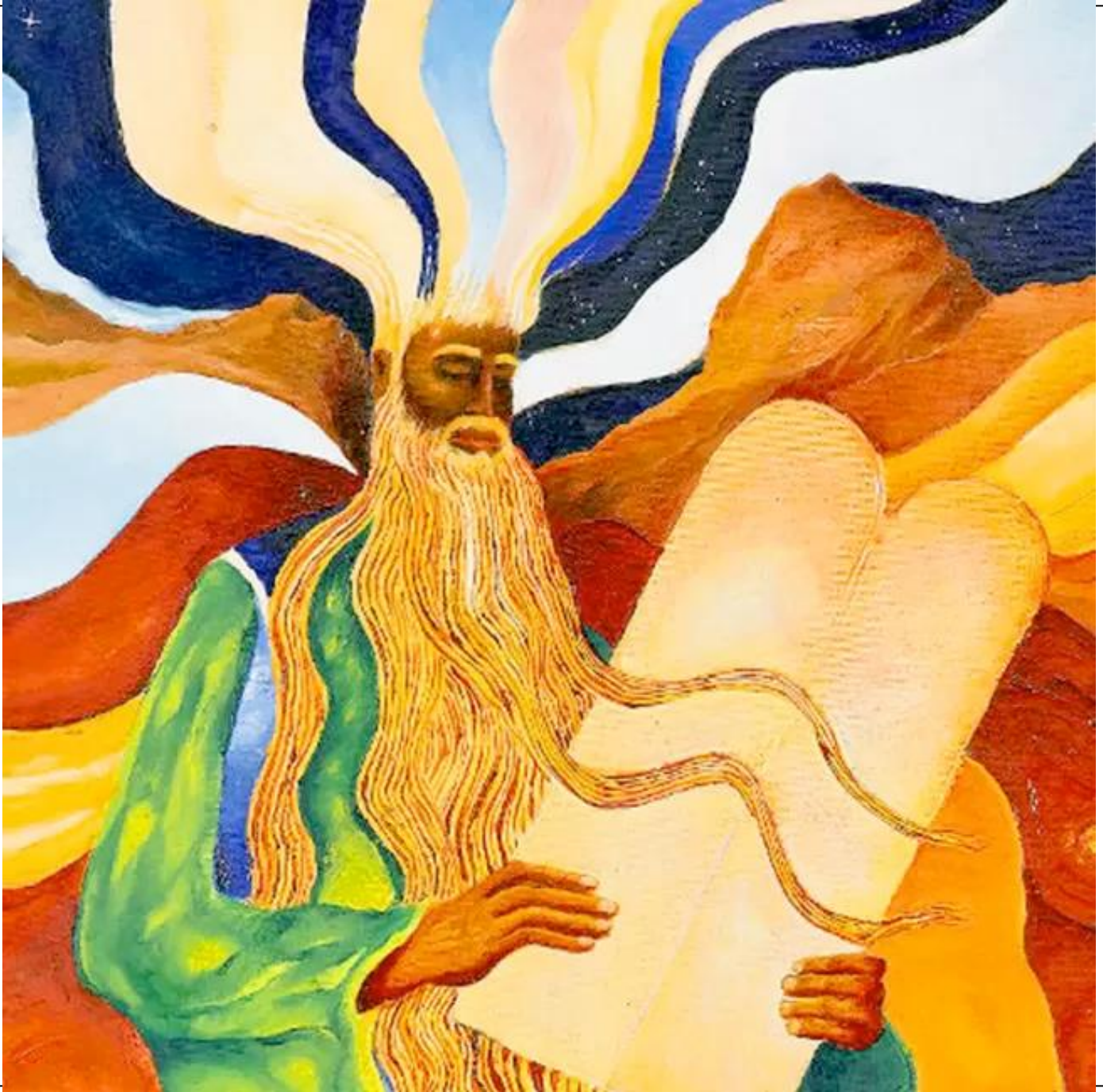


Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



19th Sunday after Pentecost
October 8, 2023

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ
[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



Church of the Covenant
The 19th Sunday after Pentecost
Indigenous People's Day Weekend

October 8, 2023, 10:30 am

[Zoom Link](#)

Church of the Covenant, Boston, resides on the ancestral and unceded (stolen) lands and sacred waters of the Massachusett people and the Mattakeeset people whose name was appropriated by this Commonwealth. We pay respect to Indigenous elders past and present. We acknowledge the truth of violence perpetrated in the name of this country and make a commitment to uncovering that truth, while celebrating the ongoing vitality of Indigenous communities in all our watersheds.

