Palm Sunday

Grotto: Reside & Resist

ZOOM LINK (click here)
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

*Call to Worship

One: Give thanks to God, who is good;  
Many: God’s steadfast love endures forever!
One: Let all the people proclaim,  
Many: God’s steadfast love endures forever!
One: I give thanks to you, God, for you answered me, and you have become my salvation.
Many: The same stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is God’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.
One: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Many: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!
One: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of peace.
Many: Hosanna in the highest!


After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, “
Lord needs it.’” So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.”

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

Invitation to the Procession

Call to Offering & One Great Hour of Sharing

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

* Opening Hymn: NCH 216  All Glory, Laud, and Honor

All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way;
Our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you this day.

O Promised One of Israel, of David’s royal line,
The one called “God’s beloved,” of flesh and yet divine,
To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.

As you received their praises, receive our prayers today,
Whose justice and whose mercy and sovereignty hold sway.
All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
Moving Towards Holy Monday: Anointing

As Mary anointed Jesus, we will share in an “anointing” with hand sanitizer. For those worshiping at home, we invite you to take a few drops of oil or a favorite moisturizer and mindfully rub into your hands or face.

Moving Towards Holy Tuesday: Speaking for Justice

Call to Resist: Decarceration

The prison industrial complex in our country is racist and broken. There is no such thing as criminal justice in the United States. The modern Abolition Movement is at work to change things, and as people of faith, we need to support this work.

- Prayerfully consider joining SURJ Boston (Showing Up For Racial Justice) – and their Prison Abolition Action Partnership: a working group of SURJ Boston working in solidarity with people directly impacted by incarceration, the prison industrial complex, and policing to fight for an end to prisons and build a new vision for justice and liberation.
- Prison Construction Moratorium: We’re at a critical moment in our fight to pass the Jail and Prison Construction Moratorium Bill. The House version of the Moratorium Bill is stuck in the Judiciary Committee and has to be voted out by April 15. We’re continuing to push for the Senate Bill to get to a floor vote! Call Chairman Day in support of the Prison
Construction Moratorium Bill! Rep. Michael Day 617-722-2396, Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary: Sample script:

“In my name is _______ and I am a member of Boston’s Church of the Covenant, and I’m calling in support of An Act Establishing A Jail and Prison Construction Moratorium. I urge you to vote this bill favorably out of committee and shift spending to what communities really need to thrive—housing, treatment, healthcare and education!”

- Sign this petition to terminate Harold Adams’ 50 year old life sentence. And take this additional step to write a letter.

- Advocate for FREE Calls Home for People Incarcerated: Some children can’t afford to talk with their dad in prison for help with homework. Some mothers aren’t able to talk to their children who are in jail. One third of families with a family member in jail or prison go into debt because of the cost of contacting their loved ones. Staying in touch with family is one of the most important things for coming home and staying home. Many people simply can’t afford that right now. H1900/S1559 would change that. Let’s advocate in support of no-cost calls for incarcerated people in MA. Check out this toolkit to learn more. TAKE ACTION: Contact Senate President Spilka and House Speaker Mariano, Tweet: @KarenSpilka @RonMariano “Wake up and smell the roses! It’s time for #NoCostCalls in Massachusetts! #mapoli http://nocostcallsmma.org/”

- Post on Instagram, and please put the following hashtags on the post! : #NoCostCalls #mapoli
- Post on Facebook: Senate President Spilka and House Speaker Mariano, wake up and smell the roses! It’s time for #NoCostCalls in Massachusetts! #mapoli
- Be sure to contact Senate President Spilka and House Speaker Mariano and let them know you support H1900 and S1559. Speaker Mariano (617) 722-2500 or Ronald.Mariano@mahouse.gov; Senate President Spilka (617) 722-1500 or Karen.Spilka@masenate.gov

Moving Towards Holy Wednesday: Prayer for Grounding in God’s Grace

Invitation to Confession

Prayer for Grounding in God’s Grace

People: Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our failure to be what you created us to be. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. By your loving mercy, help us to
live in your light and abide in your ways, for the sake of Jesus who saves us.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God’s Grace

One: Friends, hear the Good News! In the death and resurrection of Jesus we see that God’s grace overflows for all. There is no sin or transgression beyond the reach of God’s mercy. There is no brokenness that God’s steadfast love cannot heal. There is no power or principality or deep-rooted evil that God’s fierce justice cannot rearrange. There is nothing in all of creation – not even death – that can separate us from God’s love in Jesus.

