

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



First Sunday in Advent: HOPE

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

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



Church of the Covenant
First Sunday in Advent: HOPE
November 28, 2021 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

Welcome!!! Unless sharing, please keep your mic on “mute”, but your voice and heart liberated to fully join in with the songs and liturgies as we worship God while on Zoom.
Please note this service is recorded and later posted on our church website.

Welcome & Announcements

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

Prelude *Wake Up! A Voice is Calling* J.S. Bach

Call To Worship

by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

One: We hope for a world where all are fed.
Many: **We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.**
One: We hope for a world with wide open doors.
Many: **We hope for a world with contagious laughter.**
One: We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.
Many: **We hope for a world where all people feel at home—in their bodies, in the church, in the places where they live.**
One: We hope for that world.
Many: **We long for that world.**
One: We are homesick for that world.
One: **So today we light the candle of hope, because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.**
One: May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.
Many: **We are close to home. May we carry hope with us. Amen.**

Lighting the Advent Candle: Stories of HOPE

Opening Hymn: PH 2

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

- (1) Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free:
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

- (2) Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Many: **Gracious God,**
We find ourselves with two options every day—
to stay homesick for the world you had in mind, or to allow
cynicism to win.
Do we hope against hope, or do we throw in the towel?
Do we insist on a better world, or do we assume it's
impossible?
Forgive us for the days when cynicism wins.
Forgive us for numbing our homesick hurt instead of using
it to fuel a better world.
Kindle in us a hope that won't let go.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: When we are sure there is no hope for new life, God whispers
promises of transformation and change. When we are sure there
is no light in a gloomy world, God's promises flicker in the night.
In God's coming, there is total forgiveness. Therefore, let us
celebrate together...

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

Sung Response: PH (blue) 576

Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

Gloria, Gloria

Sacred Words for our World: Reading from the Gospel of Luke 21:25-36

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Human One coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then Jesus told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kin-dom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Human One.”

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

Sermon

Lightening the Load

Moment for Generosity

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Saviour of the Nations, Come

J.S. Bach

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. Rob Mark

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Advent Candle Lighting – Denice Thornhill

Lector – Rev. Kate Carlisle

Bulletin Cover: “Harvest of Righteousness”, by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman, A Sanctified Art. Comment by the artist: “All of the flowers symbolize different kinds of love: Coltsfoot flowers representing maternal love and care, Forget-Me-Nots imaging faithful love and undying memory, and Heliotrope meaning eternal love and devoted attachment. At the center of the piece, the object of the hand’s reaching is a pomegranate, bursting open with seeds. Throughout history, pomegranates have been used as a symbol for royalty because of their richness of color and flavor, and for the crown-like shape on the end of the fruit. At times, this fruit was used as a symbol for Christ and resurrection as well. The split-open fruit with seeds spilling out represents Christ breaking out of the tomb. The hands are ready to receive the knowledge and full insight of Christ and to be nourished by the harvest of righteousness.

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!

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. [Zoom Link for each Sunday.](#)

- November 28, ADVENT 1, Rev. Rob preaching (ON ZOOM)
- December 5, ADVENT 2, Hybrid Service, Rev. Joshua preaching
- December 12, ADVENT 3, Hybrid Service

STAFF SCHEDULES: Rev. Joshua will be on vacation Nov. 24-30.

“NEW WINESKINS”: SHORT & SWEET SEASON FOR GENEROSITY Nov. 21-Dec. 5: Join us for a Short & Sweet Season of Generosity with letters around Thanksgiving and Dedication of Pledges 12/5.

POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS/ PRAYERS ONLINE: Due to techno-challenges we have decided we will be posting the entire service that is livestreamed online on our [Worship Recordings Page](#). Please let us know if you have any questions. Thanks.

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS ON ZOOM: Join us this Wednesday 6:00-6:30pm for our weekly evening prayers, [on Zoom](#).

BIBLE STUDY - FRIDAYS 11AM ZOOM: You are invited to join the Friday morning Bible Study group on a new adventure as we dive into new ideas about the apostle Paul. [Zoom Link Here.](#)

join by phone: (646) 558 8656, Meeting ID: 104 478 666, Password: 581626

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Stay tuned for news about upcoming Advent activities! If you would like to learn more about or connect with our vital ministries with children and youth, [email Rev. Kate](#).

20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT BRUNCHES: Join us after worship December 19th, and email [Rev. Joshua](#) if you can come or want to find more about our young adult ministry.

WEEKLY CALENDAR Click [here](#) to view the weekly calendar of events.



Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

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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*