

# Church of the Covenant

## Boston, MA



## Nineteenth Sunday of Pentecost

*Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ*

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



Church of the Covenant  
Nineteenth Sunday of Pentecost  
September 26, 2021 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

---

**Note:** *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, we will plan to remain on Zoom for the entire service. Clear directions will be given throughout the service on how to fully participate.*

## Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!  
Many: **And also with you!**

**Prelude**

*Simple Gifts*

Aaron Copland

## \*Call to Worship

One: Sometimes we wonder how we have gotten through some difficult situations.

Many: **God has been with us, lifting and comforting our spirits.**

One: We struggle and worry.

Many: **God’s loving presence sustains and strengthens us.**

One: Listen for God’s call to you.

Many: **Lord, we are listening and seeking your guidance.**

## Kindling the Christ Light

### Opening Hymn PH 276

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*

Great is thy faithfulness, O God, Creator,  
There is no shadow of turning with thee.  
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not.  
As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

### *Refrain*

Great is thy faithfulness!  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see.  
All I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [*Refrain*]

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow;  
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [*Refrain*]

### **Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace**

**Many:** Patient Lord, we know that you call us to service, but we often feel inadequate. We love to make excuses for not doing something or for doing something only half-heartedly. Remind us again of your loving and guiding presence. Forgive us when we stumble and falter. Turn us again to you, serving joyfully and confidently. In Jesus' Name, we pray.

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

### **Listening to God in Silent Prayer**

#### **Assurance of God's Grace**

**One:** Beloved Ones, you are the salty people - those who bring flavor to living. Your spirit of love and confidence gives hope to others. Remember that the Lord is always with you.

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

# Sung Response

# Over My Head

*Refrain*

O-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; o-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; o-ver my head, I hear mu-sic in the air; there must be a God some - where.

*Fine*

## Scripture Reading from Psalm 124, The Message Translation

If God hadn't been for us  
—all together now, Israel, sing out!—  
If God hadn't been for us  
when everyone went against us,  
We would have been swallowed alive  
by their violent anger,  
Swept away by the flood of rage,  
drowned in the torrent;  
We would have lost our lives  
in the wild, raging water.  
Oh, blessed be God!  
He didn't go off and leave us.

He didn't abandon us defenseless,  
helpless as a rabbit in a pack of snarling dogs.  
We've flown free from their fangs,  
free of their traps, free as a bird.  
Their grip is broken;  
we're free as a bird in flight.  
God's strong name is our help,  
the same God who made heaven and earth.

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

### **Sung Response**

*Over My Head*

### **Sermon**

A Freedom that Takes Flight

### **\*Hymn PH 265**

*Great God We Sing that Mighty Hand*

Great God, we sing that mighty hand  
By which supported still we stand;  
The opening year your mercy shows;  
That mercy crowns it till it close.

With grateful hearts the past we own;  
The future, all to us unknown,  
We to your guardian care commit,  
And peaceful leave before thy feet.

In scenes exalted or depressed,  
You are our joy, and you our rest;  
Your goodness all our hopes shall raise,  
Adored through all our changing days.

### **Call to Offering**

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

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

### **Offertory**

*Shall We Gather at the River*

Copland

## **\*Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God 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 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.**

---

## **Participating in Today's Worship**

**Preacher** – Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Liturgist** – Ron Lacey & Rev. Rob Mark

**Lector** – Anne Covert

**Digital Minister** – Rev. Kate Carlisle

**Cantors** – Tim & Betsy Groves

*Church of the Covenant is focused on following Jesus in our world through accompaniment,  
compassion, peace, joy and creative beauty.*

*We are passionate about hospitality, committed to justice, and wild about faith.*

*We embrace an embodied spirituality that is not afraid of questions.*

*We advocate for a just climate for our earth, liberation in our world, and equality in our  
neighborhoods.*

*We are a community where ALL are welcome and celebrated as beautiful reflections of God –all  
genders, all faiths, all orientations, all backgrounds, all abilities, all ages, all struggles, and all hopes.*

*Come journey with us!*

**WELCOME & PEACE BE WITH YOU IN THESE DAYS!** We are delighted to welcome you to our community of faith here at Church of the Covenant! Thank you for joining us in worship. If you have any questions about who we are as a community of faith, please reach out to an usher or pastor in person, or Zoom chat with a member of staff online. Be most welcome!

**REGISTER FOR IN PERSON OPTION FOR WORSHIP!!** To register for today's worship service, please [click here](#). Each person who attends in person will be required to show a copy (photocopy or photo from your phone/ camera) of their vaccination card as per Council's decision. Masks will be required for the entire service. Singing hymns with masks on will be allowed. And those who do not come in person will be able to fully worship online via Zoom as per usual.

**UPCOMING WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS:** 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.

- September 26, Rev. Joshua preaching
- October 3, World Communion Sunday, Reflection on the Word
- October 10, Rev. Rob preaching, Indigenous People's Day Weekend

[Zoom link for each Sunday](#)

**NEW! WEDNESDAY SUMMER EVENING PRAYERS IN PERSON:**

Join us this Wednesday, September 29, 6:00-7:00pm for our weekly evening prayers, in person at Nancy Hollomon's home in Brookline. Email Rev. Rob to RSVP or with any questions.

