

Old South Church

Copley Square, Boston

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Gathered 1669

November 15, 2026 ❖ 11:00am

Twenty-fifth Sunday After Pentecost

Take heart: it is not too late to build a better world.

GATHER

PRELUDE — The Gift of Love — Joel Raney, *arr.*

WELCOME — John M. Edgerton

*CALL TO WORSHIP

People of God: listen to the trumpet's call!
We come from near and far
to kneel before the Holy One.
Shout to God with songs of joy!
We worship the Christ—
the Exalted One, who sits above
every ruler and authority.
Sing praises to God, sing praises!
We bless the Spirit—
The Hand of God,
Who lifts us into heavenly courts.
Let us worship God!

**Indicates all who are able may stand*

*HYMN 303 **Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing** DARWALL'S 148

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One,
we have set our minds on wrong things—
on selfish gain, not generous service;
on pursuits that distract, not inspire;
on tasks that diminish, rather than give, life.

We long to set our minds on eternal things—
on your way of mercy and compassion;
on paths that lead to justice and peace;
on living as people of hope.

Spirit of God, dwell in us.
Give us grace when we fall short,
transform our hearts and renew our minds,
and set us free to follow you faithfully.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

*PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

ANTHEM Open Our Eyes Leon Lumkins
The Old South Gospel Choir
Geoff O'Hara, *soloist*

Father, open our eyes, that we may see, to follow thee.
Grant us thy loving peace, and let all dissension cease.
Let our faith each day increase, and Master, open our eyes.

Open our eyes:
for he has given us hills and mountains,
he has given us level plains.
he has given us food and clothing,
given us shelter from the storm and the rain.
And with all he has provided, we're always hurting one another.
Seems that we just can't be contented, we're always fighting one another.

Look up on us with compassion, and please hear us when we cry.
And smile on your helpless children, and Master, open our eyes.

Silently now, I wait for thee,
ready my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me,
spirit divine.

(Though often ascribed masculine or feminine pronouns in prose and poetry,
God is unbound by human concepts of gender.)

LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION		Jack Millard
SCRIPTURE	Ezekiel 36:22-28	
*HYMN 292	**Breathe on me, Breath of God**	TRENTHAM
	During the hymn, children that wish may meet childcare staff in the back of the sanctuary and proceed to the 3rd floor.	
SCRIPTURE	Mark 3:1-6	Rachel J. Barton
SERMON	Hearts of Flesh	
*HYMN 449	**Softly and Tenderly**	SOFTLY AND TENDERLY

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION Ashley J. Popperson

Out of the depths we cry, O Lord; hear our prayer.

We pray for the leaders of nations:
Guide them to govern with justice.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for earth and all its creatures:
Help us to live in harmony with one another.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose hearts are broken:
Renew their faith, hope, and love.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for people without homes:
Give them shelter and safety.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who wrestle with evil:
By your Holy Spirit, set them free.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for families that are divided:
Bring healing and peace to all.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Out of the depths we cry, O Lord.
Give us hope as we wait for you,
that we may rejoice when the morning dawns;
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A period of silence is kept.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy 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 lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE Yet Not I, But Through Christ in Me James Koerts, *arr.*

What gift of grace is Jesus, my redeemer:
there is no more for heaven now to give.
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom,
my steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace.

To this I hold: my hope is only Jesus,
for my life is wholly bound to his.
Oh, how strange and divine, I can sing, "All is mine!"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

The night is dark, but I am not forsaken,
for by my side, the savior, he will stay.
I labor on in weakness and rejoicing,
for in my need, his power is displayed.

To this I hold: my shepherd will defend me;
through the deepest valley, he will lead.
Oh, the night has been won, and I shall overcome!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven,
the future sure, the price — it has been paid.
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon,
and he was raised to overthrow the grave.

To this I hold: my sin has been defeated.
Jesus, now and ever, is my plea.
Oh, the chains are released, I can sing, "I am free!"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

With every breath, I long to follow Jesus,
for he has said that he will bring me home.
And day by day, I know he will renew me
until I stand with joy before the throne.

To this I hold: my hope is only Jesus.
All the glory evermore to him.
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:
"Yet not I, but through Christ in me."

