

Church of the Covenant Boston, MA



World Communion Sunday
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Season of Creation
[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



World Communion Sunday
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Season of Creation

October 4, 2020 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!**

Prelude *Autumn Leaves* adapted from Bill Evans

Call To Worship

One: Here is a space where heaven and earth embrace in peace,
Many: **where God has been,**
One: where God is,
Many: **and where God always will be.**

One: Here is a space where we gather with all of God's children:
Many: **where we find God's love,**
One: where we hear the tender voice of Jesus,
Many: **where the Spirit leads us along new paths.**

One: Here is a space where all is made ready by our God:
Many: **where we bring our hunger, and find food;**
One: where we our brokenness, and find healing;
Many: **where we bring our very selves, and find acceptance.**

One: Here and now, in this space, with the world in our hearts,
Many: **Let us worship the God of all creation.**

Lighting the Light of Christ

Opening Hymn: NCH 23

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

1. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.

2. Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.
3. Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.
4. A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.
5. Time, like an ever rolling stream, soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten, as a dream fades at the opening day.
6. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Still be our God while troubles last, and our eternal home!

A Global Pandemic Litany of Lament

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: When we are in bondage to fear or negative thinking, God comes to us with words of liberation. When we find our neighbors distant or hard to love, Jesus comes to us with the example of reconciliation. When we feel our world is damaged beyond repair, the Spirit comes to us with the promise of restoration.

Therefore, as a people forgiven in grace, let us celebrate together:

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

Sung Response:

Song of Hope / Canto de esperanza

May the God of hope go with us everyday,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

May the God of justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace;

Singing, share our joy with all;

Working, for a world that's new;

Faithful, when we hear Christ's call.

Scripture Reading:

Gospel Reading: Matthew 21:33-46

“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’”¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was God’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’? Therefore I tell you, the kin-dom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kin-dom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

One: God is still speaking, the word of God,

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Moment for Mission: Peace & Global Witness & Neighbors in Need

Special Offering

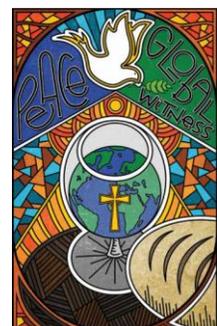
Christine James

Call to Offering

Online Giving Option:

<http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>

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



Offertory *Singabahambayo* South African Song, arr. Victor C. Johnson

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 World Communion

Invitation to Table

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 the World, let us lift up our hearts!

Many: **We open our hearts to the Spirit-with-us.**

One: Let us give thanks to God our light.

Many: **It is right for us to offer our thanks and praise to God.**

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

...And so, with your people here on earth, with all the ancestors,
with all the 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

(from A New Zealand Prayer Book)

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Post Communion Prayer

Closing Hymn NCH 469

O Grant Us Light

1. O grant us light, that we may know wisdom that you alone can give,
That truth may guide us as we go, and virtue bless the lives we live.
2. O grant us light that we may find where error lurks in human lore,
And turn to you our seeking minds, and love your holy Word the more
3. O grant us light, that we may learn how dead is life from you apart,
How sure is joy for all who turn to you an undivided heart.
4. O grant us light, when soon or late, all earthly scenes shall pass away,
In you to find the open gate, to deathless home and endless day.

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. Joshua Lazard

Liturgist – Rev. Rob Mark

Lector – Liz Vizza

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Moment for Mission – Christine James

Cantor – Tom Reid

Cover Image of COVID World – Getty Images

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 announcements that follow reflect the ongoing abundant life that is Church of the Covenant:

WORLD COMMUNION PREPARATION: Today we will celebrate communion together online as we celebrate the truth that the table of Jesus is unbound and is much wider and larger than any single wooden structure in any single church sanctuary. Before the time of the service you will want to gather some bread of any kind for you and those worshipping in the same place with you to break and share. Prepare a cup or cups and fill with juice, wine, or even water. Set these elements in the place where you experience worship. Perhaps you want to put them on a cloth or fabric or beside a photo or art that reminds you of the wider world. More instruction will be given during our liturgy in worship.

VOTING: ADULT ED TODAY SUNDAY OCTOBER 4: Directly following worship on Zoom. Voting. How/where/when do we each vote this year? And how might we honor our Missional commitment to climate justice specifically in the way we vote and the ways we help reduce the barriers to others to vote. Join us for this important discussion put on by our Climate Jubilee Team. We encourage you to watch this video if possible before our Adult Ed. discussion on Sunday. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCF9eoQECfk&feature=youtu.be>

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.

