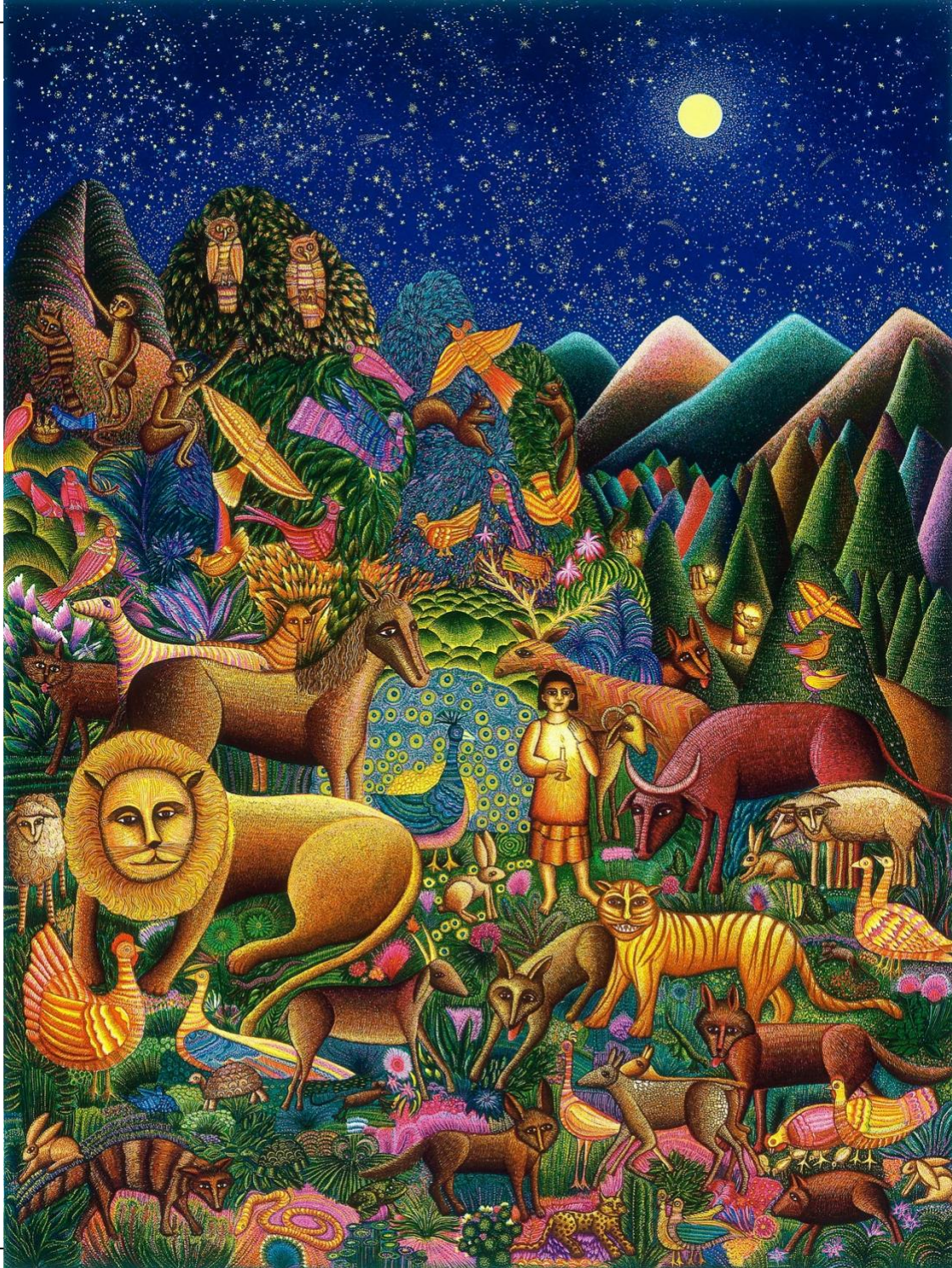


Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Blessing of the Animals

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



Church of the Covenant
The 23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Blessing of the Animals All-Ages Worship

November 13, 2022, 10:30 am

[ZOOM LINK: tinyurl.com/cotcworship](https://tinyurl.com/cotcworship)

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, please keep your mic muted during the service. The full service is recorded and later posted online

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

Prelude *Intermezzo Op. 117 No. 1* Johannes Brahms

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

***Call to Worship** “A Summer Day” Mary Oliver

One: Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean —
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down —
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

*Kindling the Christ Light

*Opening Hymn:

