



Old South Church

*Copley Square, Boston*

*A Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ*

*Gathered 1669*

## The Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

February 8, 2026 ♦ 11:00 a.m.

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

## GATHER

PRELUDE

Andante

Ludwig van Beethoven

from the Sonata (“Kreutzer”), Op. 47

\*HYMN 11

**Bring Many Names**

WESTCHASE

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

*Adapted from James Weldon Johnson,*

John M. Edgerton

*“Listen, Lord: A Prayer”*

O Lord, we come this morning,  
**knee-bowed and body-bent,**  
**before thy throne of grace.**

O Lord, this morning:  
**bow our hearts beneath our knees,**  
**and our knees in some lonesome valley.**

We come this morning:  
**like empty pitchers to a full fountain,**  
**with no merits of our own.**

O Lord, open up a window of heaven;  
**lean out far over the fortifications of glory,**  
**and listen this morning.**

*\*Indicates all who are able may stand*

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*Please greet those around you, wishing them “peace” or “the peace of Christ.”*

WELCOME

ANTHEM

Simple Gifts  
(“Shaker Song” from *Old American Songs, Set I*)

Aaron Copland

‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free,  
‘tis the gift to come down where you ought to be,  
and when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
‘twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained,  
to bow and to bend we shan’t be ashamed.  
To turn, turn, will be our delight  
‘till by turning, turning, we come ‘round right.

## LISTEN

SCRIPTURE

Luke 15:11-32

David Story

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kate M. Nintcheu

\*HYMN 583

**Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us**

AUSTIN

*During the hymn, children that wish may meet childcare staff  
in the back of the sanctuary and proceed to the 3rd floor.*

SERMON

The Light is On

Ashley J. Popperson

\*HYMN 400

**Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation**

REGENT SQUARE

# RESPOND

## \*CALL TO PRAYER

Justin Tyler Dickerson

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

May the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts.

**Christ is our peace, our light, and our hope.**

Let us pray. *Please be seated.*

## PASTORAL PRAYER

## 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

At the River

Aaron Copland

(“Hymn Tune” from *Old American Songs, Set II*)

Shall we gather by the river,  
where bright angels' feet have trod,  
with its crystal tide forever  
flowing by the throne of God?

*Yes, we'll gather by the river,  
the beautiful, the beautiful river,  
gather with the saints by the river  
that flows by the throne of God.*

Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
soon our pilgrimage will cease,  
soon our happy hearts will quiver  
with the melody of peace.

## CALL TO THE OFFERING

John M. Edgerton



*To give via ApplePay,  
GooglePay, or Credit Card,  
scan the QR code.*

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



## OFFERTORY

Zion's Walls

Aaron Copland

Come fathers and mothers,  
come sisters and brothers,  
come join us in singing the praises of Zion.

O fathers, don't you feel determined  
to meet within the walls of Zion?

We'll shout and go 'round the walls of Zion.

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*HYMN 459

**Come, O Fount of Every Blessing**

NETTLETON

## \*BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION

Ashley J. Popperson

## POSTLUDE

Marche Militaire No. 1 in D Major

Franz Schubert



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

The flowers today are given by Amy Coe  
with love and an abundance of gratitude  
for our Thursday night group.

*Close-Up*, a twenty minute tour of the Sanctuary,  
begins immediately following worship near the pulpit.  
Led by docent Kate Silfen.

❖❖❖❖❖❖❖❖

## **NOTES ON TODAY'S CALL TO WORSHIP**

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was born in Jacksonville, Florida to immigrant parents from the Bahamas. He attended Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) where he studied literature and music. Johnson wrote and edited numerous historically significant books of poetry and literature. In 1900, he penned "Lift Every Voice and Sing." His works explored racial identity and the African American folk tradition. Johnson was a teacher, principal, activist and a national organizer for the NAACP.

Old South Church *in* Boston invites you  
to its *Signature Services and Events* during the coming year.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

### **February 18, 2026 | 12PM & 6PM**

At noon, a simple service of prayer, silence, confession, & imposition of ashes.

At 6PM, a special musical service featuring the Old South Festival Choir & incorporating “Holden Evening Prayer” by composer Marty Haugen.

## **HOLY WEEK 2026**

### ***Palm Sunday* — March 29 | 9AM & 11AM**

### ***Maundy Thursday* — April 2 | 6PM**

### ***Good Friday* — April 3 | 7PM**

## **EASTER SUNDAY**

### **April 5, 2026 | 9AM & 11AM**

The triumph of the Christian story of resurrection informs a service of worship that is characterized by joyous celebration.

## **MARATHON SUNDAY**

### **April 19, 2026 | 9AM, 11AM, & 1PM**

Hundreds of marathoners join us for worship, where we will pause to acknowledge the runners, their families, and volunteers in a special “Blessing of the Athletes.”

## **ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

### **November 1, 2026 | 11AM**

In a solemn service of sacred music, we gather to name and remember our own beloved dead who now rest from their labors in the arms of God.

