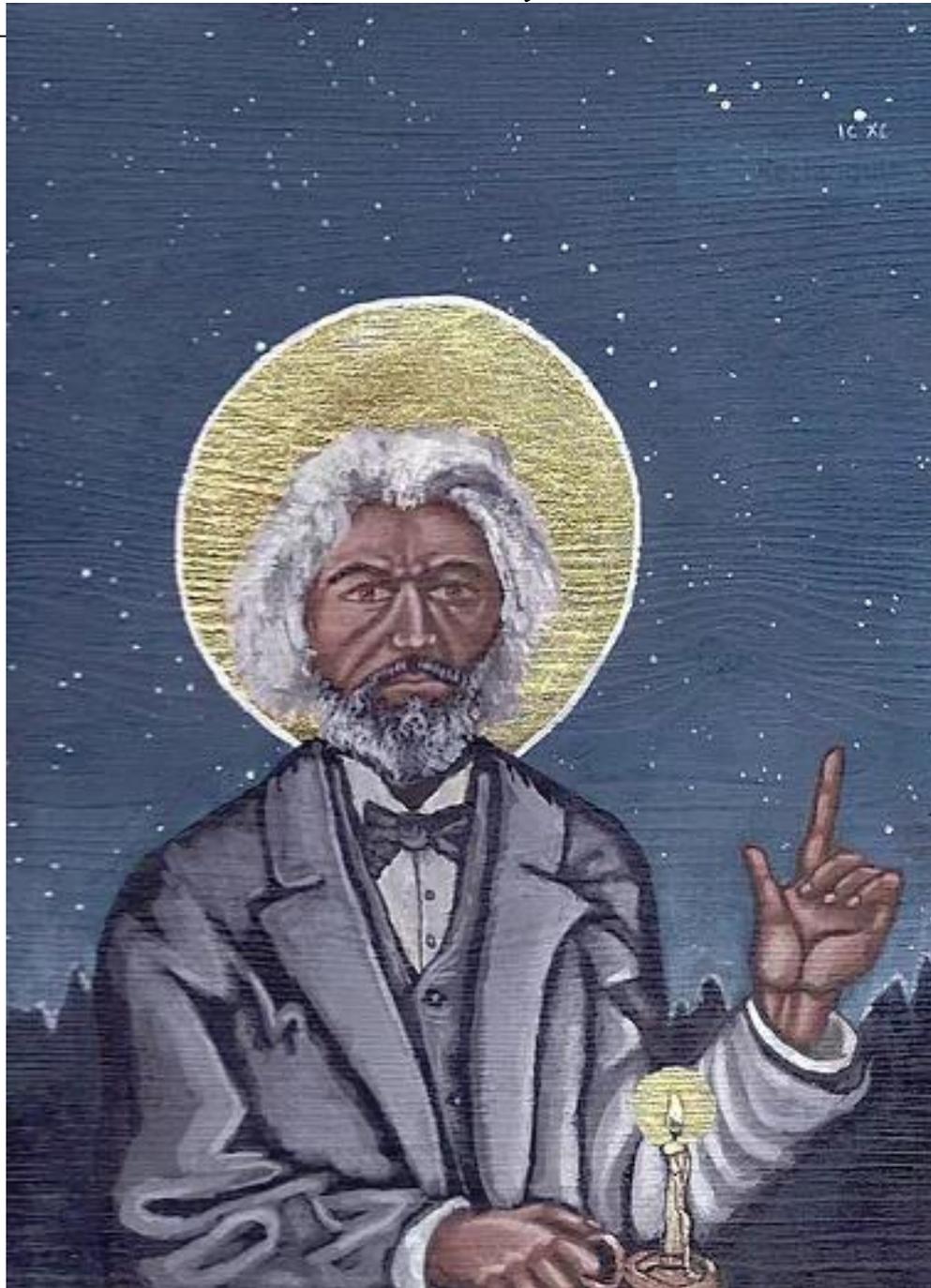


Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Interdependence Day

Seventh Sunday of Pentecost

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

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



Church of the Covenant
Interdependence Day

July 4, 2021 10:30 am

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGNZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

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

Prelude

Under the Linden Tree

J.P. Sweelinck

Call to Worship

Adapted from Eric Williams

One: Blessed is the Sky,
Many: **And all that is warm and filled with light.**

One: Blessed is the Air,
Many: **And all that is open and free.**

One: Blessed is the Earth,
Many: **And all that is steady and firm.**

One: Blessed is the Sea,
Many: **And all that is hidden and deep.**

One: May we be like the sky, the air, the earth, the sea,
Many: **As we worship you today, Great Creator of you and me.**

Kindling the Christ Light

Opening Hymn: PH 376

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

2. Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest;
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

3. Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

4. Finish, then, Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Saint Frederick Douglass

Excerpts from July 5, 1852, speech "What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July."

“Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?

I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. — The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your

fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth [of] July is *yours*, not *mine*. *You* may rejoice, *I* must mourn.

Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them.

To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then, fellow-citizens, is AMERICAN SLAVERY.

America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible, which are disregarded and trampled upon, dare to call in question and to denounce, with all the emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery — the great sin and shame of America!

O! had I the ability, and could I reach the nation's ear, I would, today, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke. For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake. The feeling of the nation must be quickened; the conscience of the nation must be roused; the propriety of the nation must be startled; the hypocrisy of the nation must be exposed; and its crimes against God and man must be proclaimed & denounced.

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy — There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour.

