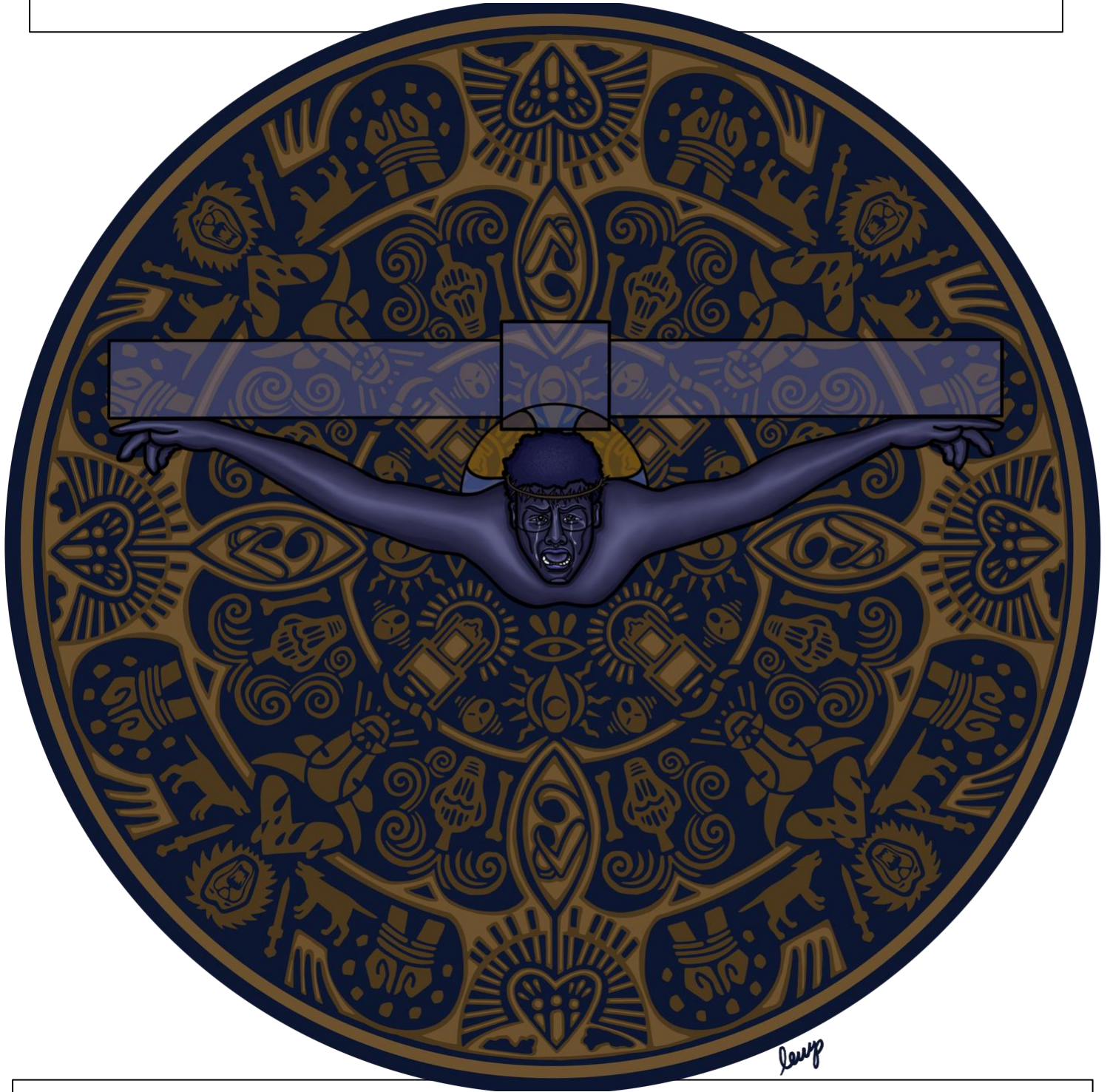


Church of the Covenant and Newton Presbyterian Church



Good Friday 2023

Presbyterian Church (USA) / United Church of Christ

Church of the Covenant & Newton Presbyterian Church

April 7, 2023 7:00 pm

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

[Zoom: tinyurl.com/cotcworship](https://tinyurl.com/cotcworship)

