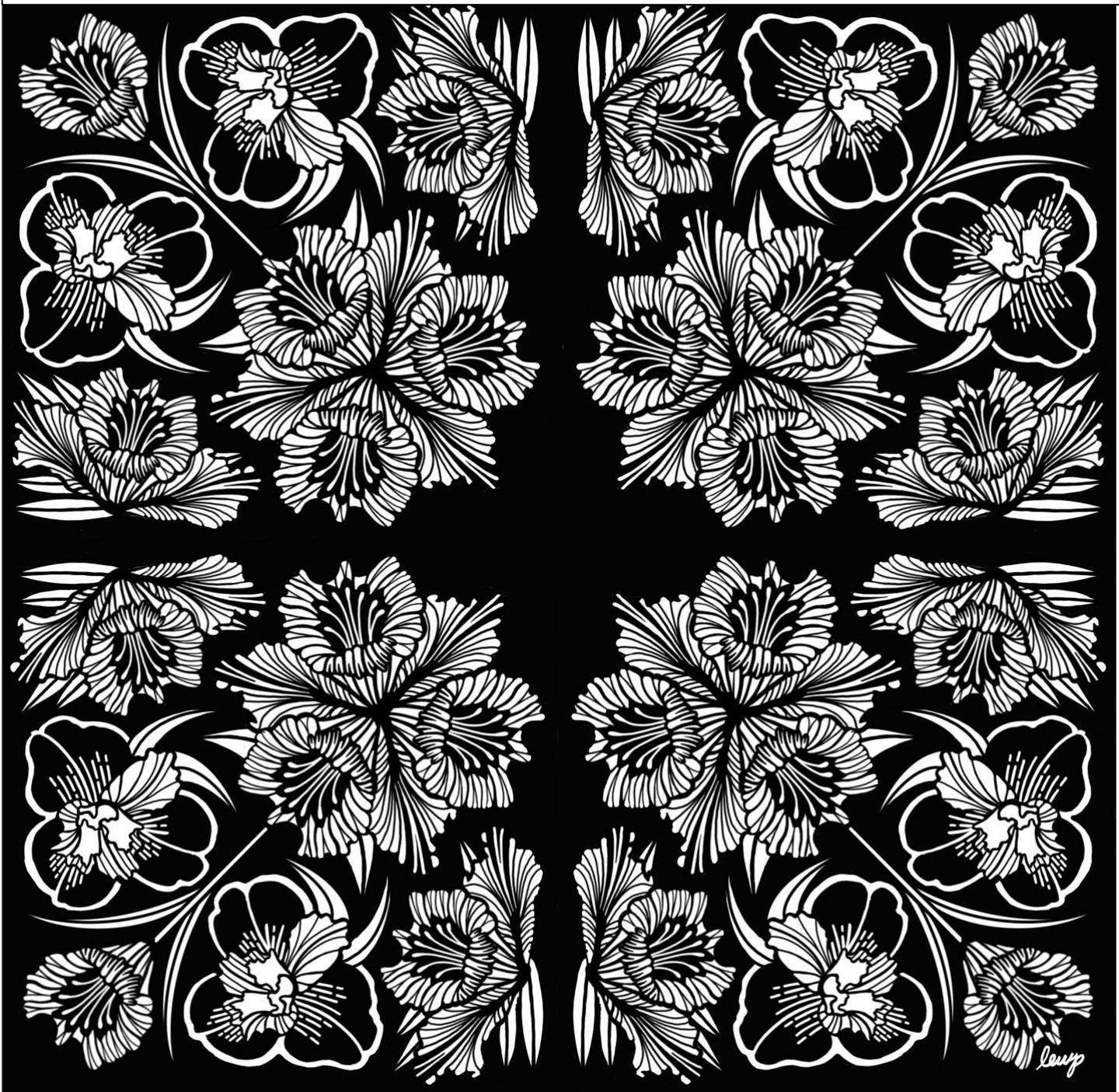


Church of the Covenant Boston, MA



Breathe: Second Sunday in Lent **Installations of New Officers**

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ
ZOOM LINK (click here)



Church of the Covenant
Breathe: Second Sunday in Lent
Installations of New Officers

February 28, 2021 10:30 am

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGNZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

Learning the Song

Black History Month: *Educate, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Chavis*



Call to Worship

Psalm 4

One: *To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.*

Answer me when I call, O God of justice!

You gave me room when I was in distress.

Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

Many: **How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?**

How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies?

Selah

One: But know that the Holy One has set apart the faithful;
and hears when they call.

Many: When you are disturbed, do not sin;
ponder it on your beds, and be silent.

