

Church of the Covenant and Old South Church *in* Boston



April 21, 2013

10:30 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Easter



Prelude

Prayer

Olivier Messiaen

My fragrance and mildness, my peace and delight (St. Bonaventura)

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

*** Call To Worship: Psalm 46**

translation by Nan C. Merrill

Breathe (Left): God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

In Peace (Right): There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
God will help it when the morning dawns.
The nations may be at war, countries left in ruins,
Yet is the voice of the Almighty heard, slowly breaking through hearts of stone.
The Beloved is with us; the Infinite Heart of Love is our refuge.

Together: Come, behold the works of the Beloved;
How love does reign even in humanity's desolation.
For the Beloved makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
breaking the bow, and shattering the spear; and burning the shields with fire.
'Be still, and know that I am Love!
Awaken! Befriend justice and mercy;
Do you not know you bear my Love? Who among you will respond?
O Blessed One, You know all hearts, You are ever with us;
May Love ever guide our lives!

***Hymn NCH 476 (black)** My Life Flows On in Endless Song

My life flows on, in endless song, above earth's lamentation
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymns, that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing,
It finds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts die? My Savior still is living.
What though the shadows gather round? A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that Rock I'm clinging,
Since love commands both heaven & earth, how can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble sick with fear, and hear their death knells ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile our thoughts to them are winging,
When friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes, the clouds grow thin, I see the blue above it,
And day by day this pathway smooths, since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing,
All things are mine since I am Christ's, how can I keep from singing?

Lighting of the Christ Light

Prayer for God's Grace

Loving God, our world sometimes spins out of control. Bombs explode, the innocent suffer, and our hearts break. In the midst of the chaos, we grasp for answers and order. In these times of legitimate fear and uncertainty, we are in deep need of your grace. And so, Sweet Spirit, we ask for your liberation. Anchor us in your love and secure us in your peace, which surpasses all understanding. May we be reminded that in a Good Friday world, we are an Easter people, always rising again into the ways of hope, compassion and new life. Fill us now with the compassion of Jesus, as we open our hearts to you in silent prayer...

Shared Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Into the midst of a wounded, uncertain city, dogwoods and cherry trees flower. Into the midst of the chaos we do not understand, Christ

* You are invited to stand.

NCH = black New Century Hymnal; **PH** = blue Presbyterian Hymnal

comes. Into the midst of our locked down homes, churches and fearful hearts, Christ comes. Christ comes into every shadowed corner of our lives with the light of Easter. Christ comes, to fill us with peace, that we may breathe in peace, compassion and forgiveness. Let us celebrate:

All: In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole. Alleluia Amen!

*** Exchange of the Peace**

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

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

*** Sung Response**

Calvin Hampton

The congregation is invited to sing:



**Hebrew Bible Reading
Gospel Readings**

Psalms 74, 75, and 85 (selections)

Matthew 5:1-12 and John 3:8

One: This is the word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Meditation

Together, Breathe In Peace

***Hymn PH 394 (blue)**

There Is a Balm in Gilead

Chorus: There is a balm in Gilead, To make the wounded whole;
There is a balm in Gilead, To heal the sin-sick soul.

Call to Offering

Offertory

23rd Psalm

Bobby McFerrin

* Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

* Prayer of Dedication

Celebrations and Concerns

One: God, in your grace,
All: **Receive our prayer.**

Litany of Rising

Refrain: **As People of God, we rise up**

*Hymn PH 354 (blue) Guide My Feet

1. Guide my feet while I run this race (repeat 3 times)
For I don't want to run this race in vain!
2. Hold my hand while I run this race (repeat 3 times)...
3. Stand by me while I run this race (repeat 3 times)...
4. I'm Your child while I run this race (repeat 3 times)...
5. Search my heart while I run this race (repeat 3 times)...
6. Guide my feet while I run this race (repeat 3 times)...

*Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Amazing Grace arr. George Shearing
(please remain seated during the postlude)

Worship Participants: Rev. Dr. Nancy Taylor, Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. John Edgerton, Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, Minister and President and Rev. Wendy Vander Hart, Associate Conference Minister, MA Conference, United Church of Christ, Ministers of Music Tom Handel and Harry Huff, Shelly Rambo, Elsa Abele, Joan Tighe, and COTC & OS Ushers and Choirs

Today's Offering: Designated to One Fund Boston, a fund to help those most affected by 4-15-13. You may also give your regular offering to your respective church by designation.

"Music Heals – NEC Plays for Boston." A concert performed by New England Conservancy Students and Faculty, Sunday, April 28 – 2:00 PM – Church of the Covenant Sanctuary. Free Admission. Join us as we celebrate creation over destruction, beauty over terror, and healing over hurting. Our city has suffered a tragic event, but we are not helpless. As Leonard Bernstein told us, we have a voice. "This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before."

Thank you for joining us in worship. For more info about each congregation, please see:

www.cotcbos.org

www.oldsouth.org