

Church of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ



**Juneteenth Sunday
Holy Communion
June 16, 2024**



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Holy Communion

June 16, 2024, 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

Welcome and thank you for worshipping together for this “hybrid” service where some will be in the sanctuary at 67 Newbury Street, and some in the sanctuary of places far and near. For those joining online, we begin on Zoom at the link above. Please keep your mic muted during the service.

**You are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude

Let Us Break Bread Together

arr. John G. Barr

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*** Call to Worship**

adapted from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship
Lisa Weaver, 2022

One: We gather in response and gratitude to God’s invitation and love for us.

Many: **We’ve come to worship the God who created all humanity in God’s image and likeness, equal in dignity and worthy of regard and care.**

One: Let us worship our great God together.

Many: **To the God of justice, love, and peace we lift up our hearts, minds, and voices.**

One: For even amid injustice and oppression, this is still the day that God has made.

Many: **And we shall rejoice and be glad in it.**

*** Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

* **Opening Hymn** PH (blue) 276

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God Creator;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided:
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest;
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. *Refrain*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! *Refrain*

Holding Memory, a Juneteenth Liturgy

adapted from

Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human

Cole Arthur Riley, 2024

One: God of broken chains...
On this day, we remember. We do not know how it felt when the word of freedom came—what release was felt in the bodies... what disbelief, what joy, what sorrow... We gather not just to honor freedom rung, but in protection and continuation of it. Let it resound clearly as we join voices on this day:

Many: God teach me the sound of freedom.

One: We marvel at the dreamers—those who clung to an imagination for liberation regained. Those who fought, strategized, organized.

Holding memory, we proclaim

Many: God teach me the sound of freedom.

One: We thank you for those who became historians—who preserved culture in whispers by moonlight, transmitting song and name.

Holding memory, we proclaim

Many: God teach me the sound of freedom.

One: We grieve for the brutality of families alienated from one another, the daughter ripped from her mother's breast, sister torn from brother. And we honor all the ways that new familial bonds were formed, rising to nurture children and impart tenderness on those the oppressor sought to harden. Strengthen those bonds now, that the invisible thread stretching between each holy Black soul would be fortified by compassion and intergenerational healing.

Holding memory, we proclaim

Many: God teach me the sound of freedom.

One: Now may the same God who spoke to Harriet make the sound of liberation clear as a starry night to us. May the divine hold us in the same holy darkness that protected those on the journey.

Holding memory, we proclaim

Many: God teach me the sound of freedom.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Psalm 46:10

One: Be still and know, that I am God.
Be still and know, that I am.
Be still and know.
Be still.
Be.

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Liberation is ours. Therefore:

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

* **Sung Response** PH (blue) 315 (refrain)

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Yes, every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Readings from Scripture

Hebrew Bible Reading – Song of Songs 1:5-8

I am Black and beautiful,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of Solomon.
Do not gaze at me because I am dark,
because the sun has gazed on me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I have not kept!
Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
where you pasture your flock,
where you make it lie down at noon,
for why should I be like one who is veiled
beside the flocks of your companions?

Gospel Reading – Luke 4:14-20

Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because God has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of God's favor.”

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

New Testament Reading – Ephesians 6:10-13 (New King James Version, modified)
Finally, my siblings, be strong in the Lord and in the power of God’s might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

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

Sung Response

Every Time I Feel the Spirit

Sermon

“Be Real Black for Me”

Call to Offering

Online Giving Option: www.cotcbos.org/give
Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General.

Offertory

Let Us Break Bread Together

arr. Bradley Sowash

*** Communion Doxology**

Tune: *Old Hundredth*

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**

Appreciation for CYCE Stewards

A Litany for the Beginning of Summer

One: As again the season changes from spring to summer, as the long days bless us with sunshine, as another church school year concludes,

Many: **We thank you for the children, youth, and families of our church, our neighborhoods, our world;**

One: And we pray for them to have everything they need to thrive.
Many: We thank you for the teachers who tell sacred stories and welcome curiosity and creativity;
One: And we pray for all of us to continue asking questions and finding wonder our whole lives.
Many: We thank you for the beauty of sunshine and summer in full bloom;
One: And we pray for the healing of our planet and for your whole Creation to flourish.
Many: We thank you for sabbath, playfulness, and rest;
One: And we pray for teachers, parents, and every kind of caregiver to find pause and re-creation.
Many: We thank you for calling us to follow Jesus in every season.
One: And we pray for your Spirit to help us to love our neighbor and work for a better world. Amen

Celebrations & Concerns

One: God, in your grace,
Many: Receive our prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

*** Communion Summons**

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 Pentecost, let us lift up our hearts!
Many: We open our hearts to the Spirit 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 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, and 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

(in unison)

Our God in heaven, holy is your name.