A Note About This Evening's Service:

This Good Friday Tenebrae service is centered on the seven last “words” or cries of Jesus from the cross. The scripture readings are followed by short meditations written by those who deliver them. Each meditation will be followed by a sequence of musical meditations, silence, and candles being extinguished. This Tenebrae service moves us from the glimmers of sunset to the gathering gloom and silence of Holy Saturday, as candles are extinguished, and we are invited to leave the service by holding silence into the night. The end of this bulletin has a broader explanation of the history and significance of this powerful service.

In-Person: Thank you for joining us. To help mark the poignancy of this holy day, please enter and leave the sanctuary in silence. You are invited, but not required, to mask.

Online: Thank you for joining us. If you are safely able, you are invited to bring a candle to this Zoom service to extinguish in solidarity following the final meditation. You will be invited to share some time in the night of silence following the service on your own.

Prelude

O World, I Must Now Leave You

Johannes Brahms

Welcome. Breathe. Center.

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

*** Call To Worship**

One: Who will come to worship when we focus on the crucifixion?

Many: We will come.

One: When the closest disciples have fled in terror, who will gather at the foot of the cross?

Many: We will gather.

One: Who will hear again the story of the death of God's Saving One?

Many: We will hear.

One: Who will witness to the love of God, poured out for the world, on that night, on this night, & always?

Many: We will witness.

*** Opening Hymn: PH 98**

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down;
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, Thine only crown;
O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain:
Mine, mine was the transgression, but Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor, vouchsafe to me Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest friend,
For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever; and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to Thee.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Assurance of Grace

One: The Gospel of John proclaims that God entered the world through Jesus Christ, not to condemn the world, but so that the world might be liberated. In Jesus, all may be forgiven, healed, and reconnected to God. Therefore, let us lay down our burdens, leave our brokenness behind, and journey on together with the Saving One of God, celebrating the good news:

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

The First Word: Luke 23:32-38

Abba, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, **‘Abba, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’** And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, ‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!’ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, ‘If you are the Ruler of the People, save yourself!’ There was also an inscription over him, ‘This is the Ruler of the People.’

Meditation: Mary Lou Smith

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 85

What Wondrous Love is This

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul.

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity, I'll sing on!

The Second Word: Luke 23:39-43

Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, ‘Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!’ But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this one has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ He replied, **‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.’**

Meditation: Kimbol Soques

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 599

Jesus Remember Me

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

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Je - sus re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Words: Luke 23:42
Music: Taizé Community, 1998

The Third Word: John 19:23–27

Woman, here is your son. Here is your mother.

And when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.’ This was to

fulfill what the scripture says, ‘They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.’ And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, **‘Woman, here is your son.’** Then he said to the disciple, **‘Here is your mother.’** And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Meditation: Rev. Kate Carlisle

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *Ave Maria* Igor Stravinsky

Betsy Groves, Tim Groves, Tom Reid, David McKinney – Vocalists

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

*Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and in the hour of our death. Amen.*

The Fourth Word: Matthew 27:45-49

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, **‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’** that is, **‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’** When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, ‘This man is calling for Elijah.’ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.’

Meditation: Rev. Rob Mark

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *Psalm 23* Text: Nancy Stockford, Christine James
Tune: St. Columba

Covenant Choir

The Fifth Word: John 19:28-29

I am thirsty.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), **‘I am thirsty.’** A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth.

Meditation: Rev. Joshua Lazard

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Hymn: PH 102

Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Were you there when they pierced Him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced Him in the side?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they pierced Him in the side?

Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

The Sixth Word: John 19:30

It is finished.

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, **‘It is finished.’** Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Meditation: Rev. Dr. So Jung Kim

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *Wondrous Love*
Covenant Choir

Shape Note Hymn

The Seventh Word: Luke 23:44-49

Abba, into your hands I commend my spirit.