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

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

Prelude

Fairest Lord Jesus

arr. Teresa Wilhelmi

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*** Call to Worship**

(adapted from *Enfleshed*)

One: God, our Creator, invites us into the art of shaping shared life.

Many: **Together, we craft our moral, cultural, and spiritual lives.**

One: Neither saviors nor helpless, we all play a part.

Many: **We honor, too, all that is beyond our control.**

One: In this web of life we share, we seek to live with integrity,

Many: **Aligning our beliefs and our actions,**

One: Prioritizing love for our neighbors,

Many: **Reckoning with the risks required.**

One: May the Spirit come and inspire us, co-creators with God.

*** Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ,

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

*** Opening Hymn PH (blue) 285**

God, You Spin the Whirling Planets

God, You spin the whirling planets, fill the seas and spread the plain,
Mold the mountains, fashion blossoms, call forth sunshine, wind, and rain.
We, created in Your image, would a true reflection be
Of Your justice, grace, and mercy and the truth that makes us free.

You have called us to be faithful in our life and ministry.
We respond in grateful worship joined in one community.
When we blur your gracious image, focus us and make us whole.
Healed and strengthened as Your people, we move onward toward Your goal.

God, Your word is still creating, calling us to life made new.
Now reveal to us fresh vistas where there's work to dare and do.
Keep us clear of all distortion. Polish us with loving care.
Thus, new creatures in Your image, we'll proclaim Christ everywhere.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: God of whirling grace and love, you have indeed created us in your very image to move in right relationship with you and with one another. You sent Jesus to walk among us, and the winds of the Spirit to direct our paths. We confess that we have sometimes ignored your leading and blurred the gracious image of Christ within us. We have too often chosen the false paths of security and forgotten the courageous call to risk for love's sake. Help us to return to you through fresh vistas of your grace in the very heart of every moment.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Friends, hear again the good news—we are created in the very image of our Divine Creator! Spun together like the planets, we too are carefully crafted and continually made new in Christ. Our past hurts, mistakes, and traumas do not have the final word—God's liberation and love does! Therefore, 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.

Reading from Scripture

Hebrew Bible Reading – Exodus 19:3-6; 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Then Moses went up to God; the Holy One called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites.”

Then God spoke all these words: I am the HOLY ONE your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the HOLY ONE your God, for GOD will not acquit anyone who misuses this name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

Honor your parents, so that your days may be long in the land that the HOLY ONE your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's spouse, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

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

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection on the Word

Sung Response

Over My Head

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Imagine

John Lennon
Kathryn Barry, soloist

*** 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 and Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

*** Closing Hymn:** PH (blue) 538

Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing

Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing;
Fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, Thy love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us,
Traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give and adoration
For Thy gospel's joyful sound;
May the fruits of Thy salvation
In our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, Ever faithful
To the truth may we be found.

So that when Thy love shall call us,
Savior, from the world away,
Let no fear of death appall us,
Glad Thy summons to obey.
May we ever, May we ever
Reign with Thee in endless day.

* 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

Worship Leader – Rev. Rob Mark

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Liturgist – Nancy Ammerman

Lector – Maria Arruda

Covenant Choir

Digital Minister – Trudi Veldman

Audio Visual Tech Volunteers – Abhishek John, Jon Schwarz

Usher – Denice Thornhill

Sunday Sexton – Jesús Vargas

Cover Art – Darius Gilmont

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.



WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!!

We offer Christian education through Godly Play for ages 3-9 and youth classes for ages 10-13 and 14+. We welcome all children, youth, and families—those we know already and those who are here for the first time. We meet downstairs in Bates Hall. 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 if you want to receive updates!