## **MEETING HOUSE SUNDAY**

### **November 22, 2026 | 11AM**

We return to our ancestral home, the Old South Meeting House at Washington & Milk Streets, to give thanks for God’s many blessings and the rich history of our faith.

## **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](mailto: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](mailto: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, 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](mailto: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](http://www.oldsouth.org/your-first-visit) or see the front desk.

### **LEARN MORE**

Check out the church website [www.oldsouth.org](http://www.oldsouth.org) for more on the history and ministries of Old South. See [www.oldsouth.org/calendar](http://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*

Kat Woodard, *Taylor Resident for Mission in the City* ♦ Justin Dickerson, *Seminarian*

Donald A. Wells, *Theologian in Residence* ♦ June R. Cooper, *Theologian in the City*

David F. Story, *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*

Audrey Woodhams, *Creative Director for Thursday Night Church*

Tim Harbold, *Director, Gospel Choir* ♦ Peter Coulombe, *Director, Old South Ringers*

Kate Nintcheu, *Director, Children & Family Ministries*

Summer Marsh, *Director, Old South Preschool*

Yuexuan Joyce Wang, *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 Garuti 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*

Sarah Acheson-Field, Shirley Bivins, & Shelia Randolph, *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.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

Old South Church in Boston | Week of Sunday February 8, 2025

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT OLD SOUTH

As we celebrate 100 years of Black History Month this year, a coalition of Boston organizations are amplifying a shared message of African-American excellence, leadership, resilience, and joy. This collective witness documents Boston's story during this centennial of Black History Month and the nation's semiquincentennial. During a time of division and erasure, this is a trailblazing movement. Grounded in joy and liberation, the coalition is offering a month of events celebrating Black History and Futures. To learn more (including about events at the Old South Meeting House!) visit [blackhistoryboston.org](http://blackhistoryboston.org).

In all three of our services, we are highlighting the voices of Black pastors, scholars, poets and musicians in our liturgy and music.

## ANNUAL MEETING 2026

### ANNUAL MEETING COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

In anticipation of our upcoming Annual Meeting on March 8 at 12:00, please join us for one of these upcoming sessions for an open discussion about Old South Church finances as we anticipate our 2026 budget discussion.

**February 12, 7:00 pm**

Crawford Library and Zoom at [tinyurl.com/2-12-26AnnualMeetingClass](http://tinyurl.com/2-12-26AnnualMeetingClass)

**February 15, 12:15 pm**

Mary Norton Hall and Zoom at [tinyurl.com/2-15-26AnnualMeetingClass](http://tinyurl.com/2-15-26AnnualMeetingClass)

**March 1, 10:00 am**

Mary Norton Hall and Zoom at [tinyurl.com/3-1-26AnnualMeetingClass](http://tinyurl.com/3-1-26AnnualMeetingClass)

At these gatherings, you'll get a basic introduction to Old South finances, and learn about sources of revenue and categories of expense. You'll hear the guiding principles underlying the development of the budget and engage with others in understanding some of the challenges we are facing.

### ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCH

*Sunday March 8, 2026, 12:00 pm, Mary Norton Hall,*

*RSVP for lunch at [tinyurl.com/RSVP2026AnnualMeetingLunch](http://tinyurl.com/RSVP2026AnnualMeetingLunch)*

*Prefer to join online? Zoom at [tinyurl.com/OSC2026AnnualMeetingZoom](http://tinyurl.com/OSC2026AnnualMeetingZoom)*

Mark your calendars! Our Annual Meeting will take place on March 8th. Together, we will vote on our Officers, Trustees, and Committee Chairs; review the Budget; and engage in the work of the church. This year, our Annual Meeting will include important conversations about our finances and the work of the church in the years to come.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

*February 18, 2026, 12PM & 6PM, Ashes On the Way, 8:30am-5:30pm*

At noon, a simple service of prayer, silence, confession, & imposition of ashes. At 6PM, a special musical service featuring the Old South Festival Choir & incorporating "Holden Evening Prayer" by composer Marty Haugen. Ashes On the Way will be offered in front of the church to those who can't attend the services.

## LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

*Sunday, February 22, 12:30-5:00pm, Cordon Chapel,*

*for more info contact William Wei Mian at [williamweimian@gmail.com](mailto:williamweimian@gmail.com)*

In a time when so much aggression is targeting immigrants and BIPOC people, what better way to reclaim our Christian Faith from the loud Christian Nationalists than honoring and celebrating the festival of a culture that once was colonized by the United States, and we will do it within the sacred space of a church that helped gave birth to the United States. Join us for a time of spiritual reflections and connections, food and fun, art, literature, and music.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR BELONGING AT OLD SOUTH CHURCH

### COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

February 15 and every 3rd Sunday, in Rev. Ashley's office,  
meet in Elevator Lobby at 10:05am

Join Pastor Ashley and church members for informal conversation and coffee. If you've been coming for one week, or a dozen, or just exploring online, join us to get to know more about the church and to make a friend or two! Questions? Email [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org).

