



# Church of the Covenant

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

**The Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
***Grotto: Reside & Resist***  
[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



# Church of the Covenant, Boston MA

April 3, 2022, 10:30 am

The Fifth Sunday in Lent / Grotto: Reside & Resist

[Zoom Link](#)

---

Welcome and thank you for worshipping together for this “hybrid” service where some will be in the sanctuary of their homes, and some in the sanctuary at 67 Newbury Street. For those joining online, we will plan to begin on Zoom. Service is recorded and later posted online.

**Prelude**

*Both Sides Now*

Joni Mitchell

## Welcome, *Breathe* & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

## \*Call to Worship

*from Psalm 27*

One: The Holy One is my illumination and my liberation;  
whom shall I fear?

Many: **The Holy One is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?**

One: For God will hide me in a grotto  
in the day of trouble;

Many: **God will conceal me under the cover of a divine tent;  
They will set me high on a rock.**

One: If my father, mother or parents forsake me,  
the Holy One will take me up.

Many: **Teach me your way, O God,  
and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.**

One: Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses  
have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.

Many: **I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Holy One  
in the land of the living. Wait for God; be strong, and let your  
heart take courage; wait for God!**

## \*Kindling the Christ Light

## \* Opening Hymn

*Down By the Riverside*

- 1) I'm gonna lay down my burdens, down by the riverside (x3)  
I'm gonna lay down my burdens, down by the riverside, Study war no more.  
*Refrain:* I ain't gonna study war no more (x6)
- 2) I'm gonna lay down my fear and shame, down by the riverside (x3)...

## Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

**People:** Holy Love Divine, we are tired of war. We are tired of violence. We are tired of the burdens we carry. And we reveal to you and each other that we have fallen short in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of the One of Peace: forgive us, restore us, renew us, we pray.

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

## Listening to God in Silent Prayer

### Assurance of God's Grace

**One:** Friends, the time to be grateful is now. The time to take heart is now. The time to rejoice is now. For in God, we find total reinvigoration and vitality. In God, we find our deepest grounding. Therefore, let us celebrate together:

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

## \*Sung Response

*This Little Light of Mine*

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (x3)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine  
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine (x3)  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

## Reading from The Hebrew Bible: 1 Samuel 24:1-22

When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, 'David is in the wilderness of En-gedi.' Then Saul took three thousand chosen warriors out of all Israel, and went to look for David and his warriors in the direction of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. He came to the sheepfolds beside the road, where there was a grotto (cave); and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. The men of David said to him, 'Here is

the day of which God said to you, “I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.” ’ Then David went and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul’s cloak. Afterwards David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul’s cloak. He said to his warriors, ‘God forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, God’s anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is God’s anointed.’ So David scolded his warriors severely and did not permit them to attack Saul. Then Saul got up and left the cave, and went on his way. Afterwards David also rose up and went out of the cave and called after Saul, ‘My lord the king!’ When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance. David said to Saul, ‘Why do you listen to the words of those who say, “David seeks to do you harm”? This very day your eyes have seen how God gave you into my hand in the cave; and some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, “I will not raise my hand against my lord; for he is God’s anointed.” See, my father, see the corner of your cloak in my hand; for by the fact that I cut off the corner of your cloak, and did not kill you, you may know for certain that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you are hunting me to take my life. May God judge between me and you! May God avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you. As the ancient proverb says, “Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness”; but my hand shall not be against you. Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A single flea? May God therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you. May God see to it, and plead my cause, and vindicate me against you.’ When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, ‘Is that your voice, my son David?’ Saul lifted up his voice and wept. He said to David, ‘You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. Today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when God put me into your hands. For who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? So may God reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Swear to me therefore by God that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not wipe out my name from my father’s house.’ So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his warriors went up to the stronghold.

One: God is still speaking, the word of God,

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Sung Response**

*This Little Light of Mine*

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine (x3)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

**Hymn:** NCH (black) 340

*We Are People on a Journey (English verses)*

1. We are people on a journey, pain is with us all the way.  
*Refrain:* Joyfully we come together at the holy feast of God.
2. God has sent the invitation, to the humble and the poor. *Refrain.*
3. This is bread that God provides us, nourishing our unity. *Refrain.*
4. Christ is ever present with us, to unite us all in love. *Refrain.*
5. All who truly thirst for justice, seek their liberation here. *Refrain.*

**Moment for Generosity – “T” – Nancy Stockford**

**Moment for Mission – One Great Hour of Sharing – Faith Perry**

**Call to Offering**

Online Giving Option: <http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>

*Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General.*

**Offertory**

*True Colors*

Cyndi Lauper

**Doxology**

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 and Concerns**

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

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Celebration of Holy Communion**

**Invitation to the Table**

**Communion Summons**

*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. (x2)

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

**One:** May God be with you!

**Many:** **And also with you.**

**One:** People of the Grotto, 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**     *San Francisco's Grace Episcopal Cathedral Womanist Lord's Prayer*

**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 for ever. Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread & Sharing of the Plate and Cup**

## **Post Communion Prayer**

**Closing Hymn:** NCH (black) 388

*Help Us Accept Each Other*

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;  
Teach us as sister, sibling, each person to embrace.  
Be present, God, among us, and bring us to believe  
We are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.  
Teach us, O God, your lessons, as in our daily life  
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.  
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,  
To love them as we find them, or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved  
In living situations to do the truth in love;  
To practice your acceptance, until we know by heart  
The table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

God, for today's encounters with all who are in need,  
Who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,  
Bring us new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;  
Renew us with your Spirit; God! Free us, make us one!

