

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Fourteenth Sunday of Pentecost

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

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



Church of the Covenant
Fourteenth Sunday of Pentecost

August 22, 2021 10:30 am

[Zoom Link](#)

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

Prelude

Préambule

Louis Vierne

Call to Worship

One: Will you, God, live on this precarious planet? How beautiful are the places where you dwell, O God!

Many: **Sanctuaries nor theologies cannot constrain your glory; even the heavens are bursting with the goodness of your presence!**

One: Complete are those who find their strength in you.

Many: **Hear our prayers this day, O God, as we proclaim your praises in this our corner of the cosmos!**

Kindling the Christ Light

Opening Hymn: NCH 273

Praise with Joy the World's Creator

Praise with joy the world's Creator,
God of justice, love and peace,
Source and end of human knowledge,
Grace bestowing without cease.
Celebrate the Maker's glory -
Power to rescue and release.

Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,
Frees the captive, finds the lost,
Heals the sick, upsets religion,
Fearless both of fate and cost.
Celebrate Christ's constant presence -
Friend and Stranger, Guest and Host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us,
Liberating truth from pride,
Forging bonds where race or gender,
Age or nation dare divide.
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure -
Foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Christ and Spirit,
One God in community,
Calling Christians to embody
Oneness and diversity.
Thus the world shall yet believe, when
Shown Christ's vibrant unity.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Psalm 84

One: How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints
for the courts of the HOLY ONE,
my heart and my flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

Many: **Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O LORD of hosts,
my Sovereign and my God.
Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise.**
Selah

One: Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

**Many: O LORD God of hosts, hear our prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob!
Selah
Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed.**

One: Hear us now, O Shield, as we confess the brokenness of our world and the deep longings of our souls to you in silence.

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

Psalm 84

One: A day in God's courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
We would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God
than live in the tents of wickedness.
For the HOLY ONE God is a sun and shield;
who bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does GOD withhold
from those who walk authentically.
Happy is everyone who trusts in you.
Therefore, liberated ones, we celebrate together:

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

Sung Response

Hallelujah, We Sing Your Praises

Scripture Reading from the Hebrew Bible: 1 Kings 8:1, 6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the ancestral houses of the Israelites, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of GOD out of the city of David, which is Zion. Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of GOD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim.

And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of GOD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of GOD filled the house of GOD.

Then Solomon stood before the altar of GOD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. He said, "O HOLY

God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand. Therefore, O HOLY God of Israel, keep for your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, “There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.” Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant my father David.

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! Regard your servant’s prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive.”

“Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name — for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm — when a foreigner comes and prays toward this house, then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.”

Scripture Reading from the Gospel of Luke 19:1-6:

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, hurry & come down; for I must stay at your house today.’ So he hurried down & was happy to welcome him.

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

Sermon

Where the Heaven is God?

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

What a Covenant

Bill Wolaver

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

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. Rob Mark

**Liturgist** – Barbara Darling

**Lector** – Rich Jackson

**Cantor & Music Recordings** – Tom Handel, Rev. Tom Reid

*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. While we lament that we can't greet you in person we are so glad you are with us today. We still feel deeply connected in the Spirit's blessing. As we all continue to do our part to love our neighbor as ourselves to help counter 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.

**JUBILEE JAUNT, AUGUST 29:** Join Diane Lauber and Syd Smith on Sunday, August 29, at 1 PM to delve into the wonder of [Middlesex Fells](#), just north of Boston off Rt. 93. Meet at Flynn Ice Rink, 300 Elm Street, Medford, MA 02155. Enjoy the biodiversity of the Fells and learn to identify some plants! Those who sign up can determine which trail to take. [Contact Diane](#), questions. [Sign up here.](#)

**RETREAT REGISTRATION NOW OPEN:** Save the date for the COTC All Church Retreat, Thursday Sept. 30 – Saturday Oct. 2, at Miramar Retreat Center in Duxbury, MA. Come. Share the blessings of community and spirit. Play. Pray. Relax. Contemplate. Share. Get to know one another better. Our theme is “Rooting down while we open up”: How do we open up to the world but feed from deep spiritual roots? This year we have a chance to go deeper together, and individually, with a longer retreat. Come for whatever time you are able to. Find more registration here: [forms.gle/zhed13cUGavQda3A7!](https://forms.gle/zhed13cUGavQda3A7)

**NEW! STAFF VACATIONS:** Tom Handel and Bill Brown are taking this week off. Please be in touch with Rev. Rob if you need anything in their absence.

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

Join us this Wednesday, August 25, when we will gather in Cambridge at Christine Gratto's beautiful back yard (accessible by car or bus) for an in-person prayer and fellowship from 6-7pm. Please RSVP to Rev. Rob if you would like to join us.

**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.

- August 22, Rev. Rob preaching
- August 29, Reflection on the Word
- September 5, Communion

[Zoom link for each Sunday](#)

**GREEN TEAM VIRTUAL SUMMIT 2021:** We encourage you to consider joining Faith in Place and Interfaith Power & Light on September 12-14 for a 3-night immersive and interactive virtual journey into healing. During this summit, we will explore ways to heal our connection with our land, body, mind, spirit, and community. From walking through vividly green wetlands in Shawnee National Forest, to touring a farm, and gathering in a racial healing circle, this virtual Summit will honor our interconnectedness and inspire our environmental work through healing. More information, and the link to free registration, [can be found at this link.](#)

**NEW! GBIO MAYORAL FORUM:** GBIO will host a zoom action with ALL FIVE candidates for Mayor of Boston on Tuesday, August [31st.at](#) 7:00PM. If you are a Boston voter, or if you have an interest in this election, please register to attend. The link to register is [bit.ly/gbiomayor](#). GBIO estimates that we can bring 1000 people to this action and we hope you will plan to join us.

**CLIMATE JUBILEE TEAM "LINK OF THE MONTH"!** When this Ezra Klein column from the New York Times was shared with Climate Jubilee Committee, one committee member responded, "Wow, that article is SO good. Articulate, true, right to the point of where we are. I find it just feels like healthy food to have such honesty. There's something powerful about someone speaking truth. I love where he goes. It's like the biggest picture, yet grounded in the here and now." Here is the article on the NY Times site: [Let's Launch a Moonshot for Meatless Meat](#). If you are not a subscriber, here is the [article as a PDF](#).



**EMERGING & GETTING TOGETHER:** These past 16 months have been long and hard, and it has been extra hard being separated from in-person gatherings. This summer, we'd like to begin re-emerging well and safely together by providing some chances to gather together in-person, even before we can do so safely together in the sanctuary on a Sunday morning. 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](#).
- **Outdoor Evening Prayers:** Our next outdoor Evening Prayer will be in Cambridge on Weds. Aug. 25, 6-7pm (see above). Other evening prayers on Wednesday can easily be hosted at your place! If you have room for up to 10 people to sit in a circle outside, please let Rob know and we’ll find a date.
- **Climate Jubilee Jaunts:** Once a month, our Climate Jubilee Team will be hosting some outdoor walks/ hikes in and around Boston. Our next jaunt is August 29 (see above); stay tuned for news about future jaunts.

**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

**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! We currently hold brunches (virtual for the time-being) on the third Sunday of each month. 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)

**CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING:** Our Godly Play and Youth Class will not be meeting for the summer. If you would like to learn more about or connect with our ministries with children and youth, [email Rev. Kate](#).

**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 – and recently opened up to kids 12-15. Check here: [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov). 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. 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> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>

**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*