### CONNECTIONS LUNCH

Sunday, February 22, 12pm in the Phillis Wheatley Room,  
RSVP by February 19 to [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org)

Interested in joining the church? To be a member of Old South Church is to enter the company of Revolutionary Era heroes, abolitionists, suffragettes, anti-poverty crusaders, and poets. Our saints include Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, Phillis Wheatley... and maybe you! Want to learn more about the life of this community of faith while sharing lunch with other newcomers and church members? Join our Connections Lunch!

### BECOME A MEMBER OF OLD SOUTH

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 March 5 and 8. Email Ashley Popperson [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org) if you're interested in joining by February 26.

## **WINTER WALK TO END HOMELESSNESS—Rescheduled to March 22**

*Sunday, March 22, 10am, Questions? Email Kat Woodard at [kat@oldsouth.org](mailto:kat@oldsouth.org)*

The Winter Walk to End Homelessness has been postponed to March 22nd. The two-mile walk around Boston Common raises awareness and funds to support organizations working to prevent homelessness and provide care, accompaniment, and resources for our unhoused neighbors. Old South is participating as part of the *common cathedral* team this year. Register or donate at [tinyurl.com/OSC2026WinterWalk](https://tinyurl.com/OSC2026WinterWalk)

## **HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS**

Be the friendly face that makes a difference in someone's day! At each worship service, our hospitality team offers a warm welcome to friends and visitors alike. We are seeking ushers and welcomers for all three services through April. For Festival Worship, note the new role of Offertory Usher who will only help collect the offering. This new, simpler role is an excellent opportunity to those new to ushering. If you've been wondering how to get more involved and get to know others, hospitality is a great way to start! Please sign up at <https://oldsouth.org/hospitality>.

## **UPCOMING COMMUNITY HOUR FORUMS | SUNDAYS AT 10AM**

### **LET'S TALK ABOUT IT- Open Forum about current events | February 8**

Join Rev June Cooper and fellow Old South folks for an open conversation about how our current world is affecting you and how your faith is motivating and sustaining you.

### **GBIO HOUSE MEETING SESSION | February 15**

As part of Greater Boston Interfaith Organization's current listening campaign, take part in a "house meeting" session with the goal of both sharing and learning more about the issues impacting us and those we love and stand in community with.

### **ALL CHURCH LENTEN SERIES: BELOVED COMMUNITY**

*Community Hours, Thursday Night Supper Clubs, and Online Small Group*

*February 22 through March 29, except March 1*

Lent is a call to connect and align ourselves with the radical, all-encompassing love that Jesus embodied. This Lent, we invite you to build relationships and deepen connections through weekly small group discussions, facilitated by the Membership committee. Consider joining for the whole series, or simply pop in when you're able! All are welcome - come as you are - come when you can!

## THE WEEKLY PUSHBACK—Christian Service and Outreach

### BLACK SPORTS MINISTRY NETWORK

Learn more about their work and volunteer opportunities [www.thebsmn.org/](http://www.thebsmn.org/)

Have other weekly action ideas? Email [outreach@oldsouth.org](mailto:outreach@oldsouth.org)

To get involved or ask questions email Kat Woodard at [kat@oldsouth.org](mailto:kat@oldsouth.org)

The Black Sports Ministry Network, under the leadership of Womanist scholar, community builder, and Founding Executive Director Cynthia N. Perry, M.Div, exists to develop ethical leaders in sports, beginning with athletes, coaches, chaplains, and support staff of the African Diaspora. The Black Sports Ministry Network fulfills this mission through strategic consultation and collaboration with Black pastors, chaplains, scholars, health professionals, and others—cultivating a distinctive platform for education, empowerment, community, and social advocacy within the world of sports. Their work centers spiritual care and support resources rooted in Black culture, spirituality, and theology, affirming the lived experiences of those they serve.

*During Black History Month this February our Weekly Pushbacks are going to Black created and Black lead organizations in Boston.*

### GREEN TIP: Skip the Bouquet for a Potted Plant

Learn more Green Valentine tips at [tinyurl.com/2026GreenValentine](http://tinyurl.com/2026GreenValentine)

Many cut flowers travel long distances and have a surprisingly large carbon footprint. A potted plant lasts longer, brightens your home, and keeps on growing. Try easy-care options like aloe, snake, or spider plants. You could also plant seeds together for a sweet shared activity.

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### WEEKLY WORSHIP

**Join us in person, on Facebook, and YouTube**

**Thursday Night Church**, Thursdays at 6:00 p.m., no service 12/25 and 1/1

**FIRST Worship** Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

**FESTIVAL Worship** Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

**VESPERS HEALING Worship**, Second Sundays at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom

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To give via ApplePay,  
GooglePay, or Credit Card,  
scan the QR code.

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



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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.

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Old South Church in Boston ♦ 645 Boylston Street, Boston 02116 ♦ [www.oldsouth.org](http://www.oldsouth.org)