invites us to carry the spirit of World Communion Sunday from today through Election Day on November 3. Over this period, we are asked to deepen our connection with our global neighbors and consider how our faith calls us to help build a more just, peaceful, and hopeful world. Please give generously in support of the work of this church and churches around the US and the globe that are working for peace, justice and a hopeful future for all. In person, you will find an envelope in this bulletin. For online contributions, you can use Covenant's Giving page on the website: *http://www.cotcbos.org/give*, and choose the Peacemaking Offering.

WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!! We celebrate World Communion Sunday today with an intergenerational All-Ages worship. Children and youth of all ages are encouraged to take part in as much of worship as you'd like. We have a nursery space open downstairs and families are welcome to come and go as feels comfortable. Most weeks, children from age 3½ through early elementary are invited to Godly Play classes. If you need help finding us, please ask an usher. We also offer youth classes and other activities for all ages. We share CYCE info regularly via email, so please email Rev. Kate at *kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org* if you want to receive updates.

UPCOMING SUNDAY WORSHIP. Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am and during special services listed below as we come together in community to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed in these hybrid (in-person and Zoom) services.

- October 11: Rev. Dr. Sara Garrard preaching, Voting Rights Spiritual Education Session After Worship
- October 18: Rev. Kate Carlisle preaching, Life Alive Apple Picking After Worship
- October 25: ZOOM-ONLY WORSHIP SERVICE AT 5:00 PM (no regular Sunday morning worship)

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT: TIME TO REGISTER! The all-church retreat will be held on **Saturday, October 24**, back at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham. The registration deadline is next Sunday, October 11, at 11:59 pm. Register at: *https://tinyurl.com/cotcretreat2026*.

LIFE ALIVE BIBLE STUDY & APPLE PICKING & BRUNCHES. Life Alive has a few activities of note in October: on **Saturday, October 10, at 12:00 noon**, Life Alive will meet for Bible study in Williams Library, and after worship on **Sunday, October 18**, they will have their annual apple-picking outing (instead of brunch). Life Alive is a small group for adults navigating career, family, and life transitions. If you want to join or have questions, see or email Rev. Sara at *sara.garrard@cotcbos.org*. Brunches will be held on **November 15 and December 20**.

VOTING RIGHTS SPIRITUAL EDUCATION SESSION ON OCTOBER 11. Last term, the Supreme Court drastically changed the Voting Rights Act and how states are allowed to draw their districts. These changes will affect elections going forward! Please join Kathryn Barry on **October 11** after worship for a review of the case and a discussion on where we go from here.

COVENANT CONNECTIONS. Are you in college? Just moved to the Boston area for grad school? Are you early in your career and looking for a spiritual home? Covenant Connections is a small group for those looking for a spiritual community to discern what God has next for them through Bible studies and connecting over meals. If you want to know more, email Rev. Sara at *sara.garrard@cotcbos.org*.

BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS. Our Bible Study gathers at **9:45 on Wednesday mornings on Zoom**. With the beginning of Fall, we turn to the Psalms to explore the many ways these songs express both the rage and despair we often feel and the joy and thanksgiving we experience. If you are interested in joining, email Jack Ammerman at *jwacooks@gmail.com* for more information and the weekly Zoom link.

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS 6:00-6:30 pm. Join us for our weekly Wednesday evening prayers with intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms, and sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian on Zoom (link also on *http://www.cotcbos.org*).

VIDEO CAMERAS/POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS. To best serve our diverse community and new worshippers, we livestream and record each service, including Celebrations & Concerns. If you would prefer not to be in occasional camera shots, you are welcome to sit on the outside aisles on either side of the sanctuary. Recordings of each service are available on our Worship Recordings Page (*cotcbos.org/worship-recordings*).

WEEKLY CALENDAR. Click here (cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) to view the weekly calendar of events.

HYMNS STREAMED with permission under One License #A-741135.

Holy Spirit, the life that gives life:
You are the cause of all movement.
You are the breath of all creatures.
You are the salve that purifies our souls.
You are the ointment that heals our wounds.
You are the fire that warms our hearts.
You are the light that guides our feet.
Let all the world praise you.

Saint Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Visitor or Newcomer? Welcome to Church of the Covenant!

