

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Communion

[ZOOM LINK](#)

Presbyterian Church (USA) / United Church of Christ



Church of the Covenant
August 16, 2020 10:30 am
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Communion

<https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTltpTTEvRGNZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!
Many: **And also with you!**

Prelude

Hang Gliding

Maria Schneider
Arr. Tom Handel

Call To Worship

based on Psalm 67

Leader 1: May God be gracious to us and bless us
and may God's face shine upon us,

Leader 2: that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.

**Many: Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.**

Leader 1: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth.

**Many: Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.**

Leader 2: The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.

**Many: May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere God.**

Lighting the Light of Christ

Opening Hymn:

She Came to Jesus (Tune: Slane)

She came to Jesus from outside the fold—
Canaanite woman! Persistent and bold!
Looking to Jesus, she wanted to see
One who would help her and set her child free.

Claiming a blessing, a touch of God's grace,
She knew God's love was not bounded by place.
Jesus, you listened, debated—then healed—
For in her asking, her faith was revealed.

God, you still bless those who seek you in prayer.
You welcome dreamers who faithfully dare.
In Christ, now risen, your mercy extends:
Those on the outside are welcomed as friends.

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace: NCH 834

Many: **Almighty and everlasting God, always more ready to hear than we are to pray, always willing to give more than we either desire or deserve: pour upon us the abundance of your mercy; forgiving those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, your Begotten One, our Sovereign. Amen.**

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

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: The God who gives, gives all.
 The God who loves, loves all.
 The God who forgives, forgives all.

Through Christ, our sins, every one of them:
the sins of commission,
the sins of omission,
the sins we confessed with contrition –
all are forgiven.

Therefore, let us celebrate:

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

Sung Response:

Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

Refrain

Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The lyrics are: 'Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.' The word 'Refrain' is written above the first system. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords and some melodic movement in the right hand.

Scripture Reading: Gospel According to Matthew 15:1-28

Some Pharisees and religious scholars from Jerusalem came to Jesus and said, “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t perform a ritual hand-washing before they eat.”

He answered them, “And why do you violate the commandments of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Those who curse their father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that whoever says to their parents, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God,’ is no longer obligated to support them. You therefore nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition! You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said: ‘This people honors me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me.

Their worship of me is worthless, and their doctrines are mere human rules.” Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles you, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles you.”

Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you realize that the Pharisees were offended by what you said?”

He answered, “Every plant that has not been planted by God our Parent in heaven will be uprooted. Ignore them—they are blind people leading other blind people. And if one blind person guides another, both may fall into a ditch.”

Then Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.”

Jesus replied, “Do you still not understand? Don’t you realize that everything that goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and eventually finds its way into the sewer and is gone? But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this is what makes a person ‘unclean.’ For from the heart can come all sorts of evil intentions—murder, sexual infidelity, promiscuity, stealing, lying, and slander. These things make a person unclean, not eating with unwashed hands!”

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, sir, Heir to the House of David; my daughter is horribly demon-possessed.”

But Jesus did not answer her at all.

And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Set her loose! She keeps calling after us.”

Finally, Jesus turned to the woman and said, “My mission is only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.”

She then prostrated herself before him with the plea, “Sir, help me.”

He answered, “It is not right to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”

She said, “Yes, sir, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table.”

Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your wish will come to pass.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

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

Call to Offering

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

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

Offertory

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands arr. Margaret Bonds
Tom Reid, Soloist

Doxology

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

Celebrations and Concerns

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

Pastoral Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to Table

Communion Hymn

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 Covenant, let us lift up our hearts!
Many: **We open our hearts to the Spirit-with-us.**
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, with 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

Our Father and Mother, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not let us fall into temptation, but 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 and Cup

Post Communion Prayer

Farewell Blessing and Commissioning for Rev. Adam Isbitsky

Adam: . . . I thank Church of the Covenant, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me this last year. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

Many: **We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

Adam: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Rob: Do you, the members and friends of Covenant, release Adam from the duties of Transitional Associate Pastor, and do you

offer your encouragement for his ministry soon to begin as
Designated Term Pastor of Ballard Vale United Church?

Many: We do, with the help of God.

(The liturgy continues)

Closing Hymn: NCH 384 *For the Faithful Who Have Answered* (Tune: *Hymn to Joy*)

For the faithful who have answered when they heard your call to serve,
for the many ways you led them, testing will and stretching nerve,
for their work and for their witness as they strove against the odds,
for their courage and obedience, we give thanks and praise, O God.

Many minds have glimpsed the promise; many hearts have yearned to see;
many souls have heard you calling us to greater liberty.

Some have fallen in the struggle; others still are pressing on.

You are not ashamed to own us; we give thanks and praise, O God.

For this cloud of faithful witness, for the common life we share,
for the work of peace and justice, for the gospel that we bear,
for the vision that our homeland is your love—deep, high, and broad—
for the different roads we travel, we give thanks and praise, O God.

