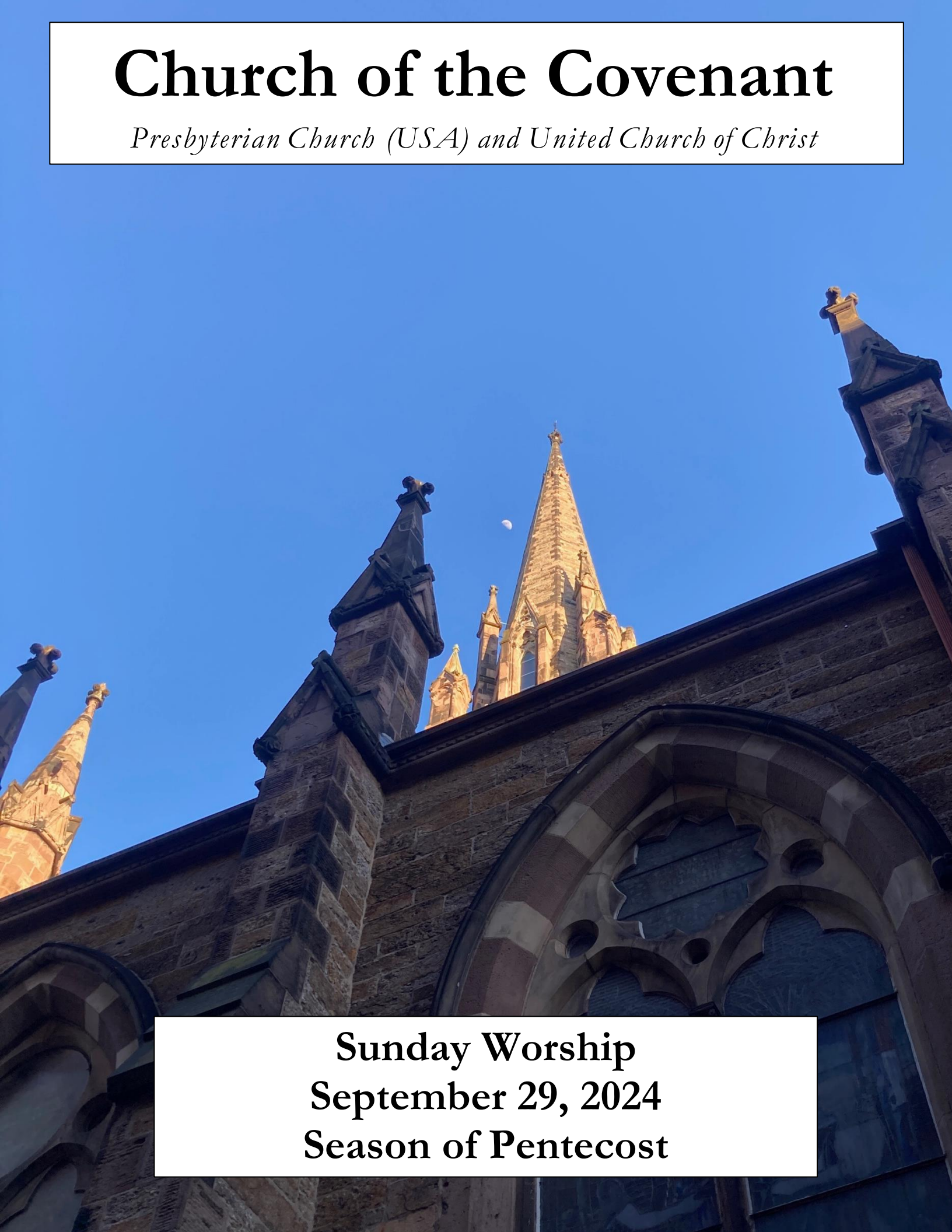


# Church of the Covenant

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



**Sunday Worship**  
**September 29, 2024**  
**Season of Pentecost**



**Church of the Covenant**  
**Sunday Worship**  
**Season of Pentecost**

September 29, 2024, 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.

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

**Prelude**

*Morning Has Broken*

arr. Teresa Wilhelmi

**Welcome & Announcements**

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

**\* Call To Worship**

(by J. Phillip Newell)

One: In the morning light, O God,

Many: **May we glimpse again your image deep within us.**

One: May we see the threads of eternal glory,

Many: **Woven into the fabric of every living thing.**

One: May we glimpse again the threads of light within us,

Many: **Shining more powerfully than the disappointments and distortions of living.**

One: Let us learn of the strength and beauty deep in our souls.

Many: **Let us learn of the strength and beauty of your image deep within.**

**\* Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

**\* Opening Hymn PH (blue) 469**

*Morning Has Broken*

Morning has broken like the first morning,  
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,  
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning  
Born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning,  
God's recreation of the new day!

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

**Many:** Loving God of mercy and light, as we look at our world, we see brokenness abound: the fog of war, structural racism, fossil fuel exploitation, unprecedented income inequality. As we look at ourselves, we long for healing: from the wounds the world inflicts upon us, from the hurts we unknowingly pass along, from the forgetfulness of your image deep within. Help us to learn of your love, healing, and grace.

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

**Listening to God in Silent Prayer**

**Assurance of God's Grace**

**One:** As people longing for liberation, let us remember that the God who created all things is the God who loves all things. In that love, there is restoration. Therefore, as people loved to love, let us 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.