Selah

One: Offer right sacrifices,
and put your trust in the Holy One.
There are many who say, 'O that we might see some good!
Let the light of your face shine on us, O God!'

Many: You have put gladness in my heart
more than when their grain and wine abound.
I will both lie down and sleep in peace;
for you alone, O God, make me lie down in safety.

Kindling the Christ Light

Attending to the Breath

Lauren Star

Chiming of the Prayer Bowl

Hymn (PH, 316):

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.
4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace: Psalm 62

One: *To the leader: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

For God alone my soul waits in silence;

from God comes my salvation.

The Holy One alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall never be shaken.

How long will you assail a person,

will you batter your victim, all of you,

as you would a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence.

They take pleasure in falsehood;

they bless with their mouths,

but inwardly they curse.

Selah

**Many: For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from God.**

**God alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.**

**On God rests my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.**

Trust in God at all times, O people;

pour out your heart before God;

God is a refuge for us.

Selah

One: Those of low estate are but a breath,

those of high estate are a delusion;

in the balances they go up;

they are together lighter than a breath.

Put no confidence in extortion,

and set no vain hopes on robbery;

if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this:

that power belongs to God,

and steadfast love belongs to you, O Holy One.

For you repay to all

according to their work.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer (*marked by chiming of prayer bowl*)

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Friends, hear again the good news – while we are but a breath, the Holy Creator Divine Breath breathes life, forgiveness and restoration into us – as she names us each “beloved”. Therefore, respiring together, let us celebrate together:

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

Scripture Readings

Hebrew Bible Reading: Habakkuk 3:1-5, 8-14, 17-19

A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk according to Shigionoth.

O Holy One, I have heard of your renown,
and I stand in awe, O God, of your work.

In our own time revive it;
in our own time make it known;
in wrath may you remember mercy.

God came from Teman,
the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Selah

God's glory covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of holy praise.

The brightness was like the sun;
rays came forth from divine hands,
where power lay hidden.

Before God went pestilence,
and plague followed close behind.

Was your wrath against the rivers, O Holy One?

Or your anger against the rivers,
or your rage against the sea,
when you drove your horses,
your chariots to victory?

You brandished your naked bow,
sated were the arrows at your command.

Selah

You split the earth with rivers.
The mountains saw you, and writhed;
a torrent of water swept by;
the deep gave forth its voice.
The sun raised high its hands;
the moon stood still in its exalted place,
at the light of your arrows speeding by,
at the gleam of your flashing spear.
In fury you trod the earth,
in anger you trampled nations.
You came forth to save your people,
to save your anointed.
You crushed the head of the wicked house,
laying it bare from foundation to roof.

Selah

You pierced with their own arrows the head of his warriors,
who came like a whirlwind to scatter us,
gloating as if ready to devour the poor who were in hiding.
Though the fig tree does not blossom,
and no fruit is on the vines;
though the produce of the olive fails
and the fields yield no food;
though the flock is cut off from the fold
and there is no herd in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Holy One;
I will exult in the God of my salvation.
God, the Holy One, is my strength;
who makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
and makes me tread upon the heights.

To the leader: with stringed instruments.

Gospel Reading: Mark 7:31-36

Then Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd,

and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he breathed and said to him, ‘Ephphatha’, that is, ‘Be opened.’ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

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

Sermon

Respiring Selah

Chant:

Meditation on Breathing

Sarah Dan Jones

Breathe in, breathe out...
When I breathe in, I'll breathe in peace
When I breathe out, I'll breathe out love
Breathe in, breathe out...

Installation of New Deacons and Council Members:

Evelyn Kimber, Jonathan Schwarz, Sarah Perreault, Harry Forsdick

**Many: We welcome you in this ministry with hope & we install you in joy!
Trust God, seek the Spirit's consolation,
love this congregation with all your hearts,
serve, forbear, witness, practice self-care and lead,
in the name of the good and gracious God. Amen.**

Moment for Generosity: *Cross*

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein

J.S. Bach

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Christ 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

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.**

Participating in Today's Worship

Preacher – Rev. Rob Mark

Breathing Guide – Lauren Star

Liturgist – Tom Reid

Lector – Mocky Day

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Moment for Generosity – Christine James

PEACE BE WITH YOU IN THESE DAYS: We are delighted to welcome you to our community of faith! As we all do our part to love our neighbor as ourselves to help “flatten the curve” of the coronavirus/COVID-19, our building remains closed; all meetings and events that are offered, including worship, have shifted to an online or conference call format. We are grateful for the technology that allows the majority of us to gather together online. And in faith and through God's ceaseless, amazing grace—as we practice “social distancing” we also practice “spiritual nearing” to each other and the Sweet Holy Spirit.

