

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Fourth Sunday of Pentecost

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

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



Church of the Covenant
Fourth Sunday of Pentecost

June 13, 2021 10:30 am

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

Prelude

Pastoral (movt. 1 and 2)

J.S. Bach

Call to Worship *(taken from Pope Francis' Encyclical, quoting St. Francis)*

One: Our common home is like a sibling with whom we share our life,

Many: **Praise be to you, our God.**

One: For this home, a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us,

Many: **Praise be to you, our God.**

One: For our Sibling, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs,

Many: **Praise be to you, our God.**

Kindling the Christ Light

Opening Hymn:

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing foundation,
Call us to rejoice in Thee.

Mortals, join the happy chorus
Which the morning stars began;
Love divine is reigning o'er us,
Joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

(Prayer of Celtic Saint Columba)

**Many: Kindle in our hearts, O God,
The flame of love that never ceases,
That it may burn in us,
Giving light to others.
May we shine forever in your temple,
Set on fire with your eternal light,
Even your Son Jesus Christ,
Our Savior and redeemer.**

One: Let us know enjoy some time in silence, opening ourselves to
God's love...

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Friends, there is great power and potential in a tiny seed. In
God's grace, new life is bursting forth, unseen. Forgiveness
and liberation blossoms! Therefore, 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 4:26-34

Jesus also said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Sermon

What's ⁱⁿ Coming ~~Down~~ the Pipeline?

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

Pastoral (movt. 4)

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

Farewell Blessing and Commissioning for Anita Goncalves and Kaitlyn & Blake Fox

Many: O God, send us from this place,
in the power of your Spirit.
to serve God and serve the people,
love God and love the people, wherever we may be.
Amen.

Thanking our Teachers and Stewards of our Children & Youth

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.

*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

Lector – Charlene James

Liturgist – Karen Henry

Cantors – Andrea Ehrenreich and Tom Reid

Cover Art: Van Gogh

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.

CLIMATE JUBILEE JAUNT, SUNDAY, JUNE 20: As part of the Climate Jubilee Team's continued goal of being outside and appreciating nature with all of you, please join Betty Southwick on June 20th, at 1 pm, as she takes you exploring in Franklin Park. Did you know that there were bear dens in the Park? And, also that Ralph Waldo Emerson had his home in the Park? We can do a 1 (or 3) mile walk and/or we can send you off on trails to explore. We will email directions, parking and public transportation information, meeting location, and other details to those who sign up. [Sign up here.](#) If you have questions in advance of the walk, please feel free to email southwickbetty@gmail.com. And for those of you in our diaspora, please take a walk on that day, send us pictures, and be with us in solidarity with nature!

IN CASE OF MAJOR TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES DURING

WORSHIP: Should any major technical glitches arise during worship and Zoom become challenged / the meeting end before worship is over, please relocate to our YouTube livestream page where a new livestream will start up:

youtube.com/channel/UCUgqWdRTyqb0yeOpR3x6UYA

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.

- June 13, Rev. Rob preaching, Thanking & Commissioning our Teachers
- June 20, Rev. Kate preaching
- June 27, More Light Presbyterians Pride Sunday Guest Virtual Pulpit, Rev. Annanda Barclay
- July 4, Interdependence Day, Rev. Rob preaching, Communion

Zoom link for each Sunday: <https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTlplTTEvRGNZUT09>

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](mailto: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. Other locations so far will be Franklin Park and the Arboretum. Contact [Betty Southwick](mailto:Betty.Southwick) with questions. [PLEASE RSVP HERE.](#)
- **Outdoor Evening Prayers:** Our next outdoor Evening Prayer will be at Nancy Hollomon's wonderful flowering yard in Brookline on Weds. June 23. Please RSVP by [emailing Rob](mailto:Rob). 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 and then promote.

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.](#)

STAFF SCHEDULES: Pastor Rob's Eco-Stewards week is June 14-21 and he will be out of reach that week, so please be in touch with [Pastor Joshua](#) or our Chair of Deacons [Anita Gram](#) with any pastoral emergencies. Pastor Joshua will be on vacation June 20-27 and Rev. Kate Carlisle will be on vacation June 21-25 – please contact Pastor Rob if you need something in their absence.

EVENING PRAYERS: There will be NO organized evening prayers this week – but please pray individually! We will start up again next week on June 23 in person in Brookline at 6pm.

GBIO REGIONAL CAUCUSES: Our organizing community Greater Boston Interfaith Organization has asked congregations to chime in to share the issues they are most concerned about through Listening Sessions – and many from Covenant took part. Now, they would like to figure out how to prioritize the 7 or so themes that have risen to the top. Please help join in on Regional Caucuses in the coming weeks to help them figure out which community has passion around which issues of justice – [register here.](#)

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.

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. Let us know if you'd like to be sent the Zoom link, and drop in any week! No homework required!

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*

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*