

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



The 14th Sunday after Pentecost
Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ
[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



Church of the Covenant
The 14th Sunday after Pentecost
September 11, 2022, 10:30 am

[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 begin on Zoom at the above link. Please keep your mic muted during the service. The full service is recorded and later posted online.

If you would like a prayer of Celebration or Concern to be prayed aloud today, and would prefer not to share it yourself with the handheld mic, please take a moment at anytime to write it into the Red Book at the back of the sanctuary. For those online, you will be invited to place a prayer in the chat and we will share aloud.

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

Prelude

Préambule, Op. 31 No. 1

Louis Vierne

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*** Call to Worship**

(inspired by Psalm 14)

One: Sometimes we hear others say, “there is no God.”

Many: **Yet your Spirit is alive and present in our world.**

One: Sometimes we hear ourselves say, “there is no hope.”

Many: **Yet your Spirit is alive and present in our hearts.**

One: Sometimes we hear our church say, “there is no way.”

Many: **Yet your Spirit is alive and present in this place.**

Come and find us here and now O Searching Spirit of Love.

***Kindling the Christ Light**

***Opening Hymn:** PH (blue) 376

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1. Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heaven to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling, All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion, Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation, Enter every trembling heart.

2. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit, Let us find that second rest;
Take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning, Set our hearts at liberty.
3. Come, Almighty to deliver, Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never, Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing, Glory in Thy perfect love.
4. Finish, then, Thy new creation; Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory, Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: Holy Spirit, graciously hear now our prayer. While at times wonderful, life is not easy. Stresses, pains, and fears are real. And sometimes these forces build up inside and we take it out on people we are called to love. Searching God, seek us out, and help us. Restore us into right relationships with others and our earth. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast.

One: Let us now listen to God in silent prayer...

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: God of the lost and found, we give you great thanks for never giving up on any of us. Thank you for bringing us back into wide and spacious places where we can once again hear whispers of your love. We ask that you finish then thy new creation in each of us, so we can love more fully. Newly restored, we celebrate together:

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

Sung Response

Over My Head

Refrain

O-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; o-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; o-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; there must be a God some - where.

Fine

Readings from Scripture

Hebrew Bible Reading: Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me out of the bare heights in the desert toward my poor people, not to winnow or cleanse - a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgment against them.

“For my people are foolish, they do not know me; they are thoughtless children, they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good.”

I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and lo, there was no one at all, and all the birds of the air had fled. I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before GOD, before the fierce anger. For thus says GOD: The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I will not make a full end. Because of this the earth shall mourn, and the heavens above grow black; for I have spoken, I have purposed; I have not relented nor will I turn back.

Gospel Reading: Luke 15:1-10

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So he told them this parable: “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When found, the sheep is laid on the shoulders and there is rejoicing. And when the shepherd comes home, friends and neighbors are called together, to hear, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

“Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

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

Sung Response

Over My Head

Sermon

“Get Lost”

Call to Offering

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

Offertory

Lied, Op. 31 No. 17

Louis Vierne

*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.

Tune: Old Hundredth

*Prayer of Dedication

Celebrations and Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

* Closing Hymn: NCH (black) 458

I've Got a Feeling

I've got a feeling, everything's gonna be alright,
oh-oh-oh(x3)
Be alright, be alright, be alright.

Jesus already told me, everything's gonna be alright,
oh-oh-oh(x3)
Be alright, be alright, be alright.

The Spirit has confirmed it, everything's gonna be alright,
oh-oh-oh(x3)
Be alright, be alright, be alright.

*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

Sabbath Supply Minister of Music – Kate Salfelder

Liturgist – Barbara Darling

Lector – Christine James

Digital Minister – Christine James

Audio-Visual Techs – Abhishek John, Jon Schwarz

Ushers – Trudi Veldman, Thiago Santos

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 an usher in person or our Digital Minister in the chat.

NEW TO CHURCH? We are SO grateful you have joined us this morning. We recognize it takes extra energy to enter a new place, so we are grateful for your choice this morning to join us! If you'd like to connect with us further, one simple step would be to fill out a New Visitor Card found either in the pew back in front of you, or over by the side desk at the back of the sanctuary. These cards can then be placed in the offering plate as your contribution today – and church leadership will then be in touch as a follow-up. Please feel at home!

OUR FIRST POTLUCK IN OVER 2 YEARS! Please join us today following worship as our Climate Jubilee Team is hosting a **Harvest Moon Vegan-Plant-based Potluck** hybrid event with tables in the Berkeley St. vestibule and people flowing onto the steps and sidewalk, and others sharing a meal and conversation on Zoom. If you brought a plant-based dish to share (think even simple cut up veggies/ fruit/ hummus), please place it in the back Berkeley Street vestibule when you come in for worship. It will be great to share in our long delayed spiritual practice of breaking bread together! We will gather outside on the steps as we remain mindful of covid-safe practices.

WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!! Today we kick off another wonderful church school year together with our children & youth! We warmly welcome all young people and their families into our journey together. We start things off with activities for all ages during worship, and an art activity during the potluck!