RESPOND

CALL TO THE OFFERING — Ashley J. Popperson



To give online, scan the QR code

If you're new to Old South scan the QR code to tell us more about yourself



OFFERTORY — Great Is Thy Faithfulness — Mary McDonald, *arr.*

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.

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.

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!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, you have given each of us gifts to use as members of the body of Christ. We offer in return the work of our hands, our hearts, and our lives. May they bring transformation and renewal through the ministry of your church, into which all are invited:

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. *—UCC Statement of Faith, Doxology*

*HYMN 41 **I Thank You, Jesus** THANK YOU, JESUS

*CHARGE & BENEDICTION Rachel J. Barton

Our help is in the name of the Lord—
The God who made heaven and Earth.
Where is God sending us?
God sends us into her own world.
And what does the Lord require of us?
To do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

Micah 6:8

POSTLUDE Come, Thou Fount Vicki Collinsworth, *arr.*

Musicians this morning:

Roberto Alaniz, *bass*
Aaron Trant, *percussion*

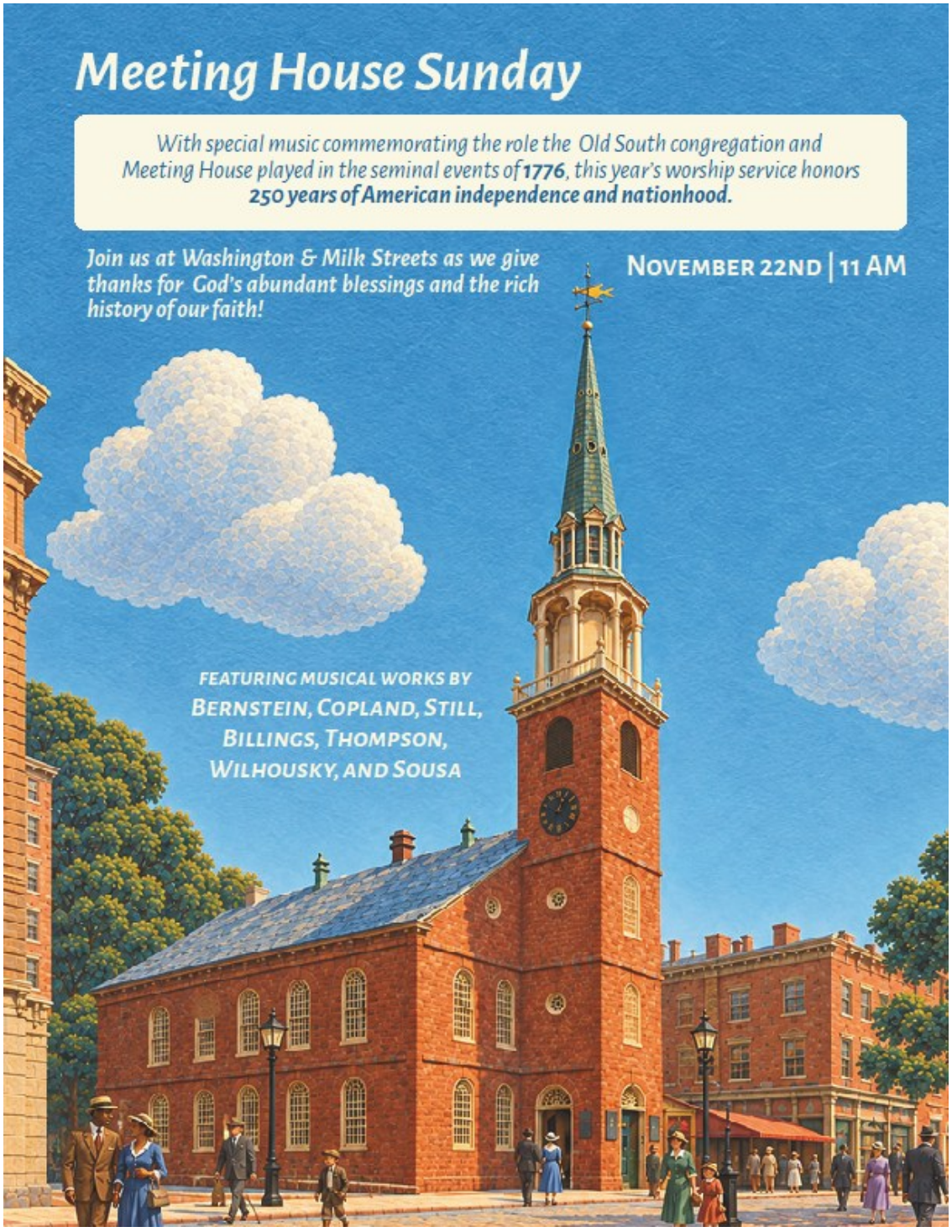
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Join us for Refreshments & Fellowship
in the Gordon Chapel following the Postlude.