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, '**Abba, into your hands I commend my spirit.**' Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this one was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Meditation: **Rev. Tom Reid**

Invitation to Meditative Silence

Musical Meditation *All Is Well* Shape Note Hymn
Betsy Groves, Tim Groves, Tom Reid - Vocalists

Prayer

Tolling of the Bell

Charge

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***In-Person:*** Please leave the sanctuary in silence as some lights come on.

***Online:*** After you log off from Zoom (or recording), we invite you to remain in silence for a minute or two after and close your computer down. Consider turning off or down the lights in your room. Extinguish any candles. Spend some moments in silent vigil.



## Participating in Worship

**Liturgists** – Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. Tom Reid

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Meditations Written and Offered By** – Mary Lou Smith, Kimbol Soques, Rev. Kate Carlisle, Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. Joshua Lazard Rev. Dr. So Jung Kim, Rev. Tom Reid

**Lector** – Claudine Ellyin

**Musicians** – Covenant Choir; Tim Groves, Betsy Groves, Tom Reid, David McKinney - Soloists

**Audio-Visual Tech Team** – Jon Schwarz, Abhishek John

**Ushers** – Holly Humphreys, Anne Crane      **Digital Minister** – Trudi Veldman

**Sexton** – Jésus Vargas

**Cover Art** – Why Have You Forsaken Me?, by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman, A Sanctified Art, Inspired by Matthew 27:27-50

### Background for this Service

This service commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus in a symbolic movement from light to darkness. The music, scriptures, and prayers reflect Jesus' last words from the cross. The service is loosely based on an 8th century service called Tenebrae, meaning "shadows," which was celebrated on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Holy Week.

The candles symbolize Jesus Christ, the light of the entire world. As they are extinguished, they reflect the darkness that fell over the world because of Jesus' death and the fear and apprehension experienced by his followers. The service will close with a stark charge without the benediction customary in worship services throughout the rest of the church year. Suspending the blessing (until Easter morning) evokes the disciples' experience of abandonment and despair at the time of Jesus' death.

As we remember the undeserved suffering of Christ, we bring before God the suffering in our own lives, the suffering of people we love, those who are persecuted for speaking the truth, and those who suffer from poverty, pandemics, violence, or other injustices around the globe. To bear witness to suffering – God's suffering and the suffering of creation – is an act of hope in the shine of God's steadfast love which the gloom cannot ultimately extinguish.

We specifically remember and celebrate the late Rev. Jennifer Wegter-McNelly, pastor of Church of the Covenant from 2007-2012, who first introduced this special service to us. Rev. Jennifer left this life to join God's eternal embrace in the fall of 2022. We give thanks to God for all the life and love Rev. Jennifer brought into this world and our church.

## **Remaining Holy Week Services:**

**Covenant (in-person or online):** [www.cotcbos.org/this-sunday-online.html](http://www.cotcbos.org/this-sunday-online.html)

Holy Saturday Vigil, April 8, 1:00pm (ZOOM ONLY)

Easter Sunday, 10:30, Easter Egg hunt for kids

**Newton Presbyterian Church (in-person or online):**

Easter Sunday, 10:15am

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### **Notes from Cover Art, “Why Have You Forsaken Me?” By Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman:**

