

# Church of the Covenant

## Boston Massachusetts



**HOLY SATURDAY MUSICAL CONTEMPLATIVE VIGIL**  
**Saturday, April 16, 2022, 2:30-3:15pm**

*Be still and know that God is God. ~Psalm 46*

*On this holy day, please enjoy some silence, and allow your mind and heart to be still.*

## **Welcome to Church of the Covenant on this Holy Saturday.**

As we continue to journey as pilgrims through this Holy Week, walking with Jesus from the Palms of Sunday to the Resurrection of Easter, today we are faced with the Silence of God. Jesus is dead and lies in the tomb. Our memories are freshly filled with the cross of suffering and death that is Good Friday. And today we are invited to simply **BE**. To be with the silence that is unique to this Holy Saturday. To be with the reality that sometimes we don't have answers in life. To be in solidarity with all those whose voices are silenced by injustice, oppression, disinterest or neglect. Sometimes the most faithful thing we can do is fall silent, and simply *be*. We must simply be even in the face of the crosses that we and those we love still face, even in the face of a planet in peril, even in the face of social injustices, racial inequality, pandemics and structural sin. This is a day to be still and know that God is God. So today, as we gather in solidarity, we sit, we listen, we meditate, we pray. And in hope, we long for the dawning of hope that tomorrow will bring.

Today's contemplation is intentionally simple. During this vigil, you are invited to listen, contemplate, pray, or read through some of the prayers and readings in this bulletin. If you are with us in-person, you are invited to light a prayer candle at anytime. If you are joining online, you are welcome to light a candle of prayer if you can safely kindle one. The main focus of this time is residing in contemplation.

## **Welcome Yourself and Others Who Vigil This Holy Day**

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

**Centering Spiritual:** *Soon I Will Be Done With the Trouble of the World* played by Praxton Z. Smith in worship at COTC on 8/27/19

<https://youtu.be/R5tvkBEyWjQ?t=62>

## **Suggested Readings and Prayers:**

### Holy Saturday by Audrey Holt

Eyes have closed  
And my whole being waits  
Sorrows roll into  
Heavy stings  
And my whole being waits  
Wounds become scars  
Scars that ache

Down to the bones  
And my whole being waits  
Lungs hold breath as  
Nights mix into  
Skies of sunrise  
And my whole being waits  
Arms and hearts and hope reach up  
And my whole being waits  
For your strong love

### **Responsive Reading: Psalm 46**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.

**God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;**

God will help it when the morning dawns.

The nations may be at war, countries left in ruins,

Yet is the voice of the Almighty heard, slowly breaking through hearts of stone.

**The Beloved is with us; the Infinite Heart of Love is our refuge.**

Come, behold the works of the Beloved;

How love does reign even in humanity's desolation.

**For the Beloved makes wars cease to the end of the earth;**

**breaking the bow, and shattering the spear;**

**and burning the shields with fire.**

'Be still, and know that I am Love!

Awaken! Befriend justice and mercy;

Do you not know you bear my Love? Who among you will respond?

**O Blessed One, You know all hearts, You are ever with us;**

**May Love ever guide our lives!**

**Reading from the New Testament for Holy Saturday:** Luke 23:50-56

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This

man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

### **A Quote from Anne Frank's Diary**

*That's the difficulty in these times: ideals, dreams, & cherished hopes rise within us, only to meet the horrible truth & be shattered. It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals because they seem so absurd & impossible to carry out. Yet, I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.*

### **Responsive Reading: "We Need One Another" by George Odell**

We need one another when we mourn and would be comforted.

**We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid.**

We need one another when we are in despair, in temptation, and need to be recalled to our best selves again.

**We need one another when we would accomplish some great purpose, and cannot do it alone.**

We need one another in the hour of success, when we look for someone to share our triumphs.

**We need one another in the hour of defeat, when with encouragement we might endure, and stand again.**

We need one another when we come to die, and would have gentle hands prepare us for the journey.

**All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.**

### **The Peace of Wild Things by Wendell Berry**

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still  
water. And I feel above me the day-blind

stars waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

## **Sacred Fire**

*We are now invited to take some time to write down on paper any anxieties, burdens, pain you are carrying for yourself, your family, friends, community, congregation, nation, world, or planet. These will be for your and God's eyes only. We will then each cast these into the sacred fire in a powerful moment of letting go, and letting God.*

## **Closing Prayer:**

Keep watch, Holy One, with those who work, or watch, or weep this day, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

## **Prayer for Grounding by Jan Richardson**

### **Let it be**

that on this day  
we will expect  
no more of ourselves  
than to keep  
breathing  
with the bewildered  
cadence  
of lungs that will not  
give up the ghost.

### **Let it be**

we will expect  
little but  
the beating of  
our heart,  
stubborn in  
its repeating rhythm  
that will not  
cease to sound.

### **Let it be**

we will  
still ourselves  
enough to hear  
what may yet  
come to echo:  
as if in the breath,  
another breathing;  
as if in the heartbeat,  
another heart.

### **Let it be**

we will not  
try to fathom  
what comes  
to meet us  
in the stillness  
but simply open  
to the approach  
of a mystery  
we hardly dared  
to dream

## **Responsive Prayer for the Middle Day**

(written by McKenna Lewellen)

People of God, on this day, we remember the textures of silence.

We remember first, soft and restful silence where chaos ceases, the silence that blanketed a good creation after God shaped the cosmos and carved out sabbath.

**We remember, listen, and trust God is with us there.**

We imagine too, the fierce and contemplative silence where we find God, the silence of Moses on the mountain, of Jesus in the wilderness, of sages and mystics through the ages.

**We remember, listen, and trust God is with us there.**

And today, we know the awful, somehow at once smothering and jagged silence of absence where we cannot find God, the silence of this middle day, laced with fear and cut by sorrow.

**We know, listen, and fear God is gone.** (silence)

People of God, we know these textures of silence.

And though this middle day's quiet threatens to consume our hope of hearing God's Word again,

**We dare to hope that God is present even in terrible silence.**

**We dare to hope that Christ's light might shine again.**

**We dare to hope that the Spirit is stirring.**

And so though it is awfully silent, we stir too.

**Together, in the face of despair, in the face of fear,  
we light candles to practice hope we cannot yet put into words.**

## **Prayer Candles**

You may light a candle in prayer, naming your prayer aloud or in your heart.

## **Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ.

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

**Go in Peace, and Await the Empty Tomb...**



**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 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, *Sunday Sexton*  
Anita Goncalves, *Child Care Provider*  
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*