If you're a family new to COTC, we are glad you are here! Children and youth share time together downstairs during the length of our worship service in the sanctuary. Babies, children, and youth are also always welcome to remain in worship. Families can connect with our Children & Youth Christian Education (CYCE) staff and volunteers by going to the back of the sanctuary and then down the stairs into our lower fellowship hall called Bates Hall (also accessible by elevator – please ask an usher for directions). Questions? Please contact Rev. Kate Carlisle, CYCE Coordinator: kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org

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, September 18, Rev. Joshua preaching, Communion
- Sunday, September 25, New Members Joining Sunday, Reflection on the Word
- Sunday, October 2, All Ages Service for World Communion Sunday

LIFE ALIVE RETREAT 2022. COTC's young adult community will be gathering for our annual retreat on **Saturday, September 17th** for a day of fellowship, community building, and worship on the beautiful shores of Cape Cod. Carpooling caravans will leave Boston around 8:00 am and will aim to return by 6:00pm at the latest. Our destination at Rob's parents' beach cottage in Barnstable is about 90 minutes away from Boston. Please *RSVP with this link*, by **today at 5pm**.

SAVE THE DATE: ALL CHURCH DAY RETREAT. Saturday, Oct. 29, 9:30am-4:30pm, Glastonbury Abbey, Hingham, MA. Please mark your calendars to join us for our annual all-church retreat as we return once again to the sacred setting at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham (2012-2013) where we will get to enjoy a Saturday together to take in the blessings of God's nature just a few miles from the ocean, surrounded by sacred pines and cedars and the fellowship of our community. "Second" breakfast and lunch will be provided. Stay tuned for registrations to begin in the coming week or so.

OPEN NEWBURY STREET CONTINUES. Newbury Street between Berkeley St. and Mass. Ave. will be closed to vehicles, and open to pedestrian traffic, on **Sundays from August 21-September 25**. Find out more *here*. Increased traffic throughout the region is also expected due to the Orange Line shutdown. Please keep this in mind when planning travel to and from COTC.

COVENANT BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP SEPTEMBER 18. The next COTC book discussion will resume on Sunday, September 18, at 5 PM via Zoom. We will be discussing *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. As always, you are welcome to join us whether or not you have ever come to a Covenant book discussion before, and whether or not you have read the book. Ask Barbara if you have any questions: barbarakdarling@yahoo.com. [Here's the Zoom link.](#)

VERNAL EQUINOX SUNSET EVENSONG: Thursday, September 22, 6:00-7:00pm Join our Climate Jubilee Team as they host this simple outdoor prayer gathering along the sacred shores of the Quinobequin (settler named Charles) River to give thanks to God for the seasons and profound wonder and peace of God's natural world, as we together take in the sun set. [RSVP HERE – thanks!](#)

BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS: Our weekly morning Bible Study is each Wednesday morning on Zoom at 9:15am. We are studying the Gospel of John. If you'd like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders & Zoom info, contact Jan Gough at revjangough@gmail.com.

SEASON OF THE SPIRIT EVENING PRAYERS 6-6:30pm: Join us for our weekly Wednesday evening prayers w/ intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms & sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian [on Zoom.](#)

TOM HANDEL'S STUDY LEAVE. Our Minister of Music, Tom Handel, will be on Study Leave this fall, from September through November. We are glad to welcome Kate Salfelder, who will be leading our music in worship while Tom is away, beginning this Sunday. Check out *last week's TWAC* if you missed Tom's note to the congregation.

POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS/ CELEBRATIONS & CONCERNS ONLINE: We will be posting the entire service, including our sharing of celebrations and concerns, that is livestreamed online on our [Worship Recordings Page.](#) Please let us know if you have any questions.

ADULT ED RESCHEDULED - MASSACHUSETTS POST-ROE. We will be rescheduling our discussion of the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade. Kathryn will summarize the recent Supreme Court opinion, where reproductive rights stand nationally and where reproductive rights stand in Massachusetts. She will then guide a discussion about what can be done to help protect reproductive rights and bodily autonomy moving forward. Watch here for the new date.

LOOKING FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH VOLUNTEERS. We are currently gifted with a number of children in our community! How wonderful is this! It is our goal to be able to offer loving and stimulating environments and programs to all of them. We have a group of infants to toddlers, a couple of younger Godly Play-aged children, older Godly Play children, potentially a 10-13 year old group, and definitely a 14 year old group of youth. Do you have interest or questions about being involved in any way at all with children or youth? This might be an occasional presence in the nursery, or a background person in a children or youth class, or something more often or more directly involved. Please consider if this calls to you at all, and reach out to Kate Carlisle (kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org), Kathy Bull, Karen Henry, or Diane Lauber. No commitment to ask us about this! We are also advertising for a paid nursery care provider, so we encourage you to reach out if you have any interest for yourself or someone you know. We will pass along the listing soon.

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

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. 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

Parking Bargain – Worshipers may park at the Back Bay Garage [Clarendon Street, between Boylston and St. James] on Sundays between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. for the first (3) hours for only \$5. To get this discounted rate, please ask an usher before or after the worship service for a parking discount voucher.

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 after going outside the sanctuary 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 rest rooms. Please ask an usher to help you locate these resources



Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

67 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116 | (617) 266-7480 | 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 & Jesús Vargas, *Sunday Sextons*
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*