ATTENDING TO THE BREATH – INTRODUCTION TO OUR BREATHING GUIDE: Lauren Star has been teaching hatha yoga for 18 years, and at the core of hatha yoga is conscious breathing exercises. She was originally trained in the Sivananda Lineage at Ananda Kutir Ashram in Cape Town, South Africa. More recently she completed her Master's Degree in Yoga Studies at

Loyola Marymount University (2020), and is currently working on a post-graduate certificate in Yoga Therapy. She has taught yoga and conscious breathing to people of all ages, in a variety of settings, including Women's Lunch Place! Conscious breathing is a practice with physiological benefits, including stress management and pain reduction. Many believe it has spiritual benefits as well, and it has been used by monks and nuns in many traditions as a way of turning within and connecting with God. During the Lenten services this year, Lauren Star will lead us in some simple 'conscious breathing' practices. Some of these will include gentle movement. We look forward to hearing your experiences of 'attending to the breath' and where that leads you physically, mentally, and spiritually.

MOMENT FOR GENEROSITY: This Lenten season we are focusing on breath and breathing. *Breathe in*, *breathe out*. Breathing is relational, there is a give and there is a take. So, as we are giving together as a church this coming Sunday, Covenant's Generosity Generators will invite you to join them in thinking about the cross and many meanings it has taken on for followers of Jesus over time. In our Moment for Generosity, we'll connect images of the cross from *Hebrews 12:1-3* to Black History Month, COVID19, traditional African medicine, and colonial Boston! And we will ask you to consider supporting the community health centers that generously serve our neighbors every day and that are especially critical in these pandemic times, including Codman Square Community Health Center in Dorchester, the Dimock Center in Roxbury, and the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center.

FACING OUR RACISM WORKSHOP (NEW DATE): Our friends at Co-operative Metropolitan Ministry are organizing an excellent few hours long workshop, \$45, "Facing Our Racism: Becoming Conscious Partners" on Sunday, March 14, noon-4:30pm – [click here to register](#).

COTC 101, MARCH 14: Are you new-ish to Church of the Covenant and want to find out more about who we are, our history, our two denominations, and our 5-point missional plan we feel called by God to live out through 2025? Then please join us after worship on Sunday, March 14 for an hour or so on Zoom while we cover some of these topics together. Bring some coffee, lunch, snacks perhaps to your comfy-iest chair/ couch as we zoom in together. Register [here](#).

COVER ART: *The Cross Remains*, by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman. Inspired by 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 | *Digital drawing*

A note from the artist: “Confession: I have a problem with the image of the cross. Early Christians expressed their identity subversively with a fish or an anchor, but once Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, the cross emerged as the predominant Christian symbol. My struggle with the cross is connected to my rejection of state-sanctioned violence. It is after all an empirical torture device. In my desire to reject the empire’s visual identification of the movement of Jesus, a symbol that has also been co-opted for questionable purposes in American culture, I have denied the cross. As I have spent more time in reflection, however, I think this rejection could be an indication of my privilege. It is convenient for me to identify with more comfortable, rosy images of Christianity while turning away from the anguish Christ suffered at the hands of earthly power. It’s easier for me to protest the cross than it is to try and more fully understand the ugliness of the oppression he endured. For those who know injustice intimately, the cross can be an image of profound identification with Jesus, the one who endured unspeakable agony and rose again. On the wall next to my front door hangs a resurrection cross created by a Mexican artisan. I love it so much because you almost can’t see the cross for the flowers. It serves as a reminder to me that death does not have the final word. I drew this image as I attempted to obscure the cross with blooming irises, a flower that represents wisdom and strength. Ultimately, in the negative space, the cross remains.

UPCOMING WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS: Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am as we come together in community through Zoom to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God’s still-speaking Word proclaimed.

- Sunday February 28, Lent 2, Rev. Rob preaching, Installations of New Officers
- Sunday March 7, Lent 3, Rev. Joshua preaching, Communion / Climate Jubilee Adult Education
- Sunday March 14, Lent 4, Celebration of the Word with Nicaragua Companions / COTC 101
- Sunday March 21, Lent 5, Rev. Rob preaching, Communion / Breakout room coffee half-hour

Here are the Zoom details for Sundays:

join by computer/ tablet/ smartphone:

<https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGZUT09>

one tap mobile: +16465588656,,91025989890#,,#892502#

join by phone: +1 646 558 8656, Meeting ID: 910 2598 9890, Password: 892502

Season of Lent

Special Announcements

A Note from the Pastor

Our theme this year for the season of Lent is “Breathe.” In this world where too many still cannot find a breath, we all need to strive together to breathe more deeply, more regularly, more generously. We need to do so physically, spiritually, and with the justice of Jesus in our lungs and actions. Join us from now through Easter for this important and timely spiritual journey. At the beginning of each worship service Sunday morning, we will spend a little sacred time learning how to breathe better.

