

# Church of the Covenant

## Boston, MA



**Easter Sunday: EXALT!**

**April 5, 2026**

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



## Church of the Covenant

### Easter Sunday: EXALT!

April 5, 2026, 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

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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 link above. Please keep your mic muted during the service.

If you have a prayer to share, please write it into the “Red Book” at the back of the sanctuary or place it into the chat, as we will not be passing the mic today.

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

#### Prelude

*Canzon Duodecima Toni*

Giovanni Gabrieli

#### 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: **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, to the cross and to an empty tomb,

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** NCH (black) 233

*Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!

Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!

Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!

Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!

Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!

Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!

Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!

Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!

Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!

Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!

God has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!

Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!

Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!

Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

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

**Many: Almighty God, in raising Jesus from the grave, you shattered the power of sin and death. We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear, bound by the ways that lead to death. We overlook the poor and the hungry, and pass by those who mourn; we are deaf to the cries of the oppressed, and indifferent to calls for peace; we despise the weak, and abuse the earth you made; we remain unhopeful when you have called us to see things as though they are not.**

**Forgive us, God of mercy. Be patient with us as we become comfortable to trust your power to change our lives and the lives of those around us. Make us new so that we may know the joy of life abundant given in Jesus Christ, the risen One.**

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

## **Listening to God in Silent Prayer**

### **Assurance of God's Grace**

One: This is the day of resurrection and new life. This is the day God offers us steadfast hope and love which will never end. We will rejoice and give thanks to the God who saves us. Therefore, let us celebrate together:

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

## **A Time with Children**

*Following this, children through grade 5 are invited downstairs to Bates Hall for nursery care and Godly Play lessons. Children and youth are also fully welcome to remain in worship.*

## **Readings from Scripture**

**Hebrew Bible Reading** – Psalm 118:13-18 (*The Message* translation)

I was right on the cliff-edge, ready to fall, when God grabbed and held me.

God's my strength, God is also my song, and now God is my salvation.

Hear the shouts, hear the triumph songs in the camp of the saved?

“The hand of God has turned the tide!

The hand of God is raised in victory!

The hand of God has turned the tide!”

I didn't die. I *lived!*

And now I'm telling the world what God did.

God tested me, pushed me hard,

but God didn't hand me over to Death.

## **Gospel Reading** – Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

But when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground.

But the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Child of God must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles.

But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

## **New Testament Reading** – 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Look, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved siblings be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of Christ because you know that in Jesus your labor is not in vain.

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

“The Conjunctions of Hope”

### \* Hymn PH (blue) 379

*My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;

I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

*Refrain*

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;

All other ground is sinking sand,

All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face,

I rest on His unchanging grace;

In every high and stormy gale,

My anchor holds within the veil. *Refrain*

His oath, His covenant, His blood

Support me in the whelming flood;

When all around my soul gives way,

He then is all my hope and stay. *Refrain*

When He shall come with trumpet sound,

O may I then in Him be found,

Dressed in His righteousness alone,

Faultless to stand before the throne. *Refrain*

## Call to Offering

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

## Offertory

*Repeating Alleluia*

Calvin Hampton

## \* Doxology

Tune: *Old Hundredth*

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 & Concerns

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

## Pastoral Prayer

## \* Closing Hymn PH (blue) 104

*Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!*

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!  
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: All creation is amazed.  
In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.  
Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.  
Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.  
Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend.  
Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven nevermore shall be the same.  
Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.  
Tell its grim, demonic chorus: "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"  
God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna, everyone!

**\* 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.**

**Postlude**

*Finale from Firebird*  
*Please remain seated for the postlude.*

Igor Stravinsky

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**Worship Participants**

**Preacher** – Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard

**Minister of Music** – Thomas Handel

**Liturgists** – Rev. Rob Mark, Nancy Stockford

**Lector** – Anita Gram

**Time with Children** – Rev. Kate Carlisle

**Trumpets** – Kyle Spraker and Toby Monte

**Horn** – Nick Rubenstein

**Trombone** – Adam Hanna

**Bass Trombone** – Charles Morris

**Covenant Choir and Friends**

**Ushers** – Holly Humphreys, Mark Huston, Byron Sipe, Denice Thornhill,  
Trisha Thompson, Trudi Veldman

**Digital Minister** – Christine James

**Audio Visual Tech Team**

**Sexton** – Syd Smith

**Cover Art** – “Through Him, All Things,” by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

**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.

**OUR BRASS MUSIC TODAY CELEBRATES THE LIFE OF ED CUTLER (1935 –2006).** Ed was a beloved member of Church of the Covenant with a passion for music. In his youth he sang and played the violin. Before he lost his vision he sang in community and church choirs. He was a biology professor, avid birder, and environmentalist who served on many local environmental committees. At COTC, he served on the Personnel Committee, supported youth group pilgrimages, and chaired the committee that called Minister of Music Tom Handel.

**EASTER EGG HUNT TODAY!** Welcome to all beloved kiddos who are with us on this sacred day! Please stick around after worship for our Easter Egg Hunt in our Sanctuary—we'll give directions at that time.

**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.

**UPCOMING SUNDAY WORSHIP.** Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am (and other days during Holy Week) 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.

- April 12: Rev. Rob Mark preaching, Holy Communion, Sacred Reckonings After Worship
- April 19: 11:00 am (note different time), Worship in the Streets, Embodied Nature Practices, Life Alive Brunch After Worship, One Sun, One Earth, One People Event with Bill McKibben at 1:00 pm
- April 26: Reflection on the Word

**SACRED RECKONINGS SPIRITUAL EDUCATION NEXT WEEK.** Join us after worship on **Sunday, April 12**, (in person and online), as our Sacred Reckonings Team conducts a “physical audit” of our sacred historic spaces. What is the physical experience of our space on people? Are there physical and psychological barriers or blessings to our space? The Sacred Reckonings team is helping us explore racial justice using truth-telling, spiritual practices, relationships, advocacy, and wealth return. Questions? Kathy Bull: [kaxianna@yahoo.com](mailto:kaxianna@yahoo.com) or Rev. Rob: [rob.mark@cotcbos.org](mailto:rob.mark@cotcbos.org).

**WANT TO JOIN COTC?** We'd love to welcome you as our newest member! Joining a faith community in these chaotic days is one practical action one can take to counter the forces of isolation, division, and hopelessness in our world and country these days. Did you know we have multiple forms of membership at Church of the Covenant including Affiliates and Associates? We also have customizable to your schedule "COTC 101" classes to deepen your exposure to our congregation. Speak to pastors Rob or Joshua at any point, or email our Parish Administrator Nancy if you'd like to know more: [nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org](mailto:nancy.stockford@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). Next Life Alive brunch: **April 19**.

**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).

**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 [jvacooks@gmail.com](mailto:jvacooks@gmail.com).

**WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS 6:00-6:30 PM. Note: there will be no Evening Prayers on April 8.** 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.

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“Jesus of the Bayou,” by Lauren Wright Pittman, A Sanctified Art

# One Sun One Earth One People

## A Sacred Celebration



Boston Interfaith Climate Allies

### Sunday

### April 19, 2026 1:30pm

### Gather on Boston Common

Process with BABAM Brass & BVOCAL choir to the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul for sacred celebration including prayerful actions and Indigenous Closing Reflections.

[bica.earth](http://bica.earth)

**Bill McKibben**  
Guest  
Speaker



RSVP



Partners:



greenfaith

MASSACHUSETTS  
Interfaith Power & Light

# IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES WELCOME



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*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*  
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*