The flowers today are given by Carol Boggs with gratitude to Kate Nintcheu for caring for children and flowers and all things that matter.

Close-Up, a twenty minute tour of the Sanctuary,
begins immediately following worship
at the front of the Sanctuary by docent Kate Silfen.

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Meeting House Sunday
With special music commemorating the role the Old South congregation and Meeting House played in the seminal events of 1776, this year's worship service honors 250 years of American independence and nationhood.
Join us at Washington & Milk Streets as we give thanks for God's abundant blessings and the rich history of our faith!
NOVEMBER 22ND | 11 AM
FEATURING MUSICAL WORKS BY
BERNSTEIN, COPLAND, STILL,
BILLINGS, THOMPSON,
WILHOUSKY, AND SOUSA

UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES AND EVENTS

Meeting House Sunday
Sunday, November 22 | 11AM

With special music commemorating the role the Old South congregation and Meeting House played in the seminal events of 1776, this year's worship service honors 250 years of American independence and nationhood. Join us at Washington & Milk Streets as we give thanks for God's abundant blessings and the rich history of our faith.

Candlelight Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 24

***Family Service with Impromptu Pageant* | 5PM**
***Lessons and Carols* | 8PM**
***Carols and Communion* | 11PM**

Boston First Night at Old South Church
Thursday, December 31 | All events free and open to the public

Organist David Preston | 1pm
A concert of American organ music in celebration of America 250. The program features variations on the National Anthem and "My Country 'Tis of Thee," colonial-era repertoire, and Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings.

Castle of Our Skins + Old South Church | 4pm
Old South partner organization Castle of Our Skins presents a First Night concert for the first time in the organization's history. A Black arts institution that centers Black arts, culture, and history within each of its curated events, Castle of Our Skins was recently honored by the City of Boston with a new performance venue and workspace at the edge of the South End.

Pipes and Pops | 6:30pm and 8pm
The best of Boston's brass and percussion artists join organist Mitchell Crawford in a supersonic program of popular classics. Featuring fun and engaging programming for the whole family, come experience Old South's incredible E. M. Skinner organ, with over 7,000 room-shaking pipes!

WELCOME TO OLD SOUTH CHURCH

Welcome to Old South Church in Boston. We are a progressive Christian church first gathered in 1669. The Church played a significant role in early American history. Today, Old South Church continues to serve as a sanctuary in the city of Boston.

NEW AT OLD SOUTH?

Welcome! We are so glad you're here! Please take a moment to fill out a friendship pad so that we can be in touch with you. If you have any questions or would like to talk to a minister to learn more about the church, contact Associate Minister Ashley Popperson at *ashley@oldsouth.org*.

Children are welcome in all aspects of worship. We also offer childcare from 8:20am-12:30pm every Sunday and Church School at 10am. For questions about our children and family ministries, email *children@oldsouth.org*.

For LARGE print bulletins or children's bulletins, please ask an Usher.

An accessible, single-stall restroom is available near Reception. More restrooms are available. Please ask at the reception desk.

HEARING ASSISTANCE

Hearing assist devices are available from Ava Welling, our Director of Audio. Please see Ava for a device and instructions on how to use it. For more information or answers to questions, please contact Ava at *ava@oldsouth.org*.

GARAGE PARKING VALIDATIONS

We have arrangements for discounted parking with two nearby garages for Old South Church for Sunday worship services only. For more information check out *www.oldsouth.org/your-first-visit* or see the front desk.