LENTEN EVENING PRAYERS: Beginning this Wednesday, 2/24, join us each Wednesday during the Lenten season from 6-6:30pm for our evening prayer service. And we are looking for volunteers to help lead these services. We have a simple powerpoint with the basic service elements that you would just customize with the given text for each week. Or you are welcome to let your imagination run wild. Just sign up in this [Google Doc](#) and let us know if you have any questions over *email*. Zoom link for each Wednesday:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88999202076?pwd=bU9XQ0JuR0F1bXhrTUV2eVBDcHIxdz09>

LENT DEVOTIONALS: Lent began Feb. 17 with our Ash Wednesday service. In preparation for this season, our Worship and Music committee is providing you all with a free PDF copy of A Sanctified Art daily Lenten devotional: download [here](#). In addition, for those who prefer booklets to hold, here are some we recommend (please let Rob know if you have any financial limitations and we will purchase a copy for you):

- *Were You There*
 - *Wild Hope - Stories for Lent from the Vanishing*
 - *Lent in Plain Sight*
 - *Lent of Liberation: Confronting the legacy of American slavery*
-

VACCINATIONS: As we all know, our Commonwealth is in the process of ensuring everyone gets a COVID-19 vaccine according to MA/CDC guidelines/phasing – yet the process can feel a bit daunting and frustrating. As we give thanks for the miraculous reality of these vaccines, we lament the unequal access still in our state, and the confusing roll out. If you are feeling confused, you are not alone, and we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Rob, Joshua, Kate or our Deacons if you could use some help in making sense of this and making a plan to get vaccinated. We also recommend everyone be in touch with their PCP as a first step. And remember, even in the face of a long history of unequal health care access, we at COTC deeply believe in the importance and efficacy of this vaccine as a necessary next step in reaching public health. Here are some helpful websites: <https://www.macovidvaccines.com/> and <https://www.cic-health.com/vaccines-location#fenway> in addition to <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>

BIBLE STUDY - FRIDAYS 11AM: Our virtual Bible Study is meeting at 11:00 am on Fridays, studying the Gospel of Mark. Questions? Please contact Nancy Ammerman at ntammerman@gmail.com. We gather on Zoom for about an hour for a “BYOB” (bring your own Bible) gathering. Drop in any week! No homework required! <https://zoom.us/j/104478666?pwd=MHAWdEY5VVNvdVFkbVA1R2U3Z3NnUT09>
join by phone: (646) 558 8656, Meeting ID: 104 478 666, Password: 581626

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Each Sunday beginning at 9:45 we gather using Zoom for Godly Play and Youth Class. Our Godly Play class gathers to sing, share news with each other, pray together, and hear ancient and contemporary stories of our faith. Our Youth Class shares their weekly gathering rituals and explores topics of interest and curiosity in faith and identity. If you need a Zoom link, email children@cotcbos.org or contact Rev. Kate at kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org.

20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT: We are currently planning our calendar of events through the Lenten season. Please be on the lookout for upcoming virtual events. If you would like to be added to our email list, contact Rev. Joshua at joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org

A CHALLENGING WINTER: For many reasons, this will be a challenging winter. One way we can help those experiencing homelessness in downtown Boston is to support our partners Women's Lunch Place, who have an ongoing wish list for items, found here: <https://womenslunchplace.org/in-kind-donations>.

ARE YOU OR ANYONE YOU KNOW FACING FINANCIAL CHALLENGES? Info on fuel and electricity discounts in MA available [here](#).

CONTINUED GIVING: Even in face of important, life-giving changes, our COTC ministry remains moving full steam ahead. Our staff and pastors continue to be hard at work. Our building continues to be faithfully stewarded. Our deacons and pastors continue to carry out vital pastoral care in these days. Therefore, your continued generosity and giving to help support the work of our church community is even more valued in these challenging days. And we are deeply grateful for your tangible signs of generosity. Here are a few ways you can continue to financially support the church and its ministries:

1. Directly on our website: <http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>
2. Download free app: GivePlus (GIVE+ by Vanco Services, LLC) in the App Store, Google Play, or at <https://giveplushelp.vancopayments.com>, then type in our zip code 02116 to find Church of the Covenant
Both online options allow you to make a one-time or a recurring gift
3. If you are uncomfortable with online giving, yes, you can still mail checks!

WEEKLY CALENDAR Click here to view the weekly calendar of events.



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, *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*