

# Church of the Covenant

*Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ*



**Sunday Worship  
Season of Pentecost  
June 23, 2024**



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June 23, 2024, 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

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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.

Note that we will not be passing the mic during Concerns & Celebrations today. Please write any prayers you would like lifted into the Red Book that is kept at the back of the sanctuary before the start of the service.

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

**Prelude**

*Peace Piece*

Bill Evans

**Welcome & Announcements**

One: Peace be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

**\* Call to Worship**

One: Welcome one another in Jesus’ name,

**Many: for Christ is truly present among us.**

One: The steadfast love of God never ceases;

**Many: the grace of God never comes to an end.**

One: For freedom Christ has set us free.

**Many: Now we live by the Spirit of God!**

**\* Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ

**Many: Thanks be to God!**

**\* Opening Hymn PH (blue) 291**

*O God of Earth and Altar*

O God of earth and altar, Bow down and hear our cry;

Our earthly rulers falter, Our people drift and die;

The walls of gold entomb us; The swords of scorn divide.

Take not Your thunder from us, But take away our pride.

From all that terror teaches, From lies of pen and voice,  
From all the easy speeches That make our hearts rejoice,  
From sale and profanation Of honor, and the sword,  
From sleep and from damnation, Deliver us, good Lord!

Awaken us to action And forge us into one,  
Defying sect and faction; O God, Your will be done!  
Oppressive systems snare us; Our apathies increase  
Great God, in mercy spare us For justice and for peace!

### **Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace**

**One:** Let us pray together as we ground ourselves in the steadfast love and abundant grace of God.

**Many:** **O God, light of the minds that know you, life of the souls that love you, strength of the thoughts that seek you: help us so to know you that we may truly love you, so to love you that we may fully serve you, and in serving you find perfect freedom, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Listening to God in Silent Prayer**

#### **Assurance of God's Grace**

**One:** Friends, hear the good news! We are convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**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 – from 1 Samuel 17

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle.

And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was four cubits and a span. He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron, and his shield-bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants, but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." And the Philistine said, "Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel were in the valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines. David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, took the provisions, and went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampment as the army was going forth to the battle line, shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father, and whenever a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth, and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it. Your servant has killed both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God."

David said, “The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.” So Saul said to David, “Go, and may the Lord be with you!”

Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these, for I am not used to them.” So David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the wadi and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.” But David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head, and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give you into our hand.”

When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

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

## Sermon

“Unlearning the Underdog”

## Call to Offering

Online Giving Option: [www.cotcbos.org/give](http://www.cotcbos.org/give)

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

## Offertory

*One Voice*

Ruth Moody

## \* Doxology

Tune: *Old Hundredth*

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 & Concerns

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

## Pastoral Prayer

## \* Closing Hymn PH (blue) 386

*O For a World*

O for a world where everyone Respects each other's ways,  
Where love is lived and all is done With justice and with praise.

O for a world where goods are shared And misery relieved,  
Where truth is spoken, children spared, Equality achieved.

We welcome one world family And struggle with each choice  
That opens us to unity And gives our vision voice.

The poor are rich, the weak are strong, The foolish ones are wise.  
Tell all who mourn: Outcasts belong, Who perishes will rise.

O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,  
Where time and tears will be no more, And all but love will cease.

## \* 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.**

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## Worship Participants

**Preacher** – Rev. Kate Carlisle

**Minister of Music** – Tom Handel

**Guest Musicians** – Margy, John, and Elliott Ronna

**Liturgist** – Nancy Ammerman

**Lector** – Jack Ammerman

**Usher** – Nancy Stockford

**Digital Minister** – Trudi Veldman

**Audio Visual Tech Team** – Venkatesh Balasubramanian

**Sexton** – Jesús Vargas

**GUEST MUSICIANS TODAY!** New-ish choir member Margy Ronna is joined by her husband John and son Elliott for the offertory, singing *One Voice* originally sung by the Wailin' Jennys. Margy and John live in Cambridge with their several companion animals, including dogs, cats, a rabbit, and a chinchilla!

**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](http://cotcbos.org).



**JUBILEE JAUNT TODAY!** Join us at the Arnold Arboretum for one of the Climate Jubilee Team's Jubilee Jaunts, today, **Sunday, June 23, at 1:30 pm.** Please see Nancy Stockford if you are interested getting outside and appreciating the wonders of summer.

**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 30: Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard preaching, Cold Drink Fellowship
- Sunday, July 7: ZOOM ONLY, Rev. Julie Avis Rogers preaching, Holy Communion
- Sunday, July 14: Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard preaching, COTC 101 & Deacons Meeting After Worship

**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](mailto:joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org).

**WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!!** Welcome to all children, youth, and families—those we know already and those who are here for the first time. Our Godly Play and other classes don't meet during the summer, but the nursery is open most Sundays. Families are welcome to drop off young ones in the nursery or to stick around or come and go as you feel comfortable. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:nancy.stockford@cotcbos.org)) know if you have any questions. Online giving option: [www.cotcbos.org/give](http://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 embarking on a new adventure—a study of one of the books of the Apocrypha, namely 1st Maccabees. This is a historical book that helps us fill in some of the history that happened between Old and New Testament times. It is also a book that was part of the Greek version of the scriptures that the early church had available to them, but eventually dropped out of most Protestant versions of the Bible. This is new territory for us, and all are welcome to join the expedition. 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](mailto:revjangough@gmail.com).

**WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS ON SUMMER HIATUS.** Our weekly Wednesday evening prayers with intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms, and sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian will resume in early September.

**OPEN NEWBURY.** 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. That means no parking on Newbury Street *and* Berkeley Street. 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](http://cotcbos.org/worship-recordings)).

**WEEKLY CALENDAR.** Click [here](http://cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) ([cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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*