UPCOMING WORSHIP. Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am 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 15, Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching, Communion, Generosity Season
- Sunday, October 22, Rev. Rob preaching

BUILDING COMMUNITY. In the spirit of building deeper connections, community, and momentum as a church, Council requests you consider making an extra effort to attend in-person as is possible, the following events:

- Jubilee Jaunt following worship: Sunday, **October 15**
- All-Church Retreat: Saturday, **October 28**
- Celebration of Renew the Light and Rededication of Windows: **November 5**
- All-Church Potluck following worship: Sunday, **November 5**

LIFE ALIVE APPLE PICKING TRIP. We have an active young adult group that meets monthly for activities and fellowship. Save the date for immediately following worship service on **Sunday, October 15**; Trudi Veldman will be hosting Life Alive for a fall apple picking outing. Please RSVP [here](#). If you'd like more information about our young adults group please email Rev. Joshua: joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org.

JUBILEE JAUNT IN FRANKLIN PARK. Sunday, October 15, 1:30 pm. Our Climate Jubilee-ers continue to encourage us to enjoy God's creation as it is now—and once again invite us to jaunt together! Betty Southwick will lead a walk to explore this local gem, Boston's largest open space, a partially-wooded parkland in the Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston. The colors of autumn will be showing off the woodland for us. Come to hear the history of the park, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr.'s vision and planning, and to see the site of the historic Bear Cages and White Stadium. We will visit Schoolmaster Hill where Ralph Waldo Emerson lived for two years. Wear comfortable shoes we—can choose to walk 1, 2, or 3 miles! RSVP at <https://tinyurl.com/franklinjaunt>.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY: We invite you to celebrate and mark this important day. We also ask you to push for our Commonwealth to properly acknowledge it: <http://www.indigenouspeoplesdayma.org/>. Here is a list of all the opportunities around our area to mark and celebrate: <https://tinyurl.com/oct92023>.

CLIMATE JUBILEE ALL-CHURCH READ. Please join us for another All-Church Read book discussion at an Adult Ed offering after church on **November 19**. The book is *In Deep Waters: Spiritual Care for Young People in a Climate Crisis*. The author is Talitha Aho, who ministers in California to a younger generation. She shares how the climate crisis impacts that generation and the importance of offering ecologically informed spiritual care. She shares practical ways to care for and respect God's world, drawing on science, Scripture, and her expertise. The book is available through the Boston Public Library (as an e-book) or at <https://www.fortresspress.com/store/product/9781506469782/In-Deep-Waters>.

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT: "Enough." Saturday, October 28, 9:30 am-4:30 pm, Glastonbury Abbey, Hingham, MA. Please join us for our annual all-church retreat as we return to the sacred setting at Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham, where we will 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 as we focus on the themes of "what is enough/I've had enough/we are enough." "Second" breakfast and lunch will be provided.



Register: tinyurl.com/cotcretreat23 by 10/15 or use this QR code:

We are very excited about our theme this year of Enough! Creating the retreat itself is a practice in the theme: we know this congregation holds *enough* gifts to create a totally stimulating, nourishing, productive, relaxing, and amazing day together. We also want everyone to follow the call for what feels like *enough* for them to contribute, so no one is burdened, and everyone is filled. Look/listen inside, and tell Rob, Diane, Joshua, and/or Nancy Stockford if you feel called to offer spiritual practices, rituals, music, prayers, logistics with rides or registration, kid activities, or to be on call for assistance. We can get you more details about all we're envisioning once you express an interest, and we'll be interested to hear from your visions too! We are thrilled to have this day to spend together, and are feeling already how rich it will be.

CHOIR INVITATION. We would love new members of the choir! If you are interested, speak to Minister of Music Tom Handel or email 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 Romans. If you'd like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders and Zoom info, contact Jan Gough at revjangough@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](#) (link on 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 and 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](#) (cotcbos.org/worship-recordings).

OPEN NEWBURY STREET CONTINUES. Newbury Street between Berkeley Street and Mass. Ave. will be closed to vehicles, and open to pedestrian traffic, on **Sundays through October 15**. Please keep this in mind when planning travel to and from COTC.

WEEKLY CALENDAR. Click [here](#) (cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) 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 – Worshippers 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 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, *Sunday Sexton*
Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*
Kelsie Lawhorn, *Child Care Provider*

CHURCH OFFICERS

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