Your reign come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

Sharing of the Bread & Cup

Communion Meditation

Let Us Break Bread Together

arr. Wilbur Held

Post Communion Prayer

* Closing Hymn NCH (black) 474

I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me,

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me,

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me,

Singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me,

Singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me,
Singing glory, hallelujah, Jesus lifted me.

*** 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.**

Worship Participants

Preacher – Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Liturgist – Rev. Kate Carlisle

Lector – Barbara Darling

Usher – Trudi Veldman

Communion Servers – Barbara Darling, Harry Forsdick, Trudi Veldman

Digital Minister – Christine James

Audio Visual Tech Team – Venkatesh Balasubramanian, Jon Schwarz

Sexton – Jesús Vargas

COME TO THE ALL-CHURCH PICNIC TODAY! Join us after worship today to celebrate the beginning of summer with a picnic. We will meet at the back of the sanctuary to walk to the Public Garden together. In case of rain, we will picnic in Bates Hall.

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE COVENANT! We are so glad to have you worshipping with us today! If you are new to our community, we hope you will feel at home and welcomed during this service. If you have any questions about who we are as a community of faith, please reach out to an usher in person or our Digital Minister in the chat.

NEW TO COTC? We are so glad you are here! Let us know a little bit about how we can welcome you by filling out the form at this QR code, and learn more on our website at cotcbos.org.



UPCOMING WORSHIP. Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am and during the special services listed below as we come together in community to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed in these hybrid services (in-person and Zoom options). [Zoom Link for each service.](#)

- Sunday, June 23: Rev. Kate Carlisle preaching, Jubilee Jaunt in Arboretum at 1:30 pm
- Sunday, June 30: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching, Cold Drink Fellowship
- Sunday, July 7: ZOOM ONLY, Rev. Julie Avis Rogers preaching

DIY SUMMER SOLSTICE ON JUNE 20. Much of Covenant's Climate Jubilee Team will be away for the summer solstice, so we will be offering a "DIY" version of a solstice celebration on **Thursday, June 20**. Stay tuned for an email that day.

JUBILEE JAUNT! Join us at the Arnold Arboretum for one of the Climate Jubilee Team's Jubilee Jaunts, on **Sunday, June 23, at 1:30 pm**. Please contact Nancy Stockford (nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org) if you are interested getting outside and appreciating the wonders of summer.

COLD DRINKS ON NEWBURY. On **Sunday, June 30**, join us immediately after worship at the steeple entrance to celebrate the beginning of Open Newbury with cold drinks; hosted by the Membership Development Committee.

“COTC 101” NEW MEMBERS CLASS SUNDAY, JULY 14. Are you new-ish to Church of the Covenant and want to find out more about who we are, our history, our two denominations, our 5-point missional plan we feel called by God to live out through 2025, and what it means to join in membership? Then please join us after worship on **Sunday, July 14**, for an hour or so in-person, while we cover some of these topics together. Please RSVP to Rev. Joshua at joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org.

WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!! We offer Christian education through Godly Play for ages 3-9, youth classes for ages 10-13 and 14+, and a nursery for the littlest ones. We welcome all children, youth, and families—those we know already and those who are here for the first time. If you need help finding us, please ask an usher. We share CYCE info regularly via email, so please email Rev. Kate at kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org if you want to receive updates!

REV. ROB ON EXTENDED REFLECTION LEAVE. Lead Pastor Rob Mark is away until September 12, taking three months of Extended Reflection/Study Leave, along with some vacation and unpaid leave. Rev. Joshua is serving as full-time Lead Pastor during this time. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Rev. Joshua (joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).