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.

Participating in Today's Worship

Preacher – Rev. Adam Isbitsky

Liturgist – Rev. Rob Mark

Lector – Kathy Bull

Worship Leaders – Kathryn Barry, Kathy Bull, Nancy Hollomon

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Soloist – Tom Reid

Cantors – Betsy and Tim Groves

Opening hymn lyrics © 2002 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. Used with permission.

Assurance of God's Grace by the Rev. Kaji S. Douša. Used with permission.

COVER ART: “The Canaanite Woman asks for healing for her daughter” by Herman de Limbourg, Jean de Limbourg, and Pol de Limbourg (c.1385-c.1416), from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55920> [retrieved August 13, 2020]. Original source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Folio_164r_-_The_Canaanite_Woman_.jpg.

PEACE BE WITH YOU IN THESE DAYS: We are delighted to welcome you to our community of faith! As we all do our part to love our neighbor as ourselves to help “flatten the curve” of the coronavirus/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.

The announcements that follow reflect the ongoing abundant life that is Church of the Covenant:

UPCOMING WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS: Please join us each Sunday at 10:30am as we come together in community through Zoom to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God’s still-speaking Word proclaimed. We will hold live-worship on Zoom at 10:30am.

- Sunday, August 16, Rev. Adam Isbitsky preaching, Holy Communion
- Sunday, August 23, joint online worship service with Burlington Presbyterian Church and Clinton Presbyterian Church

Here are the Zoom details for Sundays:

join by computer/ tablet/ smartphone:

<https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGNZUT09>

one tap mobile:

+16465588656,,91025989890#,,#,892502#

join by phone:

+1 646 558 8656, Meeting ID: 910 2598 9890, Password: 892502

Some suggestions to aid in your worship for you to consider:

1. Printing the bulletin out in advance so you have it during worship
2. Pulling the bulletin up on a second device/phone/screen

3. Pulling both the bulletin up and Zoom, and switch between them as needed. The liturgy, songs, and scripture are the important times to have this bulletin visible if possible.
4. And if none of these options work for you, no worries—just following the link will be fine – you will be able to worship fully.

COMMUNION PREPARATION: This Sunday we will once again celebrate communion together online as we celebrate the truth that the table of Jesus is unbound and is much wider and larger than any single wooden structure in any single church sanctuary. Before the time of the service you will want to gather some bread of any kind for you and those worshipping in the same place with you to break and share. Prepare a cup or cups and fill with juice, wine, or even water. Set these elements in the place where you experience worship. Perhaps you want to put them on a cloth or fabric that reminds you of a special time or a person deeply connected with you. Perhaps you will light a candle or place a flower or plant or the photograph of someone you wish to bring into the circle of faith beside the bread and the cup. More instruction will be given during our liturgy in worship.

BIBLE STUDY ON WEDNESDAY MORNINGS: We gather on Zoom at 10:00am for about an hour for a “BYOB” (bring your own Bible) gathering. Currently, we are taking a look at the Book of Psalms, which runs the gamut of human emotion. Drop in any week!

join by computer/ tablet/ smartphone:

<https://zoom.us/j/104478666?pwd=MHAwdEY5VVNvdVEkbVA1R2U3Z3NnUT09>

one tap mobile: +16465588656,,104478666#,,#,581626#

join by phone: (646) 558 8656, Meeting ID: 104 478 666, Password: 581626

CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Each Sunday beginning at 9:45 we gather using Zoom for Godly Play and Youth Class. Our Godly Play class gathers to sing, share news with each other, pray together, and hear ancient and contemporary stories of our faith. Our Youth Class shares their weekly gathering rituals and explores topics of interest and curiosity in faith and identity. If you need a Zoom link, email children@cotcbos.org.

20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT: We have an active young adult group that meets regularly to create community. Join us on Monday evenings at 7:30 PM for a weekly time to pray and connect via conference call at (712) 432-0220, access code 2667480#. We'll be holding our final 7:30 PM Monday evening prayer time with Rev. Adam in-person on August 17 outdoors at the Boston Public Garden. Physical distancing, face coverings, and reservations required here: <https://forms.gle/7ATE5irRrjmWJRoV7>. For questions, contact one of our group leaders: Kathryn Barry, Melissa Morgan, Tom Reid, or Rev. Adam at youngadults@cotcbos.org. If you'd like to be added to our email list, email covenant-boston-subscribe@googlegroups.com.

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 prayers 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, 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. And 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 creation; that transcend the exclusive language of the church's past. We invite you to join us in the journey toward God's justice and peace for all people in this neighborhood, this city, and the world.

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor*
Rev. Adam Isbitsky, *Associate Pastor*
Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*
Bill Brown, *Building Manager*
Hillary Gabbidon, *Parish Administrator*
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*
Nancy Stockford, *Financial Secretary*