- Sundays, October 4-18 Special Series on Climate Jubilee:
 - October 4 World Communion Sunday & Special Offering, Rev. Joshua preaching
 - October 11 Blessing of the Animals Service
 - October 18 Communion, Rev. Rob preaching

Upcoming Sunday Adult Eds following worship:

- *Oct. 4 – Climate Jubilee Team helps us focus on voting with creation in mind this fall*
- *Oct. 11 – presentation and congregational meeting on the columbarium proposal at COTC*
- *Oct. 18 – Question 2 on MA Ballot – Rank Choice Voting with Rev. Vernon Walker, followed by Informal Coffee Half-hour getting to know Rev. Joshua*

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. The liturgy, songs, and scripture are the important times 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.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED AND PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS

SPECIAL OFFERINGS – October 4th. Today, on World Communion Sunday, October 4th, we celebrate the unity of Christians worldwide. We celebrate our connections to Nicaragua, Malawi and the Congo as well as our connections with congregations in every neighborhood of Boston and the suburbs. On World Communion Sunday we also give to support both our denominations' efforts to bring about peace and reconciliation. Both the UCC Neighbors in Need offering and the PCUSA Peace and Global Witness fund programs help to bring people together in countries and communities experiencing racism, conflict and deprivation. Part of the total collected will support the Boston Area Gleaners, a local group which collects food that would otherwise be wasted from local farms to provide fresh produce to local food pantries and feeding programs, all of which are experiencing higher than usual demand. For more information visit the following websites and give generously:

<https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/peace-global-witness/>

<https://www.ucc.org/nin>

<https://www.bostonareagleaners.org/>

Covenant's giving site has a "Peacemaking Offering" category for your gifts, or you can send a check to COTC at 67 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116.

WORLD COMMUNION PREPARATION: Today we will celebrate communion together online as we celebrate the truth that the table of Jesus is unbound and is much wider and larger than any single wooden structure in any single church sanctuary. Before the time of the service you will want to gather some bread of any kind for you and those worshipping in the same place with you to break and share. Prepare a cup or cups and fill with juice, wine, or even water. Set these elements in the place where you experience worship. Perhaps you want to put them on a cloth or fabric or beside a photo or art that reminds you of the wider world. More instruction will be given during our liturgy in worship.

WEDS EVENING PRAYERS (in person): After 3 successful outdoor in-person Evening Prayers in September, we are wondering if there is interest in holding some more before the colder weather sets in. Please email Rev. Rob if you are interested: rob.mark@cotcbos.org

HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST: For our Covenant book group discussion in October we have agreed to read and discuss Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Anti-Racist*. We'll meet via Zoom to discuss that book on **Sunday, Oct 25, at 5 pm.**

40 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR THIS COUNTRY: Our siblings in faith at the Sudbury Presbyterian Church invite us to join them in praying each day in advance of the election:

<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1110322783198&ca=63f9a378-df7d-485d-95d4-45cc613bce3a>

VOTE: Questions about if you are registered, where or how to vote?

<https://www.environmentalvoter.org/>

BALLOT QUESTION #2 – Adult Ed following worship on Sunday, October 18, we welcome Rev. Vernon Walker who will speak to us about the importance of voting Yes on 2 to help bring Rank Choice Voting to our Commonwealth.

GET TRAINED TO BE AN INTERFAITH DIGITAL DEFENDER: Auburn Seminary is teaming up with Women’s March for a webinar with Auburn Senior Fellow, Brian McLaren. Join us on October 7th at 7 pm EST for a 45 minute discussion; we’ll learn about identifying election disinformation online and pushing back against common voter suppression tactics. After the webinar, you’ll be invited to join a deeper election disinformation training track to protect the results and count every vote in the upcoming 2020 election.

https://womensmarch.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pRwXOIiQRluwIY5rE73iaQ?xzm_rtaid=jOH3HjxiQ0K29gXJuS5QFw.1601492254252.03a57789078f33f9161df02c1d23556d&xzm_rhtaid=220

CONGREGATION CLIMATE JUSTICE VOTER CHALLENGE: Our Council voted unanimously on August 18 to join the Congregation Climate Justice Voter Challenge initiated by the Southern New England Conference of the UCC. Needless to say, our country is at an important crossroads this year and our ability to address and deal with climate change and climate justice issues, as well as other important social justice issues which are important to us, will be affected by our elections this Fall. This is true at all levels – local, state and Federal. So voter engagement is crucial! And Council accepted the recommendation of the Climate Jubilee Team to join this Challenge for at least 75% of our members to sign. So please sign!--at this link:

<https://sneucc-reg.brtapp.com/CreationCareVoterPledge>) By signing the Pledge, one simply says that they “pledge to be a consistent voter” and “always to prioritize caring for God’s creation in how I vote.” The Challenge has two levels: First, individual congregations are asked to challenge themselves to have a least 75% of their members commit to being faithful and regular voters. Second, the Southern New England Conference's Environmental Ministries Team hopes that many churches in MA, CT and RI will join in accepting the Challenge for their congregations.

More information (<https://www.sneucc.org/congregation-climate-justice-voter-challenge>).

VIRTUAL SUPER SATURDAY (UCC): Saturdays October 24, 2020 and October 31, 2020, 9am-3pm, \$10 <https://www.sneucc.org/planning-event-detail/12871453?month=10&year=2020&day=1&display=m>

BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY MORNINGS: We gather on Zoom at 10:00am for about an hour for a “BYOB” (bring your own Bible) gathering. Currently, we are taking a look at the Book of Psalms, which runs the gamut of human emotion. Drop in any week!

<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.

20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT: We have an active young adult group that meets regularly to create community, even while we can’t be together physically. Join us on Monday evenings at 7:30 PM for a weekly time to pray and connect via conference call at (712) 432-0220, access code 2667480#. If you’d like to be added to our email list, contact one of our group leaders: Kathryn Barry, Melissa Morgan, or Tom Reid at youngadults@cotcbos.org.

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*

Hillary Gabbidon, *Parish Administrator*

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*

Nancy Stockford, *Financial Secretary*