My research for this piece began with imagery of Christ’s mockery. Image after image had contorted, almost inhuman, figures torturing Christ and reveling in brutality, while Jesus was at peace. It seems the artists depicted Jesus leaning hard into his divinity, almost transcending the embarrassment, abandonment, and pain, but all I could think of when I read the text was how devastating and lonely it is to be misunderstood and made to be a joke. I felt that, in the last moments of Jesus’ life, he’d be thrust into his humanity. An art piece that was particularly intriguing to me was *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* by Salvador Dalí. It has such a harsh downward angle on the cross; it visually connected me to Christ’s mockery in a new way. It pushed me to consider different perspectives from which artists and people of faith have been engaging with this horrifying event, both physically and theologically. One visual perspective I couldn’t find was one looking directly down on Jesus’s face. At first I thought of this as the ultimate position of mockery—looking down Jesus’ nose during the most excruciating moments of his thirty-three years. Everyone mocked him. It must’ve felt like this mockery was closing in on him. I wonder what his internal world was like... Were there parts of him echoing the mockery of the soldiers, chief priests, scribes, elders, and bystanders? As I began to sketch Christ from this perspective, my thoughts and feelings about the piece took a hard turn. I was thinking about the text as I was holding my five-month-old little boy. He had a fever and was inconsolable. I felt desperate to offer him comfort and solace; it felt like my heart was breaking open. And then it occurred to me: this perspective I was drawing was not a position of mockery, it was metaphorically the perspective of God the Creator looking at her son who was screaming out in agony. In order to find the expression on Christ’s face, I referenced images of children crying; their expressions were raw, real, and unencumbered. This perspective shift reveals something profound to me about the heart of God, and I connect with it in a new way after becoming a mother. This image represents the deep lament of God. It holds the desperation of a parent and the betrayal of a loved one. These acts of abuse, cruelty, and indignity were fired at the Creator of the Universe by the very beings into whom God breathed life. Perhaps God is crying out to us, “Why have you forsaken me?” Instead of creating a mandala with mockery closing in on Jesus, I imaged the verses of Psalm 22. These images of grief and gratitude ripple out from Jesus’ mouth and become a foundation, a grounding in his faith in this moment. In the visual, the moments of lament are faded while the images of adoration and praise shimmer a bit more brightly. The psalm gives him the fortitude to rest, and to offer up his last breath.

# **Newton Presbyterian Church, 75 Vernon Street Newton, Massachusetts**

<https://www.newtonpresbyterianchurch.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/newtonpresbyterianchurch>

<https://www.instagram.com/newtonpresbyterianchurch/>

Link to the church's worship YouTube channel: <https://npc-ma.org/youtube>

Pastor: Rev. Tom Reid, [revtom@newtonpresbyterianchurch.org](mailto:revtom@newtonpresbyterianchurch.org), (617) 564-3314

Music: Jean Pulsifer, Interim Organist

Website: <https://newtonpresbyterianchurch.org>

Email: [newtonpresbyterian@gmail.com](mailto:newtonpresbyterian@gmail.com)

## **The Session**

Kweku Donkor Class of 2023

Mary Lou Smith Class of 2023

David Penn Class of 2024

Kathy Barnes Class of 2024

Esther Tambe Class of 2025

Gerald Tabi Class of 2025

Rev. Tom Reid Moderator

Clerk of Session & Treasurer, Kathy Barnes

## **Board of Deacons**

Jack Holder Class of 2023

Laura McTaggart Class of 2024

Hope Mugerwa Class of 2024

Allison Penn Class of 2025

Deacon Contact: Laura McTaggart, [Lmctaggart@comcast.net](mailto:Lmctaggart@comcast.net)

Youth Ministry: David Penn, [dpenn@bu.edu](mailto:dpenn@bu.edu)

Newton Pres Community Group Email List: [NewtonPres@groups.io](mailto:NewtonPres@groups.io)

NewtonPres is a moderated listserv for church-related matters for the Newton Presbyterian Church community. On this list, members and friends of the church can periodically send out prayer requests, announcements, or updates about church events. If you would like to subscribe, send an email to:

[NewtonPres+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:NewtonPres+subscribe@groups.io)

<https://www.newtonpresbyterianchurch.org>

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<https://npc-ma.org/youtube>



## 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 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 marginalized, to enjoy seats at God's table. This congregation seeks to demonstrate that vision by welcoming individuals and families of all races, gender identities, ages, physical/mental abilities, and 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 and gender identities 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*

Jesús Vargas *Sunday Sexton*

Anita Goncalves, *Child Care Provider*

Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

Kelsie Lawhorn, *Childcare 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*