### **Call to Resist:** Transgender Rights

The rights of transgender people in our church, country and world are under assault. And too many good, progressive folks are not doing enough to counter and condemn this violence. In 2022, over 200 anti-LGBTQ bills have been filed so far, with over half specifically targeting trans people, particularly youth. This follows 2021 as the most anti-LGBTQ legislative session in history. This hypervisibility typically comes at the expense of trans people who are demonized and scapegoated by politicians and in media. Our faith demands that we take action, rise up, and resist.

In the wake of last week's International Week (and Day) of Transgender Visibility, let us commit ourselves to taking the following actions:

- Call/email your 2 Senators, thank them and ask them to prioritize pushing for the passage of the Equality Act.
- Drawing on Jesus' preference for the structurally marginalized and the human impulse of tenderness toward the vulnerable, one inner-focused action we can all take is to learn more about and from transgender people so we can better allies. The GLAAD site has these Tips for Allies.

- From GLAAD's webpage dedicated to the 2022 Day of Visibility: One outward facing action we can all take is to email the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services & tell them to stop investigating the families of trans children. Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton have shamefully attempted to reclassify trans-affirming care for minors as “child abuse.” There are similar cruel anti-trans efforts underway in Alabama, Florida, Arizona, Missouri, Kansas, and South Carolina, where bills limiting trans-affirming healthcare, and sports participation are currently advancing through state governments. If you have friends in these states, reach out and ask them to speak out against these sinful bills.
- Support the faith based organizing and prophetic work of Parity, their Transgender Safety Network, including their support of LGBTQ Ukrainians in need.
- Contact President Biden and ask him to continue to support Trans Rights

### **\*Charge and Benediction**

### **\*Exchange of the Peace**

*(Please exchange greetings of Christ's peace and reconciliation while respecting personal space preferences and public health safe distancing)*

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

---

### **Participating in Worship:**

**Guest Preacher** – Rev. Julie Avis Rogers

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Liturgist** – Rev. Rob Mark

**Lector** – Abhishek John

**Co-Communion Celebrant** – Rev. Joshua Lazard

**Cantors** – COTC Choir

**Audio-Video Tech Deacons** – Derek Holbrook, Jon Schwarz

**Digital Minister** – Diane Lauber

**Door Steward** – Jesús Vargas

**Sexton** – Fred Lopes

**Usher** – Faith Perry

**Call to Resist** – Rev. Rob Mark

**Bulletin Cover** – Trans Pride though a grotto sunset, Stephen Bay Photography

**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 welcomed during this service. If you have any questions about who we are as a community of faith, please reach out to a member of staff in the chat.

**TODAY WE WELCOME (BACK) REV. JULIE AVIS ROGERS!** A creative, progressive, and compassionate leader, Rev. Julie Avis Rogers currently serves as the Director of Religious and Spiritual Life and Campus Chaplain at Emerson College. Julie is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. Her training focused largely on the evolution of liberation theologies in Latin America, vibrant public speaking, and the spiritual development of students and young adults. She has degrees in Theatre and Vocal Performance and is passionate about many social justice concerns, particularly immigrant justice and the full inclusion and affirmation of the LGBTQ community and all historically marginalized identities in the life of diverse faith communities. Julie is no stranger to this congregation, as she served as part of Church of the Covenant's staff from 2012-17, and as our Associate Pastor until 2019. It is a complete joy to welcome Julie back to this community she knows and loves well!!

### **LENT 2022: GROTTO – RESIDE & RESIST: MARCH 2 – APRIL 17**

Discovering spiritual power from entering the inner life and emerging for action. *Grotto (noun: from Italian grotta, via Latin from Greek kruptē (see crypt))*: a small, subterranean cavern or human-made cave-like shrine often linked to gardened landscapes connoting a place of rebirth and renewal. Join us this Lent as together, inspired by sacred stories from our scriptures, we will build our own at-home grottos and decorate them each week with images, ideas, words, beliefs, mentors, callings, & passions. From these places of residing in God's nurture, potential & new beginnings, we will emerge in solidarity through weekly calls to action & advocacy as we resist the powers of empire & fear.