**NEW! SPECIAL OFFERING OCTOBER 3:** Next week, for World Communion Sunday, we will receive a special offering for our two denominations.

- The PCUSA offering is called the Peace and Global Witness offering. It supports the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program whose goal is building a culture of peace and nonviolence. A portion of this offering will go to our local Presbytery of Boston to support a Cameroonian peacemaker. A number of churches in the Presbytery have members from Cameroon, which is currently suffering violence from *both* armed separatists, and government security forces.

- The UCC offering is called the Neighbors in Need offering. One third of this offering goes to the Council for American Indian Ministries. The majority goes to the UCC Justice and Witness Ministries which works on economic justice, environmental justice and racial justice among other things.

You may give online at [cotcbos.org](http://cotcbos.org), by selecting the “peacemaking offering” option. Or you may send a check payable to Church of the Covenant, with “peacemaking” in the memo line, to 67 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116.

**CREW Climate Preparedness Week:** This week, September 24-30, is Climate Preparedness Week – [learn more here](#).

**COTC BOOK GROUP OCTOBER 17:** The next COTC book group meeting via Zoom will be on October 17 at 5:00 pm. We will be discussing *Grounded: Finding God in the Word* by Diana Butler Bass. Please contact Nancy Stockford with any questions. Zoom link will be sent closer to the date.

**20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT:** We have a vital group for young adults, young professionals and students – and we’d love you to join us! If you would like to be added to our email list, or connect one-to-one, please contact Rev. Joshua at [joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org) Also, see below:

- **Save-The-Date: The 20s30s40s Retreat** is scheduled for Saturday, October 16, 2021. There will be more details forthcoming. However, if you wish to reserve your spot, please [email Rev. Joshua](#) by September 30th.
- **20s30s40s Sunday Brunches have returned!** Following the worship service, the 20s30s40s group will resume having out once-a-month after-church shared meal on the following dates: TODAY, September 26; October 17; November 21 and December 19th. More details about in-person or virtual meetings will be forthcoming via the listserv. For further questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out via email to [Rev. Joshua](#).

**CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING:** CYCE is proceeding with as much caution as possible to keep our unvaccinated kids safe. We won't be having any indoor gatherings of kids under 12 for at least the next couple of months. Our focus for fall is to hold some gatherings, in-person and outdoors, where we can have some safe fun, fellowship, and even worship. Watch your email for more updates and details! If you would like to learn more about or connect with our vital ministries with children and youth, [email Rev. Kate](#).



**BIBLE STUDY - FRIDAYS 11AM:** Our virtual Bible Study is meeting at 11:00 am on Fridays, studying the Book of Acts. Questions? Please contact Nancy Ammerman at [ntammerman@gmail.com](mailto: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

**SAVE THE DATE:** Former Student Minister with us, Megan Berkowitz is getting ordained! Sunday Oct. 3, 3pm on Zoom.

**EMERGING & GETTING TOGETHER:** These past 18 months have been long and hard, and it has been extra hard being separated from in-person gatherings. This fall, we'd like to continue to provide chances to safely gather together. Here are the opportunities that are emerging:

- **Porches for 8:** Just as in the past we called these “Suppers for 8”, this summer we are offering the chance to gather together with a small group of fellow COTCers at someone's back yard or porch so share a simple meal. This will be for those who have been fully vaccinated and who feel comfortable (and obviously without any covid-like symptoms). If you'd like your name to be added to the list of those who will be invited to these gatherings (dates and locations yet TBD), please email [Trudi Veldman](mailto:Trudi.Veldman).
- **Outdoor Evening Prayers:** Each week we alternate between in-person and on Zoom prayers.
- **Climate Jubilee Jaunts:** Once a month, our Climate Jubilee Team will be hosting some outdoor walks/ hikes in and around Boston. Stay tuned for news about future jaunts.

**IDA: WANT TO HELP?** Here are ways to help around Hurricane Ida, with BIPOC and food justice in focus: <https://anothergulf.com/ida/>

1. [Market Umbrella](#), and [Crescent Fund](#) will go directly support farmers, fishers, ranchers, and food producers.
2. [Sprout and VEGGI](#) and [Local Food Purchasing Fund](#), are supporting farmers and food producers through value chain coordination.
3. [Culture Aid](#) is bringing freshly prepared meals to distribution points around the city of New Orleans.

**AFGHAN REFUGEES: WANT TO HELP?** The [PCUSA](#) and [September 11 Webinar from UCC](#).

**CLIMATE JUBILEE TEAM “LINK OF THE MONTH”!:** A recent article our team recommends: Some good news: [Citing climate, court blocks vast Alaskan drilling project](#) and the PCUSA’s Hunger Program [provides this very helpful set of links](#) on how we can collectively and individually respond to the recent IPCC report.

**LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR: GET VACCINATED!** At this church we believe fully in the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine and ask that everyone eligible get vaccinated. Check here for details: <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> If you have any concerns or questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out to Rob, Joshua, Kate or our Deacons.

**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](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*

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*