Canticle of the Three Children

Verse 1 and Refrain: Christine James
Verse 2: Barbara Darling
Verse 3: Karen Henry

In Celebration of
Easter/Earth Day
2019

Tune: Gustav Holst



Praise God, all works of heav - en, all beasts both wild and tame. Clear skies or rains from
The moon in all its splen - dor, the sun - rise light sub - lime, the birch - es stand - ing
All Chil - dren who are hap - py and those with - out a home who long for love and



heav - en, all man - i - fest God's reign! Star - ry night and dew - y morn - ing sum - mer
slen - der the hol - ly - hocks that climb. Bright light - ning as it's pop - ping, loud -
safe - ty, God will not leave a - lone. We the stew - ards of this life - Each -



breeze and wint - er chill. The - dolph - in's leap, hawks soar - ing, each
thun - der as it roars, small - bun - nies happ' - ly hop - ping, Gir -
called by God by name join with earth and oc - eans bright - to



shows God's lov - ing will.
affes and lab - ra - dors. We - pledge our love and lab - ors to build a world of
sing our joy - ful praise.



peace, for our kin and for our neigh - bors God's wond - ers nev - er cease!

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: Loving Creator of all animals, when you made humans, you called us to be companions and caregivers to one another and to all your creatures. Too often we fail to love as you love us. On earth there is enough, yet we perpetuate systems of injustice and deprivation. We are complacent in the face of violence and cruelty. Our systems of dominance and greed kill animals, plants, rivers, mountains, oceans, sky. We aren't living out the promise of the Peaceable Kin-dom. We've even forgotten how to imagine that it's possible. Holy One, forgive us, reconcile us, re-create us.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: From the very beginning, God has created the whole universe in love. God created the sun and moon and stars, and made this living planet our home. God brings forth every plant and insect, every bird and fish, the tiniest protozoa and the majestic whales. Even when we feel like strangers to God and one another, nature remembers us and sees the divine light in our hearts. Therefore, as critters ourselves, as children of God called as stewards and co-creators in love, let us celebrate together:

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

Sung Response

Over My Head

Over my head, I hear music in the air;
Over my head, I hear music in the air;
Over my head, I hear music in the air;
There must be a God somewhere.

Readings from Scripture

First Hebrew Bible Reading – Isaiah 11:6-10

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Adonai as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will flock to you, and your home will be a place of honor.

Second Hebrew Bible Reading – Job 12:7-8

But ask the animals, and they will teach you,
Or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you,
Or let the fish in the sea inform you.

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

Reflection – A quote from Meister Eckhart (c. 1260 – c. 1328)

Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things.
Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God.
Every creature is a word of God.
If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature—even a caterpillar—
I would never have to prepare a sermon.
So full of God is every creature.

Sung Response

Over My Head

Storytime

Moment for Generosity

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir

Bill Staines

* Doxology

Let orange maples start the song.
Hills, valleys, oceans sing along.
Dogs, cats and rabbits join the tune!
All beings thank our God triune!

Words by Barbara Darling

* Prayer of Dedication

Celebrations and Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

Blessing of the Animals

Sending Prayer – Norman Habel

Many: God, our Creator, help us to love
all creatures as kin,
all animals as partners on Earth,
all birds as messengers of praise,
all minute beings as expressions of your mysterious design
and all frogs as voices of hope. Amen.



* Closing Song

God, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let your love increase.

Prayer of Saint Francis

*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

Liturgists – Rev. Kate Carlisle, Ron Lacey, Barbara Darling, Evelyn Kimber, Nancy Stockford, Karen Henry, Rowen Mark, Rev. Joshua Lazard, Rev. Rob Mark

Sabbath Supply Minister of Music – Kate Salfelder

Moment for Generosity – Christine James

Audio-Visual Techs – Abhishek John, Jon Schwarz

Usher – Denice Thornhill

Digital Minister – Trudi Veldman

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, November 13, Blessing of the Animals All Ages Worship
- Sunday, November 20, Reign of Christ Sunday, Communion, Trans Day of Remembrance
- Sunday, November 27, First Sunday of Advent, ZOOM ONLY, Rev. Rob preaching
- Sunday, December 4, Second Sunday of Advent, Communion

WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!! We warmly welcome all young people and their families into our journey together. If you're a family new to COTC, we are glad you are here during this all-ages service! Children and youth of all ages are welcome and encouraged to remain in worship this week, and to come forward when invited if comfortable. Our nursery is open this week and you are welcome to drop in. Families can find our nursery 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). To learn more, contact Rev. Kate Carlisle, CYCE Coordinator: kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org