LEARN MORE

Check out the church website www.oldsouth.org for more on the history and ministries of Old South. See *www.oldsouth.org/calendar* for a calendar of current events.

CCLI #2802138 ❖CCS #12028 ❖ OneLicense #A-700000

OLD SOUTH CHURCH *in* BOSTON — MINISTERS, OFFICERS, & STAFF

John M. Edgerton, *Senior Minister*
Ashley J. Popperson, *Associate Minister* ❖ Rachel J. Barton, *Associate Minister for Transformation*
Dimitri Bawole, *Taylor Fellow*

Donald A. Wells, *Theologian in Residence* ❖ June R. Cooper, *Theologian in the City*
James Harrison Jr., *Wedding Minister* ❖ Kenneth H. Orth, *Healing Worship Minister*

James W. Crawford, *Senior Minister Emeritus* ❖ Nancy S. Taylor, *Senior Minister Emeritus*

Mitchell Crawford, *Minister of Music*
Jonathan Reddix, *Collaborative Pianist* ❖ Jan Christoph Hadenfeldt, *Visiting Organist*
Tim Harbold, *Director, Gospel Choir* ❖ Peter Coulombe, *Director, Old South Ringers*
Audrey Woodhams, *Creative Director for Thursday Night Church*

Kate Nintcheu, *Director, Children & Family Ministries*
Summer Marsh, *Director, Old South Preschool*
Jamie Chelel, *Children's Choir Director* ❖ *Jonathan Reddix , Children's Choir Accompanist*
Rory Razon, *Youth Group Co-Leader*

Rebecca Pasipanodya, *Director of Operations*
Rémy Hatfield-Gardner, *Administrative Assistant* ❖ Kathleen Steen, *Staff Accountant*
Karen Hand, *Wedding Coordinator*

Jamie G. Sage, *Multimedia Director* ❖ Ava Welling, *Director of Audio*
Rémy Hatfield-Gardner & William Wei, *Livestream Production Assistants*

Elias Perez, *Senior Sexton* ❖ Tahmina Akter, Richard Serebour, & MD Rahman, *Sextons*

Corey Spence, *Weekday Receptionist* ❖ Shirley Bivins, Anna Pratt, Shelia Randolph, & Zach Zang *Evening & Weekend Receptionists*

Maren Batalden, *Moderator* ❖ Rob Gabler, *Clerk* ❖ Donna Matson, *Treasurer*
Debby Kuenstner, *Chair, Board of Trustees* ❖ Kate Silfen, *Historian*
Rebecca Bowen & Laurie Stickels, *Senior Deacons*

A NOTE ON THE INCLUSIVE DIMENSIONS OF GOD'S GRACE

Old South Church in Boston, in the name of its host, Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of Christ's invitation carved into the stone of this church's portico, "Behold I Set Before You an Open Door," welcomes all who seek to know God. Following the One who we believe is Sovereign and Savior, we affirm that each individual is a child of God, and recognize that we are called to be like one body with many members, seeking with others of every race, ethnicity, creed, class, age, gender, marital status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression to journey together toward the promised realm of God. We invite everyone to join in the common life and mission of our reconciling community through participation and leadership in this congregation, and by fully sharing in the worship, rites and sacraments of this church. As we all move forward with the work of this church, we commit ourselves to making justice and inclusivity a reality in this congregation and in the world. On the threshold of Christ's open door, we rely upon the healing, unconditional nature of God's love and grace to be our help and guide.

OLD SOUTH CHURCH *in* BOSTON

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMUNITY HOUR FORUM—SPEAKING OF BELONGING:
What Holds You Back from Deeper Relationships at Church?
Sunday, November 15, 10am in person and Zoom ***tinyurl.com/Nov15BELONG***
You are also invited to join the discussion on Sunday, December 6, 7:30pm at the Online Small Group meeting at ***tinyurl.com/2025OSCOnlineSmallGroup***
Join us in examining ways our institutional practices influence our personal sense of belonging, including social culture, worship, communication, leadership, resource allocation, community partnerships and organizational norms. We gather in a spirit of truth telling that will help us be better.