We are glad you are here. Please let us know if there are ways we can help you connect to the church community. Learn more about the church by visiting our website at www.cotcbos.org. To sign up for email updates about worship services and other events in our community, please fill out a visitor's card in your pew, or email us at info@cotcbos.org.

Parking Bargain – Worshippers may park at the Back Bay Garage [Clarendon Street, between Boylston and St. James] on Sundays between 6:00 am and 9:00 pm for the first three (3) hours for only $5. To get this discounted rate, please ask an Usher before or after the worship service for a parking discount sticker.

Prayers of Celebration or Concern May Be Shared in the Red Book – At the rear of the Sanctuary is a red book where prayers that you wish to have spoken aloud during the Pastoral Prayer time may be written. The book will be available until the time of the offering.

Time of Greeting – After worship this morning, we hope that you will take a few minutes to connect with others worshipping with you, especially people you may not know as well.

Hearing Assisted Devices – Speak with an usher if you would like to use these devices that work with or without a hearing aid. These devices are specifically designed to work only with our sound system. Please remember to return the device at the close of the service. Thank you!

Building Accessibility – Our building includes an exterior ramp on Newbury Street and an elevator (in the Parish House part of the building) which allows access to the fellowship hall, meeting rooms, offices, and other parts of the building. We also have accessible restrooms. Please ask an usher to help you locate these resources.

NEW TO COTC? We are so glad you are here! Let us know a little bit about how we can welcome you by filling out the form at this QR code, and learn more on our website at *cotcbos.org*. Note that your information goes only to our pastors and you will not be added to any email lists.

Church of the Covenant is focused on following Jesus in our world through accompaniment, compassion, peace, joy and creative beauty.
We are passionate about hospitality, committed to justice, and wild about faith.
We embrace an embodied spirituality that is not afraid of questions.
We advocate for a just climate for our earth, liberation in our world, and equality in our neighborhoods.
We are a community where ALL are welcome and celebrated as beautiful reflections of God– all genders, all faiths, all orientations, all backgrounds, all abilities, all ages, all struggles, and all hopes. Come journey with us!

Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

67 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116 | (617) 266-7480 | www.cotcbos.org

Worship at Church of the Covenant is the heart and soul of our life together as a community of faith. Since 1932 we have been a federated church, maintaining membership in the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA) and welcoming pilgrims from all traditions to our life and work. Through our prayer and praise, in our concerns and celebrations, by word and sacrament, art and silence, we seek empowerment, together and individually, as a covenant people, for the work of Christ.

Jesus taught that the Spirit invites all people, including society's marginalized, to enjoy seats at God's table. This congregation seeks to demonstrate that vision by welcoming individuals and families without regard to race, gender identity, age, physical/mental condition, or sexual orientation. We rejoice in the presence of children among us as integral to our community. We maintain vital ties of faith with the Church of the Poor in the community of the Sweet Name of Jesus, in Northwestern Nicaragua.

We believe God's blessings are found in marriage equality for all. Thus, we joyfully welcome the opportunity afforded us by our Commonwealth and both denominations to join couples of any sexual orientation in fully legal and holy marriage.

Covenant's sanctuary resides on the ancestral and unceded lands and waterways of the Massachusett people. We lament the pain of displacement, honor the ongoing work of repair, and give thanks for all past, present and future stewards of this sacred place.

In our worship we use language and imagery that reflect the wonderful diversity of the image of God in humanity and all of creation; that transcend the exclusive language of the church's past. And as stewards, we seek to live into the Spirit's blessing as we move in solidarity on this shared and sacred, common home we call earth. We invite you to join us in the journey toward God's justice and peace for all of Boston and beyond!

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Sara Garrard, *Transitional Associate Pastor*
Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*
Bill Brown, *Building Manager*
Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator*
Nancy Stockford, *Parish Administrator/Financial Secretary*
Jesús Vargas, *Sexton*
Venkatesh Balasubramanian, *Music Composition Fellow 2025-2026*
Soyoung Cho, *Childcare Provider*

CHURCH OFFICERS

Brian Bigler, *President of the Corporation*
Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*
Anita Gram, *Moderator of the Board of Deacons*
Faith Perry, *Treasurer*