GIVE TO ANIMALS AS WE BLESS THE ANIMALS! Today, **Sunday, November 13**, Church of the Covenant will hold its annual Blessing of the Animals service. This year we encourage children of the church—and people of **any age!**—to bring with you to that service contributions of clean new (or gently used) towels, blankets, or sheets; unopened hand soap, bleach, paper towels, and more. These donations will be lovingly delivered to the Animal Rescue League of Boston for the rescued animals in their care. Also, you can contribute to Kobe Henro Pet Food Bank, which gives food and treats to needy pets – you can bring cat food, dog food, kibble, or cat litter. See these links for more information (or ask barbarakdarling@yahoo.com if you have questions):
arlboston.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2021_Boston-Wishlist.pdf
kobehenro.org/

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS ALL AGES WORSHIP. Today we invite you to bring dogs, cats, and other beloved non-human companion animals to worship! You will be invited to come forward together for a blessing toward the end of the service. If you have animals you weren't able to bring in person, we invite you to bring a photo (maybe one on your phone!), or a collar, toy, or other small item forward for a blessing. We will also raise a prayer of thanksgiving for those pets we have lost, and you might want to have a picture of a beloved pet ready during that time.

LIFE ALIVE BRUNCH. Our young adults will gather for brunch following worship today, **Sunday, November 13**. Questions? Email Rev. Joshua at joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org.

2022 SEASON OF GENEROSITY – Giving God!

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above,

We thank You, God, we thank You, God, for all Your love. – *Godspell*

This year's *Short Yet Mighty Season of Generosity* reminds us that all of the beauty and bounty of our world are gifts of our living, giving God. Over three November Sundays, the Generosity Generators team will gratefully acknowledge God's ceaseless giving of "all good gifts." As those who have received much, each of us is invited to "give God" on to others, by striving to be the salt, light, compassion, generosity, and justice of Jesus for others in this world. Through annual pledges of treasure, time and talents to Church of the Covenant, we acknowledge in gratitude our faith community's numerous good gifts to us all, and "pay it forward" to ensure

Covenant can continue to “give God” to our congregation, our neighbors and our world into the future. Look for communication from the Generosity Generators team to reach you soon in both letter and email formats. Please prayerfully consider what you can afford to give this year and complete and return the enclosed pledge card at your earliest convenience. **If possible, please bring your pledge card to church on November 20, when we will dedicate our pledges.** For those who cannot come to church in person, please use the electronic pledge form available [here](#) that will go directly to Financial Secretary Nancy Stockford. We hope to raise \$275,000 in pledges this year to help us meet our overall budget. May we *give God* and *receive God* in this season of celebrating the One who gives *all good gifts*!

ADULT ED ON TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE. Next **Sunday, November 20**, is Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day to witness to the lives and memories of trans people, known and unknown, who have died by violence and despair in the past year. In the spirit of mourning the dead but fighting for the living, we will hold an Adult Ed forum immediately following worship, where Rev. Kate will lead a discussion of the ongoing escalation of legislative action, rhetoric, and violence against trans people across the US.

COVENANT BOOK DISCUSSION. Church of the Covenant's next book discussion is **Sunday, December 4, at 5 PM.** We will meet for a potluck at Faith and Lucy's in Roslindale and discuss Brian McLaren's *Do I Stay Christian?* As always, you are invited whether or not you have read the book and whether or not you've ever come to a Covenant book discussion before. Questions? Ask Barbara: barbarakdarling@yahoo.com

CARDS TO NANCY HOLLOMON. We miss our wonderful congregant and friend Nancy Hollomon who is spending much of this summer & fall at her beloved family “Gade Farm” in upper New York state. While there, email is harder to access, so she'd love to get a postcard or a note from you! If you can, drop her an “old school” line: Nancy Hollomon, 2479 Western Ave., Altamont, NY 12009. Thanks!

VISTING MARY ROBINSON. Our beloved Mary is enjoying in-person visits these days as she is recovering from her broken femur. Please consider dropping by her rehab place in Boston's South End if you can. Please contact Rev. Rob or Faith Perry for more details including free parking.

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 with intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms & sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian *on Zoom*.

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

BULLETIN ART: Peaceable Kingdom © 2022 John August Swanson | Eyekons

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 New Visitor's Card and place it in the offering plate, or email us at churchofthecovenant@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!

Worship Recordings – 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.

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*