**UPCOMING WORSHIP:** Please join us each Sunday at 10:30am as we come together in community to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed in these Hybrid services (in-person and Zoom options). [Zoom Link for each service.](#)

- Sunday, April 3, Lent 5, Rev. Julie Avis Rogers, Director of Religious and Spiritual Life & Campus Chaplain at Emerson College guest preaching
- Sunday, April 10, Palm Sunday All Ages Service
- Holy Week: Maundy Thursday 4/14, 7:30pm, Good Friday 4/15 7pm, Holy Saturday 4/16 12:30pm, Easter 4/17 10:30am

**PRE-REGISTER FOR HYBRID WORSHIP:** We continue to ask that those worshipping in person at 67 Newbury pre-register, be up to date on vaccinations, and still wear a mask at all times in the building. Worship will continue to be accessible to all on Zoom. Pre-register for all services at [rsvp.church/r/L77KITal](https://rsvp.church/r/L77KITal).

**SUPPORTING UKRAINE:** As we continue to hold the people of Ukraine and Russia in our prayers in light of Putin’s horrifying “war of choice,” here are some places to support:

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/ukraine/>
- United Church of Christ ACT Alliance: <https://www.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal/>
- World Central Kitchen: <https://wck.org>

**OUR CHILDREN & YOUTH ARE BACK IN THE BUILDING! BATES HALL FOR CYCE ONLY PLEASE:** We are so grateful our Children & Youth Christian Education programs are, after 2 years, finally back to safely gathering on Sunday mornings in Bates Hall & the nurse! Thank you to our teachers and staff and families for their ongoing commitment to these vital programs. **We therefore ask all adults not connected to CYCE to refrain from using Bates Hall on Sundays**, as per our policies set before the pandemic. The one exception is our Choir that regularly rehearses in Bates Hall from 9:30-10:00am. The two all-gender bathrooms for use are on the same floor as the sanctuary, and will remain open and available during the service. One is located near the elevator, one just outside the “secret door” in the sanctuary, just past the baptismal font). The small bathroom just in front of our Nursery will now only be used for children and youth on Sundays.

**BUILDING YOUR OWN GROTTTO:** This Lent, we invite you to put on your creativity hat, and join us in making your own home-grotto. Inspired by sacred stories from our scriptures, we will build our own at-home grottos and decorate them each week with images, ideas, words, beliefs, mentors, influencers, callings, and passions. You can start with a shoebox, any cardboard box bound for the recycling bin, a matchbox, a little wooden box, a special corner of your room, or a sacred spot in your back yard. Any “place” is fine – we just invite you to think of a place that will remain intact over the 6 weeks journey through Lent. Each week, following worship, we invite you to spend the week adding things to your grotto. Perhaps a word or a phrase from the scripture or hymns or liturgy in worship. Perhaps a photo from a bulletin cover, or an image you take and print out, or find on the internet. Perhaps something you make. Perhaps an item from nature. The sky is the limit. Think creativity and build a grotto that will become a sacred place for you to “go” and

further reside in the expansive and wild love of God during your Lenten journey. A journey that is both yours individually, and ours collectively in community. For those who wish to share photos of their grottos along the way or around Holy Week, we welcome the sharing and mutual inspiration. Questions? Ask away.

**LENTEN EVENING PRAYERS 6-6:30pm:** Our weekly Wednesday evening prayers w/ intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms & sharing of prayers will meet this Wednesday, April 6 with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian [on Zoom](#).

**BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS:** Our weekly morning Bible Study is each Wednesday morning on Zoom at 9:15am. We are studying Hosea & the other 'minor prophets.' If you'd like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders & Zoom info, contact Nancy Ammerman, [ntammerman@gmail.com](mailto:ntammerman@gmail.com).

**COVENANT BOOK DISCUSSION SUNDAY, APRIL 24:** Our next book discussion will be Sunday, April 24 at 5 PM over Zoom, and we'll be discussing Rowan Williams' *Where God Happens: Discovering Christ in One Another*. The Zoom link will be sent out later. As always, you are very welcome whether you've ever attended book group before, or whether you have read the book.

**20s-30s-40s UPCOMING BRUNCHES WITH ANIMATE VIDEO SERIES:** We have an active young adult group that meets regularly to create community, even while we can't be together physically, including weekly prayer calls, brunches (sometimes online!), fellowship and support. We are expecting to have our next brunch in April in-person. If you have more questions or would like to be added to our email list, contact Rev. Joshua at [joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).

**CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING:** At long last, we have resumed in-person CYCE activities downstairs for vaccinated children and youth, ages 5 & up. We're also looking forward to our next all-ages service on Palm Sunday, April 10. Parents of younger kids, we're also able to open the nursery for one household at a time. We'll continue to send updates and more details via email. If you're interested in getting involved with CYCE, please [email Rev. Kate](#).

**POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS/ PRAYERS ONLINE:** We will be posting the entire service that is livestreamed online on our [Worship Recordings Page](#). Please let us know if you have any questions. Thanks.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR** Click [here](#) to view the weekly calendar of events.



**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 and inquirers 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 outcasts, 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, and we strive to include them in our ministry. We maintain 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 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church USA to join couples of all sexual orientations in fully legal and holy marriage.

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 Lazard, *Associate Pastor*  
Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*  
Bill Brown, *Building Manager*  
Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator / Parish Administrator*  
Nancy Stockford, *Financial Secretary*  
Fred Lopes, *Sunday Sexton*  
Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

#### **CHURCH OFFICERS**

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