A MONTH IN MARK
Sunday, November 15,10:00 am, Crawford Library
Join Rev. Rachel for a four-week long community Bible study on the Gospel of Mark. We'll be looking at the weekly sermon text together, asking questions, interpreting the stories and parables and applying the Bible to our lives. Got questions? Email Rachel at ***rachel@oldsouth.org***

SEEKING ADVENT DEVOTIONAL SUBMISSIONS | Deadline: November 23
In the midst of war, climate change, global economic struggle, and our personal struggles, where is God? This Advent, we will create a devotional filled with entries from Old Southers and community partners about where they see God's love embodied in the world today. We're seeking submissions for stories, prayers, art, music and poetry that answers the questions: How has God shown up for you? Where and in whom do you see God's love embodied in your own neighborhood? How might we embody God's love? Submit your entry at ***tinyurl.com/adventdev2026***. Questions? Email ***ashley@oldsouth.org***.

MEETING HOUSE SUNDAY
Sunday, November 22, 11am at the Old South Meeting House—Washing St. & Milk St.
Don't come to Copley Square next Sunday—join us for worship at our ancestral home, the Old South Meeting House instead! In this annual special service, we'll give thanks for God's many blessings and the rich history of our faith.

MUSIC FOR PEACE: 32 STRINGS!
Friday, November 20, 7:30pm, Old South Sanctuary
Get tickets at ***tinyurl.com/2026MusicforPeace****. Admission is free, donation requested.*
Join our very own Sam Ou for a lovely string concert featuring the harmonies of the Mendelssohn and Enescu Octets, written by teenage composers, and the sound of 8 talented musicians. This concert benefits Massachusetts Peace Action.

CORO ALLEGRO PRESENTS ANDREW YEE'S TRANS REQUIEM

Sunday, November 22, 3pm, Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury Street, Boston
*Tickets available at **tinyurl.com/11-22Concert**, Use the code REQUIEM for $5 off any ticket.*

Coro Allegro, Boston's LGBTQ+ and allied classical chorus, presents the Boston premiere of Andrew Yee's *Trans Requiem*. Featuring two-time GRAMMY Award-winning cellist and composer Andrew Yee, soprano Breanna Sinclairé, and tenor Sam Crosby-Schmidt, this moving work celebrates the beauty, resilience, and diversity of the trans experience.

SAVE THE DATE: OLD SOUTH & ISBCC—Exploring Christian and Islamic Views on Jesus

December 14th, 6pm, Old South Sanctuary

Old South will host our friends from the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center. We will share a light meal and deep conversation about the role of Jesus in both Christianity and Islam.

SAVE THE DATE: BENEFIT CONCERT FOR BIJAN

Saturday, December 5, 3-5pm in Gordon Chapel; Free admission, free-will offering to support BIJAN

You're invited to a benefit concert led by Willie Sordillo featuring a diverse group of musicians (including Zoë Krohne!), dancers and poets/spoken word artists to support the work of The Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network (BIJAN). This event is sponsored by the participating artists, with co-sponsorship from the Old South Christian Service and Outreach Committee and The Immigration Justice Committee of First Parish in Brookline.

GIVING BACK: THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, Old South has several opportunities to give to the wider community through our long-term community partners. Beginning November 19th, there will be a Christmas tree near the reception desk decorated with ornaments. Each ornament will have instructions for a gift for one of the gift drives listed below. You can select an ornament from the tree or you can participate online at ***oldsouth.org/true-spirit-christmas***.

THURSDAY NIGHT CHURCH MUSIC IS NOW STREAMING

Back in June, the Thursday Night Church Band recorded some of our congregation's favorite songs live. Now, after months of work, we're ready to share them with the world! Give them a listen on all major streaming platforms today, or visit ***oldsouth.org/tnc-music***

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday, December 20th, 5-7pm in Mary Norton Hall

Join us for a time of merriment and community, caroling and children's activities! Dinner will be provided. You're invited to bring cookies for a cookie competition! Come prepared for holly, jolly, festive fun!

BECOMING A MEMBER OF OLD SOUTH CHURCH

If you're new to Old South or have been coming for a while and are ready to make it official, now is your chance! New Members will be joining Old South on December 3rd and 6th. Email Ashley Popperson if you're interested in joining by November 30th (ashley@oldsouth.org)

ASSOCIATE MINISTER SEARCH SURVEY

We want to hear from you about what you're hoping for in our next settled Associate Minister! Your input will directly inform the Search Committee's work as we look for our next Associate Minister. Scan the QR code to take the survey—it's anonymous and only takes 5 minutes!