**Responsive Hebrew Bible Reading – Psalm 91 (Nan C. Merrill translation)**

- One: Those who dwell in the shelter of Infinite Light, who abide in the wings of Infinite Love, will raise their voices in praise:
- Many: **“My refuge and my strength, in You alone will I trust. For you deliver me from the webs of fear, from all that separates and divides;**
- One: You protect me as an eagle shields its young. Your faithfulness is sure, like an arrow set upon the mark.
- Many: **I will not fear the shadows of the night, nor the confusion that comes by day, nor the dreams that awaken me from sleep, nor the daily changes that life brings...”**
- One: “Because you cleave to Me in love, I will deliver you; I will protect you who call upon my Name.
- Many: **When you call to Me, I will answer you; I will be with you in times of trouble.**
- One: I will rescue you and reverence your life.
- Many: **All through the years will I dwell in your heart, as Loving Companion Presence, forever.”**
- One: God is still speaking, the word of God,
- Many: **Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection on the Word**

**Gospel Reading** – Mark 9:38-50

John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

“For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

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

**Holding Silence**

**Chant**

*Be Still and Know That I Am God*

**Call to Offering**

Online Giving Option: [www.cotcbos.org/give](http://www.cotcbos.org/give)

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

**Offertory**

*All Good Gifts (Godspell)*

Stephen Schwartz

**\* 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** NCH (black) 181

*You Are Salt for the Earth, O People*

You are salt for the earth, O people: salt for the reign of God!  
Share the flavor of life, O people: life in the City of God!

*Refrain:*

Bring forth the reign of mercy, bring forth the reign of peace;  
Bring forth the reign of justice, bring forth the City of God!

You are a light on the hill, O people: light for the City of God!  
Shine so holy and bright, O people: shine for the City of God! *Refrain*

You are a seed of the Word, O people: bring forth the reign of God!  
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice, grow in the City of God! *Refrain*

We are a blessed and a pilgrim people: bound for the reign of God!  
Love our journey and love our homeland: love is the City of God! *Refrain*

**\* Charge & 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.**

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## Worship Participants

**Worship Leader** – Rev. Rob Mark

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Liturgist** – Nancy Ammerman

**Lector** – Tim Groves

**Covenant Choir**

**Ushers** – Holly Humphreys, Denice Thornhill

**Digital Minister** – Christine James

**Audio Visual Tech Team** – Venkatesh Balasubramanian, Jon Schwarz

**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 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 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).



**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 WORSHIP.** Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am and during the special services listed below 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, October 6: All-Ages Worship, World Communion Sunday, Jubilee Jaunt at 1:30 pm
- Sunday, October 13: Sacred Reckonings Reflection on the Word, Nica Companions Adult Ed. After Worship
- Sunday, October 20: Rev. Rob Mark preaching, Life Alive Apple Picking After Worship

**JUBILEE JAUNT ON OCTOBER 6.** The Climate Jubilee Team is sponsoring another Jubilee Jaunt on **Sunday, October 6, at 1:30 pm**, in Franklin Park. Betty Southwick will lead us on a colorful walk through a beautiful landscape. For those who have walked this jaunt before in Franklin Park, good news: this jaunt will bring you to some new parts of the park! Please email Betty at [southwickbetty@gmail.com](mailto:southwickbetty@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us!

**OPEN DELEGATION TO NICARAGUA.** Our church has a sibling relationship with a church community in Nicaragua, in the village of Dulce Nombre de Jesús. The purpose of the relationship is to build community. This happens by our being together—learning about each others’ lives, participating in honest dialogue, reflecting on the word of God, singing, and playing games. This winter, we hope a delegation from our church will be going to Nicaragua to visit our sibling community. Membership in the delegation is open. You don’t need to speak Spanish, the cost is flexible, and you will share an amazing experience with other members of the delegation. If you would like to learn more about this opportunity, please come to an Information Session after church on **October 13**, or speak to any of these people: Rev. Rob, Mocky Day, Karen Henry, Debbie Howland, Faith Perry, Tim Groves, Diane Lauber, Ellice Miller, Joey Waters, or Alicia or Kathy Bull.

**LIFE ALIVE APPLE PICKING.** Life Alive’s annual apple picking outing to Honey Pot Hill Orchard will be on **Sunday, October 20**, immediately following worship. If you have any questions, please email Rev. Joshua at [joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).



**ALL-CHURCH RETREAT!** This year's all-church retreat will be on **Saturday, October 26**, from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham. Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/cotcretreat2024>. Come one, come all!

**CHOIR & MUSIC MINISTRY.** Our amazing all-volunteer choir, led by our Minister of Music Tom Handel, is happy to welcome new singers! If you would like to join or play an instrument, please email Tom at [thomasghandel@gmail.com](mailto:thomasghandel@gmail.com).

**BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS.** Our weekly Bible Study meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:45 on Zoom. We are studying the book of Acts, exploring the movement of the Christian community throughout the Jewish, Greek, and Roman worlds. 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](https://www.cotcbos.org) (link on <http://www.cotcbos.org>).

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

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

*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!*



*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 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](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*

Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

Venkatesh Balasubramanian, *Digital Communications & Audio Visual Tech Manager*

#### **CHURCH OFFICERS**

Kathryn Barry, *President of the Corporation*

Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*

Jon Schwarz, *Moderator of the Board of Deacons*

Faith Perry, *Treasurer*