

# Church of the Covenant

## Boston, MA



**The Second Sunday in Lent: EXAMINE**  
**March 1, 2026**

*Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ*



# Church of the Covenant

## The Second Sunday in Lent: EXAMINE

March 1, 2026, 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

---

Welcome and thank you for worshipping together for this “hybrid” service where some will be in Bates Hall 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.

*\*You are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

### Gathering Song

*Down by the Riverside*

I'm gonna lay down my burdens

Down by the riverside (x 3)

I'm gonna lay down my burdens

Down by the riverside study war no more

I ain't gonna study war no more / Ain't gonna study war no more (x2)

### Prelude

*Sonata Mexicana: Allegro moderato*

Manuel M. Ponce

### Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

### Experiencing God

#### \* An “Out There” Call to Worship

One: O Cosmic God of all that is and ever will be,

Many: **This Lent we long to follow and find you out there.**

One: Out there, beyond the walls of tradition, beyond the confines of state-sponsored hate,

Many: **Out there, beyond the comfort zones to seek you through new, sacred, equal exchanges.**

One: As we follow the call of Jesus through the wilderness,

Many: **May we stretch beyond convenience and habit to encounter new people, new ideas, and new life.**

One: For you call us the “called out ones,”

Many: **Help us go out in joy and be led forth in peace as we worship you! Amen.**

**\* Kindling the Christ Light**

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

**\* Opening Hymn PH (blue) 313**

*Come Down, O Love Divine*

Come down, O Love divine, seek out this soul of mine  
And visit it with Your own ardor glowing;  
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,  
And kindle it, Your holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn  
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
And let Your glorious light shine ever on my sight,  
And clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

And so the yearning strong with which the soul will long  
Shall far outpass the power of human telling;  
For none can guess God's grace, till Love creates a place  
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

**Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace**

**Many: Love Divine, there is much in our world we don't love right now. The cruelty, the hate, the self-centered love of power over others, the abuse of neighbors and the earth. We lament all of this, and how so much of this collective hurt seeps inside of us. So we turn to you for restoration and hope. For we know through Jesus we all can find cleansing, healing, and renewal.**

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

**Listening to God in Silent Prayer**

## Assurance of God's Grace

One: People of God – Children of God – let us be reminded once again of the full and free, boundless and beautiful grace that flows to each of us from God. Grace that washes us clean from the all the hurt, all the pain, all the fear. Grace that liberates us and empowers us to move on into the ways of hope. Giving thanks for this amazing grace, let us celebrate together:

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

## \* Sung Response

(to the tune of *We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder*)

Called to love our God and neighbor (x3)

This is how we live.

## Readings from Scripture

**New Testament Reading** – 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29, 33

For I received from Jesus what I also handed on to you, that Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my life-flow. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim Jesus' death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of Jesus in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and life-flow of Jesus. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body eat and drink judgment against themselves.

So then, my siblings, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

**Gospel Reading** – John 4:3-30, 39-42

Jesus left Judea, and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of

Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestors Jacob and Rachel, who gave us the well, and with their children and their flocks who drank from it?” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.” Jesus said to her, “Go, call your spouse, and come back.” The woman answered him, “I have no spouse.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no spouse,’ for you have had five spouses, and the one you have now is not your spouse. What you have said is true!” The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Dear woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship God neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship God in spirit and truth, for God seeks such as these to be worshipped by. God is spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am, the one who is speaking to you.” Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see someone who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” They left the city and were on their way to him. Many Samaritans from that city believed in Jesus because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

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

**Sung Response** (to the tune of *We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder*)  
Called to love our God and neighbor (x3)  
This is how we live.

**Sermon** "Do Your Research!"

**Call to Offering**

Online Giving Option: <http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>  
*Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General.*

**Offertory**

*Harbour*

Anna Tabbush

"For our door is always open,  
And our hearth is always warm,  
When you need a place to shelter,  
We're a harbour in the storm."

**\* 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 to the Table

### \* 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 Out There, 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 God.**

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

(in unison)

**Our Mother, who is in heaven and within us,  
We call upon your names. Your wisdom come. Your will be done,  
In all the spaces in which You dwell.**

**Give us each day, sustenance and perseverance.**

**Remind us of our limits as we give grace to the limits of others.**

**Separate us from the temptation of empire, but deliver us into  
community.**

**For you are the dwelling place within us, the empowerment around us,  
and the celebration among us now and forever. Amen.**

*~San Francisco's Grace Episcopal Cathedral Womanist Lord's Prayer*

# Breaking of the Bread

## Sharing of the Bread & Cup

## Post Communion Prayer

### \* Closing Hymn

*God, You Love the World!*



1. God, you love the world! You sent your on - ly Son, \_\_\_  
2. By your Spir - it, some build hous - es, safe and strong, \_\_\_  
3. Teach us that in lov - ing, we must lis - ten well. \_\_\_



and you said, "Go share my love with ev - ery - one." \_\_\_  
Some are called to share your Word in prayer and song. \_\_\_  
Help us hear the stor - ies oth - ers have to tell. \_\_\_



