



Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA

July 14, 2024

10:30 am

The Season of Pentecost/Ordinary Time

Zoom Link: tinyurl.com/cotcworship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

* Call To Worship

* Opening Hymn NCH (black) 442

I'm Pressing on the Upward Way

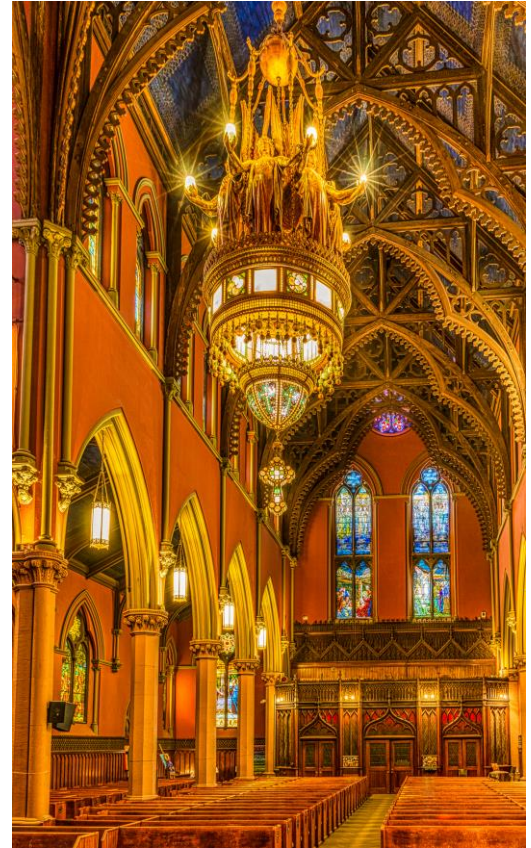
I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining every day;
Still praying as I'm onward bound,
"O plant me, God, on higher ground."

Refrain:

O lift me up, and I shall be
By faith in heaven eternally,
A higher plane than I have found,
O plant me, God, on higher ground.

My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where these abound,
My prayer, my aim is higher ground. *Refrain*

I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught a joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground. *Refrain*



I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heaven I've found,
"God, lead me on to higher ground." *Refrain*

Lighting of the Christ Light

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

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

* Sung Response

Amen, Bawo

5 A-men, we praise your name, O God! A-men we praise your name, O God!

A-men, ba- wo. A-men, ba- wo. A-men, we praise your name, O God!

Scripture Readings

Hebrew Bible Reading – 1 Chronicles 11:22

Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant man of Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen.

Gospel Reading – Luke 8:26-39

Then they arrived at the region of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on shore, a man from the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had not worn any clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, shouting, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me," for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would

break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding, and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd stampeded down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they became frightened. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then the whole throng of people of the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

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

Sung Response

Amen, Bawo

Sermon

Call to Offering

Offertory

*** 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 & Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

*** Closing Hymn** NCH (black) 547 *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

*** Charge & Benediction**

*** Exchange of the Peace:**

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: **And also with you.**



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 welcome 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 SUNDAY WORSHIP. Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am as we come together in community to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed in these hybrid (in-person and Zoom) services.

- July 14: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching, COTC 101 After Worship
- July 21: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching, Holy Communion, Life Alive Brunch
- July 28: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching
- August 4: Rev. Julie Avis Rogers preaching, Holy Communion
- August 11: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching
- August 18: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching, Holy Communion, Life Alive Brunch
- August 25: Rev. Joshua Lazard preaching



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*