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

Moving Towards Maundy Thursday: Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

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

Our God, who is in heaven, holy is your name.
Your reign come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, and save us from the time of trial.
For yours is the kindom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread & Sharing of the Plate and Cup

Post Communion Prayer

Moving Towards Good Friday: Pausing before the Cross

Hymn

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kindom.
Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kindom. (repeat)

Pastoral Prayer

Moving Towards Holy Saturday: A New Fire

Invitation to Silence

Closing Hymn

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.

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:

Minister of Music – Tom Handel
Audio-Video Tech Deacons – Derek Holbrook, Jon Schwarz
Door Steward – Jesús Vargas
Sexton – Fred Lopes
Usher – Anne Crane
Call to Resist – Rev. Rob Mark

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.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SPECIAL OFFERING: Today on Palm Sunday, Covenant joins with thousands of other congregations, - Presbyterians, UCCers, American Baptists, Methodists and more - in One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS). In the past couple of years, we have heard too much about wildfires, tornadoes, floods and hurricanes. OGHS dollars go to assist the victims of these disasters to relocate or rebuild. We have heard about the enormous flow of refugees from war. OGHS dollars help to provide food, water, and medicine to assist refugees. We know that drought causes hunger in Central America, Africa and other places around the world. OGHS dollars go to feeding programs and programs that help subsistence farmers improve their methods and output. We know that victims of racism and poverty suffer disproportionately from climate events, the pandemic and lack of opportunity. OGHS dollars go to projects that provide sustainable development, empowerment, and structural change. The themes for this year’s offering are connection and love. As Christians, we are connected to those who suffer. Let us show our love and give generously. You may mail a check payable to Church of the Covenant to 67 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116. Or you may donate online at cotcbos.org/give.html Select the One Great Hour of Sharing option. If you are in person today, you may put cash in the offering envelope in your bulletin and leave it in the offering basket. Thank you for your connection and love.
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.
- Holy Week: Maundy Thursday 4/14, 7:30pm, Good Friday 4/15 7pm, Holy Saturday 4/16 2:30pm (NOTE NEW), Easter 4/17 10:30am
- Sunday, April 24, Rev. Joshua preaching (Rev. Rob away)

PRE-REGISTER FOR HYBRID WORSHIP: We continue to ask that those worshiping 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/L77KlTal.

EASTER: For the first time since March of 2020, we will have a worship service where no pre-registration is required! This Easter, we will open up our doors fully and allow anyone to join us for worship! We still require people to be vaccinated and masked for the service.

CLIMATE JUBILEE ACTION!: Covenant’s Climate Jubilee Team urges you to take part in “Great Tide Rising: Earth Day at the Compressor” on Saturday, April 23, from 10 AM to 1 PM. As a congregation we have strongly opposed the unjust, polluting compressor station in Weymouth, MA, and this will be a chance for a protest, rally, and community gathering. The address is 50 Bridge Street in North Weymouth, the site of the compressor. Please let me know at barbarekdarling@yahoo.com if you can come – I hope you can! You can visit NoCompressor.com for more details.
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 nursery! 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 GROTTO: 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 Holy Wednesday, April 13 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.

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, most likely Sat. April 23. If you have more questions or would like to be on our email list, email Rev. Joshua at joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org.

CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Join us next week for Easter Sunday, including our Easter Egg Hunt after worship! More details to come via email. If you’re interested in getting involved with CYCE, please email Rev. Kate.

POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS/ CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS 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.
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