SMALL GROUPS AT OLD SOUTH CHURCH

For more information or questions about Small Groups at Old South Church, reach out to Associate Minister for Transformation Rachel Barton at ***rachel@oldsouth.org***.

FAITH, LIFE, AND PRAYER

Monday nights 7:00 pm-9:00 pm, in person, Jamaica Plain

Join this group for fun, friendship and great conversations about God and the meanings of life! This group shares life, prays together, and discusses the sermon scripture from Sunday morning. Every other gathering we'll share a meal and more time for prayer. Delicious homemade popcorn everytime. Hosted by Val Snekvik and Jim Jumper.

THEOLOGICAL BOOK GROUP: WINTER BOOK

Monday nights 6:00 pm-7:00 pm on zoom

The Theological Book Group's winter book is *Do I Stay Christian? A Guide for the Doubters, the Disappointed, and the Disillusioned* by Brian McLaren. He examines sins that the wider church has engaged in over the centuries such as slavery, homophobia, white patriarchy, violent colonialism, the treatment of Native Americans and, the Crusades. McLaren helps us see a way forward to greater faithfulness in our time by 'renouncing' this checkered past, aspects of which are still with us today, and 'announcing' the Good News in compelling ways. Interested? Contact Don Wells to sign up (***granwell@comcast.net).*** The group is limited to 20.

WELCOME TO THE TABLE

Wednesdays & a monthly Saturday, 4-6pm, Allston-Brighton Food Pantry, 404 Washington St, Brighton

Put your faith into action by helping to feed the hungry. On designated Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings, volunteers serve food and/or help clean up food stations. Afterwards, the group will go to a restaurant to share a meal and conversation. Hosted by Esther Seguin (***ejohannaseguin@gmail.com***).

METROPLITAN BOSTON ASSOCIATION FALL MEETING

Sunday, November 15, 2-4pm

*Go to **tinyurl.com/MBAMeetingFall2026** or email **rachel@oldsouth.org** for info.*

Join the wider church at the Metropolitan Boston Association's Fall Meeting. We'll gather from 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm for a time of worship and collaboration, including a workshop on church collaboration led by our colleagues Rev. Chris Mereschuk and Rev. Julia Khan at the SNUECC's Continuing Covenant Collaborative. Following our formal meeting, we'll retire to an Association Social at Joe's on Newbury.

THE WEEKLY PUSHBACK: BAGLY

In honor of Trans Day of Remembrance on November 20

*To learn more and to donate **bagly.org***

*Have other weekly pushback ideas? Email **outreach@oldsouth.org***

At a time where we particularly see trans and nonbinary youth under federal attack, Old South is proud to support The Boston Alliance of LGBTQIA+ Youth (BAGLY) with a $1,000 Weekly Pushback grant. BAGLY is a youth-led, adult-supported social support organization, committed to social justice and creating, sustaining, and advocating for programs, policies, and services for the LGBTQIA+ youth community in Massachusetts. They offer free health clinic and therapy services, and offer life skills sessions on practical topics such as being a good roommate, what to buy at the grocery store and how to cook it, how to file taxes, and creating a resume. In this trying moment, we are grateful for the opportunity to affirm the important work BAGLY does everyday to help LGBTQIA+ youth know that they are not alone and that they are supported through each life stage.

WEEKLY WORSHIP

Join us in person, on Facebook, and YouTube

Thursday Night Church, Thursdays at 6:00 pm

FIRST Worship Sundays at 9:00 am

FESTIVAL Worship Sundays at 11:00 am

VESPERS HEALING Worship, Second Sundays at 5:00 pm via Zoom

To give online, Scan the QR code

If You're new to Old South, scan the QR code to tell us more about yourself.

NOTICES 1) Worship services and events at Old South Church are sometimes photographed and videotaped to document the vibrant life of our church. If you do not wish to be included in these recordings, please notify an usher. 2) Please do not leave bags unattended in the building, including the Sanctuary, for any length of time.