So we seek to serve you in our homes and towns, \_\_\_  
Some are called to heal the sick and fight dis - ease, \_\_\_  
Help us learn from oth - er peo - ple and their ways. \_\_\_



And we work to show the world: Your love a - bounds! \_\_\_  
Some are called to save the land by plant - ing trees. \_\_\_  
May we be u - ni - ted as we of - fer praise. \_\_\_



Lead us, \_\_\_ as we go this day; \_\_\_ Guide us \_\_\_ as we work and pray. \_\_\_



Give us, \_\_\_ when each day is through, \_\_\_ True joy, \_\_\_ found in serv-ing you. \_\_\_

**\* Charge and 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.**

~~~~~//~~~~~

**Worship Participants**

**Preacher** – Rev. Rob Mark

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Liturgist** – Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard

**Lector** – Barbara Darling

**Covenant Choir**

**Guitar** – Xinyi Yang

**Violin** – Anita Gram

**Communion Servers** – Sally Pomeroy, Mocky Day

**Ushers** – Linda Pursley, Trisha Thompson

**Digital Minister** – Diane Lauber

**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.

**WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!!** Welcome to all children, youth, and families—those we know already and those who are here for the first time. We offer Christian education through Godly Play for ages 3-9, youth classes for ages 10-13 and 14+, and a nursery for the littlest ones. If you need help finding us, please ask an usher. We share CYCE info regularly via email, so please email Rev. Kate at [kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org](mailto:kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org) if you want to receive updates.

**COVER ART.** “Living Water,” by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman, A Sanctified Art. Inspired by John 4:5-42. *Digital painting.*

**THE SEASON OF LENT.** Join us this Lenten season as we engage the theme: “Out There: Close Encounters of the Human Kind—following Jesus through sacred eXchange.” See brochure and church website for more information.

**UPCOMING SUNDAY WORSHIP.** Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am 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 on Zoom) services.

- March 8: Third Sunday in Lent, Nicaragua Companions Service, Celebration of the Word, Guest Musician Meachum Clarke, Sacred Reckonings Spiritual Education After Worship
- March 15: Fourth Sunday in Lent, Guest Preacher Dr. Daniel Montañez, Life Alive Brunch After Worship
- March 20 (Friday): Spring Equinox Outdoor Eco-Evensong, Arthur Fiedler Dock, 6:30 pm
- March 22: Worship in the Streets with Boston’s Winter Walk
- March 29: Palm Sunday, All-Ages Service

**STAFF AWAY.** Bill will be away March 3-10 – Rev. Rob and Nancy will be covering.

**WORSHIP IN BATES HALL.** Due to our sanctuary getting roof repairs, we will hold in-person worship downstairs in Bates Hall until Holy Week, at the earliest. Questions? Contact our Building Committee.

**FANEUIL HALL NAME-CHANGE COMMUNITY-LED MEETING.** The New Democracy Coalition is holding a rescheduled community meeting on **Saturday, March 14, at 2:00 pm**, at the Grove Hall Public Library. The Boston City Council has voted to change the name of Faneuil Hall. This meeting will give community members one minute each to offer name suggestions. Please join this public process.

**WORSHIP IN THE STREETS: BOSTON'S WINTER WALK.** The Winter Walk has been postponed to **Sunday, March 22**, when we will once again take our worship to the streets by joining the 10th annual Boston Winter Walk, walking two miles in shoulder-to-shoulder solidarity with those experiencing homelessness in our city, and re-committing ourselves to the prayerful work of housing justice. There will be three options: to join the walk in person; to join the walk virtually on your own; or to join in a virtual “prayer walk” at home. To register, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/cotcbosnw2026register>. Scroll down to register under the Women’s Lunch Place. You can choose to fundraise for or pay the \$100 registration fee. Once you register, please join the Church of the Covenant team. Also, please RSVP to Covenant staff at <https://tinyurl.com/cotcwinterwalk2026>. If you have any trouble with registering, contact Nancy Stockford ([nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org](mailto:nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org)).

**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. Joshua at [joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).

**LIFE ALIVE BRUNCHES.** Every third Sunday, Life Alive meets immediately after church for monthly fellowship. 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. Joshua at [joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).

**BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS.** Bible Study meets weekly on Wednesday mornings at 9:45 on Zoom. The Wednesday morning Bible study is exploring the Gospel of Matthew. If you would like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders and Zoom details, contact Jack Ammerman at [jwacooks@gmail.com](mailto:jwacooks@gmail.com).

**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>).

**WEEKLY CALENDAR.** Click [here](http://cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) ([cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events](http://cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events)) to view the weekly calendar of events.

**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](http://cotcbos.org/worship-recordings) ([cotcbos.org/worship-recordings](http://cotcbos.org/worship-recordings)).

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

*You are the ones called out of  
the gloom into  
God's marvelous light.  
~1 Peter 2:9b*

For more info: [www.cotcbos.org](http://www.cotcbos.org)

Church of the Covenant  
Lent 2026

## OUT THERE

Close Encounters of the  
Human Kind.

Following Jesus through  
sacred eXchange.

# IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES WELCOME



See ICE? Call LUCE 617-370-5023

*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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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 Massachusetts 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. Joshua Lawrence Lazard, *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*