LET’S CELEBRATE MARY ROBINSON TURNING 90 WHILE SUPPORTING THE RESTORATION OF THE MADONNA WINDOW! Our beloved Mary Robinson will be turning 90 on August 21! She is hoping to use this major milestone to raise funds for Covenant’s planned restoration of the Madonna window, due to start this summer. Mary is hoping YOU will participate by setting aside some amount (1 penny, 1 nickel, 1 dime, 1 quarter, 1 dollar, \$10 or more!) every day or every week starting on May 21 (90 days out), and then contribute the total amount saved by August 21 (the big birthday) to Covenant for the work on the Madonna window. Mary appreciates your participation! Please let Parish Administrator Nancy Stockford (nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org) know if you have any questions. Online giving option: www.cotcbos.org/give (choose “Madonna Window”).

BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS. Our weekly Bible Study meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:45 on Zoom. We are studying the Gospel of Mark. If you’d like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders and Zoom info, contact Jan Gough at revjangough@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS THIS WEEK 6:00-6:30 PM, THEN TAKING SUMMER HIATUS. Join us for our weekly Wednesday evening prayers with intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms, and sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian [on Zoom](http://www.cotcbos.org) (link on <http://www.cotcbos.org>). **Note that June 19 will be the final evening prayers until September.**

OPEN NEWBURY RETURNING THIS SUMMER. Newbury Street will be closed to motor vehicle traffic on ten consecutive **Sundays from June 30 to September 1**, from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. Please plan your travel to church accordingly. For more information, visit <https://www.boston.gov/departments/transportation/open-newbury-street>.

VIDEO CAMERAS/POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS. To best serve our diverse community and new worshippers, we livestream and record each service, including Celebrations & Concerns. If you would prefer not to be in occasional camera shots, you are welcome to sit on the outside aisles on either side of the sanctuary. Recordings of each service are available on our [Worship Recordings Page](http://cotcbos.org/worship-recordings) (cotcbos.org/worship-recordings).

WEEKLY CALENDAR. Click [here](http://cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) (cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) to view the weekly calendar of events.

*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!



Visitor or Newcomer? Welcome to Church of the Covenant!

We are glad you are here. Please let us know if there are ways we can help you connect to the church community. Learn more about the church by visiting our website at www.cotcbos.org. To sign up for email updates about worship services and other events in our community, please fill out a visitor's card in your pew, or email us at info@cotcbos.org.

Parking Bargain – Worshippers may park at the Back Bay Garage [Clarendon Street, between Boylston and St. James] on Sundays between 6:00 am and 9:00 pm for the first three (3) hours for only \$5. To get this discounted rate, please ask an usher before or after the worship service for a parking discount voucher.

Prayers of Celebration or Concern May Be Shared in the Red Book – At the rear of the Sanctuary is a red book where prayers that you wish to have spoken aloud during the Pastoral Prayer time may be written. The book will be available until the time of the offering.

Time of Greeting – After worship this morning, we hope that you will take a few minutes after going outside the sanctuary to connect with others worshipping with you, especially people you may not know as well.

Hearing Assisted Devices – **Speak with an usher** if you would like to use these devices that work with or without a hearing aid. These devices are specifically designed to work only with our sound system. Please remember to return the device at the close of the service. Thank you!

Building Accessibility – Our building includes an exterior ramp on Newbury Street and an elevator (in the Parish House part of the building) which allows access to the fellowship hall, meeting rooms, offices, and other parts of the building. We also have accessible rest rooms. Please ask an usher to help you locate these resources.



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 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. Joshua Lawrence Lazard, *Lead Pastor (pro tem)*
Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor (on sabbatical)*
Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*
Bill Brown, *Building Manager*
Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator*
Nancy Stockford, *Parish Administrator/Financial Secretary*
Jesús Vargas, *Sexton*
Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*
Venkatesh Balasubramanian, *Digital Communications & Audio Visual Tech Manager*

CHURCH OFFICERS

Kathryn Barry, *President of the Corporation*
Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*
Jon Schwarz, *Moderator of the Board of Deacons*
Faith Perry, *Treasurer*