But the church of this country is not only indifferent to the wrongs of the slave, it actually takes sides with the oppressors. It has made itself the bulwark of American slavery, and the shield of American slave-hunters. Many of its most eloquent Divines, who stand as the very lights of the church, have shamelessly given the sanction of religion and the Bible to the whole slave system. They have taught that man may, properly, be a slave; that the relation of master and slave is ordained of God; that to send back an escaped bondman to his master is clearly the duty of all the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; and this horrible blasphemy is palmed off upon the world for Christianity.

For my part, I would say, welcome infidelity! welcome atheism! welcome anything! in preference to the gospel, *as preached by those Divines!* They convert the very name of religion into an engine of tyranny, and barbarous cruelty... These ministers make religion a cold and flinty-hearted thing, having neither principles of right action, nor bowels of compassion. They strip the love of God of its beauty, and leave the throng of religion a huge, horrible, repulsive form. It is a religion for oppressors, tyrants, man-stealers, and thugs.

The American church is guilty, when viewed in connection with what it is doing to uphold slavery; but it is superlatively guilty when viewed in connection with its ability to abolish slavery. The sin of which it is guilty is one of omission as well as of commission. Oh! be warned! be warned!"

One: In contrition for our sins of omission and commission, sins of our past, and sins of our present, let us open ourselves now in silent prayer...

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

Saint Fredrick Douglass

"Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation, which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery. The fiat of the Almighty, "Let there be Light," has not yet spent its force. No abuse, no outrage whether in taste, sport or avarice, can now hide itself from the all-pervading light. In the fervent aspirations of William Lloyd Garrison, I say, and let every heart join in saying it:

"God speed the year of jubilee

The wide world o'er!

When from their galling chains set free,

*Th' oppress'd shall vilely bend the knee,
And wear the yoke of tyranny
Like brutes no more.
That year will come, and freedom's reign,
To man his plundered rights again
Restore."*

One: Friends, in the promise of jubilee, *let us celebrate together:*
Many: **In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole.
Alleluia, Amen!**

Sung Response:

Sweet, Sweet Spirit (refrain)

Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove,
stay right here with us, filling us with your love;
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise,
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived
when we shall leave this place.

Reading from Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

Jesus left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this rabbi get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the child of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

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

Many: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

What, to the Christian, is the 4th of July?

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Under the Linden Tree (conclusion)

J.P. Sweelinck

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

The Great Thanksgiving

One: May God be with you!

Many: And also with you.

One: People of Interdependence, 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

*San Francisco's Grace Episcopal
Cathedral Womanist Lord's Prayer*

**Our Mother,
who is in heaven and within us,
We call upon your names.
Your wisdom come.
Your will be done,
In all the spaces in which You dwell.
Give us each day
Sustenance and perseverance.
Remind us of our limits as
we give grace to the limits of others.
Separate us from the temptation of empire,
But deliver us into community.
For you are the dwelling place within us
the empowerment around us
and the celebration among us
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread & Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Post Communion 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.**

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!

Participating in Today's Worship

Preacher – Rev. Rob Mark

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Liturgist – Barbara Darling

Lector – Debbie Howland

Cantors – Betsy Groves, Tim Groves, Barbara Darling and Ted Goodfleisch

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.

EVENING PRAYERS ON ZOOM: Join us this Wednesday on zoom from 6-6:30pm for our weekly evening prayer service. Zoom link for each Wednesday: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88999202076?pwd=bU9XQ0JuR0F1bXhrTUV2eVBDcHIxdz09>

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.

- July 4, Interdependence Day, Rev. Rob preaching, Communion
- July 11, Rev. Rob preaching
- July 18, Livestream from Sanctuary, Rev. Joshua preaching, Communion
- July 25, Rev. Joshua preaching

Zoom link for each Sunday: <https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTlRTEvRGNZUT09>

EMERGING & GETTING TOGETHER: These past 14 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](#).
- **Climate Jubilee Jaunts:** Once a month, our Climate Jubilee Team will be hosting some outdoor walks/ hikes in and around Boston. Our first was on the Esplanade, June 6 and second in Franklin Park on June 20. Other locations so far will be the Peace Abbey and the Arboretum. Contact [Betty Southwick](#) with questions.
- **Outdoor Evening Prayers:** Our next outdoor Evening Prayer will be in Brookline on Weds. July 14, 6-7pm. 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.

CYCE FAMILIES & 20s30s40s GATHERING, JULY 18

Save the date for our joint gathering of 20s30s40s folks and CYCE families on Sunday, July 18 at 5:00 pm, in the Arnold Arboretum. Rev. Joshua and Rev. Kate are eager for a chance to get to know folks better after so many months mostly online. Bring your kids, bring your (child- and other-pet-friendly!) dogs, bring a blanket or chairs. More details to come. Questions? Email kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org or joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org.

CLIMATE JUBILEE TEAM “LINK OF THE MONTH”!: Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg has made a must-see short video on nature, the cost of an industrialized food system, and the action we can take before it's too late. It's a beauty. [Please watch it here.](#)

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. 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

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 at kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org.

STAFF SCHEDULES: Pastor Joshua will be on vacation July 4-16 – please contact Pastor Rob if you need something in his absence.

SUMMER SABBATH: Rev. Rob’s annual Summer Sabbath (2 weeks unpaid furlough, 2 weeks vacation) will be July 20-August 17. Please contact Rev. Joshua or chair of Deacons, Anita Gram, with pastoral needs during this time.

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>

WHAT CAN I DO ONCE VACCINATED? As we give thanks that increasing numbers of people are getting vaccinated, many are asking this question, here are a few guidelines:

[CDC Guidelines](#)

[Interactive Risk Assessment Tool](#)

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*

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*