

Church of the Covenant Boston, MA



Fifth Sunday in Epiphany Holy Communion

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



**Church of the Covenant
Fifth Sunday in Epiphany**

February 7, 2021 10:30 am

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTlIpTTEvRGNZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

Black History Month: *Educate*

Prelude

Praeludium in C

Dietrich Buxtehude

Call To Worship

(Isaiah 40, from Joanna Harader)

One: Have you not known?

Many: **Our God is the everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth.**

One: Have you not heard?

Many: **God does not faint or grow weary.**

One: Have you not known?

Many: **God's understanding is unsearchable.**

One: Have you not heard?

Many: **God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.**

One: Have you not known?

Many: **Those who wait for God will renew their strength they shall mount up with wings like eagles.**

One: We come to hear.

Many: **We come to know. Thanks be to God!**

Lighting the Christ Light

Opening Hymn (NCH 18)

Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

1. Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

2. Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change; courage to change the things we can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time, may we like Jesus, search for you in the quiet, as we turn from the false voices of judgment and fear, and learn from you the ways of love.

One: Let us open ourselves to silent prayer.

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Friends, hear this good news: Our God is the one who gives strength to the powerless, power to the faint, raises up those afflicted, and casts out the divisions among us. Therefore let us celebrate together:

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

Sung Response

Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

Gloria

Scripture Reading

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:29-39

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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

Sermon

Beyond a Cure

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Praeludium in C (conclusion)

Buxtehude

Doxology

Though what we have in truth is small,
God's grace shall be enough for all.
So as we bless and break this bread,
Each heart be filled, each mouth be fed

Prayer of Dedication

Celebrations and Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

In preparation for this sacrament, please gather a bread product (bread, tortilla, gluten-free cracker, etc.), and a liquid (grape juice, wine, water, etc.) to take in when invited.

Invitation

Communion Hymn

I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.

The Great Thanksgiving

One: May God be with you!

Many: **And also with you.**

One: People of Epiphany, let us lift up our hearts!

Many: **We open our hearts to God who fills us with hope.**

One: Let us give thanks to God our light.

Many: **It is right for us to offer our thanks and praise to the One who loves us.**

One: It is right for us to thank and praise you God...

...And so, with your people here on earth, with all the ancestors, saints and the great company of heaven, we glorify your name, praising you together:

Many: **Holy, holy, holy One, God of heaven and earth. All creation is full of your love and grace. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace. Hosanna in the highest!**

One: Holy are you, O God...

The Prayer of Jesus

(in unison)

Our Father and Mother, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we
forgive our debtors; and do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver
us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread & Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Post Communion 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.**

Annual Meetings...

Participating in Today's Worship

Preacher – Rev. Rob Mark

Liturgist – Jon Schwarz

Lector – Debbie Howland

Co-Celebrant for Communion – Rev. Joshua Lazard

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Cantor – Rev. Tom Reid

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.

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE CORPORATION AND

CONGREGATION will be held today, Sunday February 7, 2021 at 11:45 AM on Zoom for the purpose of adopting the 2021 budget, electing 3 members to the Covenant Council for a 3-year term, 4 members to the Board of Deacons for a 3-year term, 1 member to the Board of Deacons for a 2-year term, and accepting 2 members to the nominating committee as elected at the denominational meetings. [The agenda for these meetings can be found here.](#)

PER CAPITA GIVING AT ANNUAL MEETING: As a reminder, congregants are invited to make their contribution of their 2021 per capita "fair share" for our denominations (the church pays \$56 per member) by this Sunday's annual meeting. As a reminder, per capita is a fundamental way in which all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and mid-councils of the PC(USA) are connected and participate in the work of the wider church. The same is true for the 5,100 or so UCC congregations across the country and their associated state conferences. Through this process, every member who contributes his or her per capita member gift helps empower the work of both the UCC and the PC(USA)—at Covenant, in Boston, in Massachusetts, across the US, and internationally. The per capita amount that Covenant must pay for each member every year is \$56.00. *It's very important to know that the per capita is different from your annual pledge or the gifts you may leave in the plate from time to time.* Covenant pays per capita dues to the UCC and the PC(USA) every year, regardless of whether each member of the congregation pays Covenant to do so. Checks can be made out to COTC. Or, as always, you can give online! More details here: <https://conta.cc/3aBsWsj>. Many thanks for your ongoing generosity!

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.

- February 7, Rev. Rob preaching, Communion / Annual Meeting
- February 14, Rev. Joshua preaching
- Wednesday, February 17, Ash Wednesday service, time TBD
- Sunday February 21, Lent 1 *Breathe*, Rev. Rob preaching, Communion

Here are the Zoom details for Sundays:

join by computer/ tablet/ smartphone:

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

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

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

Some suggestions to aid in your worship for you to consider:

1. Printing the bulletin out in advance so you have it during worship
2. Pulling the bulletin up on a second device/phone/screen
3. Pulling both the bulletin up and Zoom, and switch between them as needed. Parts of the liturgy are important to have this bulletin visible if possible.
4. And if none of these options work for you, no worries—just following the link will be fine – you will be able to worship fully.

FACING OUR RACISM WORKSHOP: Our friends at Co-operative Metropolitan Ministry are organizing an excellent few hours long workshop, \$45, “Facing Our Racism: Becoming Conscious Partners” on Sunday, February 28, noon-4:30pm – [click here to register](#).

COTC “COMMUNITY AS MISSION” MISSION FAIR: On Sunday, February 14 (Saint Valentine's day!), following worship on Zoom, our Mission & Advocacy Committee invites you to a mission fair to learn about and celebrate the many tendrils of mission and advocacy that make up our life together as a congregation. Come find out how all ages, all places in life, all passions and vocational callings make up the community that is Covenant, and hear how we see all of this as essential to the missional call of our loving God. Join us if you are new to our congregation, join us if you have been here since before you can remember – either way, we are sure you will leave this fair inspired by the breadth and depth of what the Spirit is doing through and among us! A day to give thanks for LOVE, indeed.

BREATHE Feb. 17-April 4: 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 starting on Ash Wednesday, February 17 through Easter, join us for this important and timely spiritual journey. In place of ashes this year, to keep ourselves COVID safe, we will be inviting you to get creative and consider finding some soil from a house plant (if not immunocompromised/ allergic), or making some ash from matches to use to “impose” on your own foreheads during this service. More details will come.

LENT DEVOTIONALS: Lent begins Feb. 17 with our Ash Wednesday service on Zoom at 6:30pm. 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*

COVENANT BOOK GROUP MEETS 2/21 TO DISCUSS *CASTE* BY ISABEL WILKERSON: The next meeting of Covenant's book group will be Sunday, February 21, at 5 PM. We will meet by Zoom –see link below – to discuss the first half of the book *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. As always, you are welcome to join whether or not you have read the book and whether or not you've ever come to a Covenant book discussion before. Email Barbara if you have questions, barbarakdarling@yahoo.com. Join Zoom Meeting: <https://wheatoncollege-edu.zoom.us/j/91347027130>

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS: Our next Weds. Evening prayer will be on Weds. Feb. 10, 6-6:30pm. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88999202076?pwd=bU9XQ0JuR0F1bXhrTUV2eVBDcHIxdz09>

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

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](#).

TOM REID'S ORDINATION VIDEO: What a wonderful service of celebration and thanksgiving this past Sunday as we took part in *Rev. Tom Reid's* ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA – congrats and blessings Tom! If you missed it, here it is: <https://youtu.be/LPibEEIF-s>

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*