

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Fifth Sunday of Pentecost

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

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



Church of the Covenant
Fifth Sunday of Pentecost

June 20, 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

True Colors

Billy Steinberg and Tom Kelly

Call to Worship

from Psalm 139

One: O God, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

Many: **You trace my journeys and my resting places and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O God, you know it completely.**

One: You encompass me, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

Many: **If I climb up to the skies, you are there. If I make the grave my bed, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the farthest parts of the sea, even there your hand will lead me, and your right hand will hold me fast.**

One: If I say "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike.

Many: **For it was you who formed my inmost parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know it well.**

One: My body was not hidden from you, while I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all my days, before they came to be.

Many: **Search me out, God, and know my heart. Lead me in the everlasting way.**

Kindling the Christ Light

Opening Hymn:

Spirit, I Have Heard You Calling
words and music by Thew Elliot

Spirit, I have heard you calling, like a mem'ry long grown dim,
Crying from creation's moment, seeking voice from deep within.
I have heard you in my longing.
I have heard you in my pain.
Now I feel you moving in me, feel you burning like a flame.

Now I see you all around me, now I hear you call my name.
Now I speak the words you give me, now I feed creation's flame.
You are speaking through my longing.
You are speaking through my pain.
Now I feel you moving in me, and I'll never be the same.

Since you moved upon my waters, since you spoke and set me free,
I have yearned for this communion, for your fire inside of me!
Now your love defines my longing.
Now your love defines my pain.
Now we dance in endless union, singing out creation's name!

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Julian of Norwich (c. 1342-1419)

Many: In you, Father almighty, we have our preservation and our bliss. In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving. You are our mother, brother, and Savior. In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvelous and plenteous grace. You are our clothing; for in love you wrap us and embrace us. You are our maker, our lover, our keeper. Teach us to believe that by your grace all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. Amen.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you," says our God.
"I have called you by name; you are mine."
God is doing a new thing, friends;
Even now it is springing forth!

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: 1 Samuel 17:57-18:5

On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.

Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

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

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Words on the Page

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 Wonderful World

Bob Thiele &
George David Weiss

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.**

*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. Kate Carlisle

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Lector – Joan Hill

Liturgist – Joey Waters

Worship Leaders – Barbara Darling, Rev. Kate Carlisle

Soloist – Rev. Tom Reid

Cantors – Andrea Ehrenreich and Tom Reid

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 TODAY: As part of the Climate Jubilee Team's continued goal of being outside and appreciating nature with all of you, please join Betty Southwick this afternoon 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 today, send us pictures, and be with us in solidarity with nature!

EVENING PRAYERS: Our next Evening Prayers will be outdoors and in-person, this Wednesday, June 23 at 6pm, at Nancy Hollomon's wonderful flowering yard in Brookline. Please RSVP by [emailing Rob.](#)

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 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=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](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 in Brookline this Weds. June 23 (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 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.

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*