



Copley Square, Boston

*A Congregation of the
United Church of Christ*

Gathered 1669

October 11, 2026 ♦ 11:00am

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

*Let us go forth into the city and proclaim the message there also;
for that is what I came out to do. —Mark 1:38*

GATHER

PRELUDE

Adagio from the Sonata in F minor, Op. 65, No. 1

Felix Mendelssohn

WELCOME

Ashley J. Popperson

BELONG MESSAGE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Whether we stray like sheep,
or follow faithfully,

God welcomes us here.

Whether we seek healing and wholeness,
or stand ready to extend compassion,

God welcomes us here.

**Indicates all who are able may stand*

Whether exhausted from journeys across rough terrain,
or renewed and refreshed, our souls at peace,
we gather to hear the good news:
The kingdom of heaven is close at hand!
We worship the Living God.

*HYMN 304

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

CORONATION

CONFESSION

Merciful God,
our world calls for action and immediate response.
We do not know how to slow down and wait patiently.

Silence.

Our world dings, beeps, and rings, demanding constant attention.
We struggle to hear you amidst the noise.

Silence.

Our world is filled with images, reels, and shiny objects that catch our eyes.
We forget to look for you amidst the distractions.

Silence.

Call us to wait;
to surrender;
to pay attention:
**Until our eyes are opened,
and we recognize you have been with us all along.**

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

*PASSING THE PEACE

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

ANTHEM

He is Able

Jay Rouse, *arr.*

Like peering through a window blurred with rain,
emotions run together in a flood of doubt and pain.

We've prayed as best we can;
now we must leave it in his hands.

*Yet I know when my eyes fail to see, he is able.
And even though it seems impossible to me, he is able.
But if he chooses not to move in the way we prayed he would,
confident he's working altogether for my good,
I will stand behind his word, for he is able.*

Questions seem to haunt us night and day;
Oh, how could God allow my heart to be torn this way?

Does he listen when I call?
Is he even there at all?

Yet I know when my eyes fail to see...

And as the night gives way to dawning and evaporates away,
I'll stand to face another day.

And I will stand behind his word, for he is able.

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

LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Kara Duca-Johnson

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 43:18-25

*HYMN 5

Praise to God

SAKURA

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

SCRIPTURE

Mark 2:1-12

John M. Edgerton

SERMON

Shameless

*HYMN 178

We Have the Strength to Lift and Bear

TALLIS THIRD TUNE

CENTERING PRAYER

Rachel J. Barton

Be still and know that I am God. Be still and
know that I am. Be still and know. Be still.

Text: adapted from Psalm 46:11
Music: Barbara Bridge, 2005, 2006

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

Sweet Hour of Prayer

Gilbert Martin, *arr.*

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! that calls me from a world of care,
and bids me at my Savior's throne make all my wants and wishes known.

In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief,
and oft escaped the tempter's snare by thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! the joys I feel, the bliss I share
of those whose anxious spirits burn with strong desires for thy return!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! thy wings shall my petition bear
to him whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since he bids me seek his face, believe his word, and trust his grace,
I'll cast on him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Amen.

RESPOND

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Matt Rasure and Esther Seguin



*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

By Faith

Lloyd Larson, *arr.*

By faith we see the hand of God
in the light of creation's grand design,
in the lives of those who prove God's faithfulness,
who walk by faith and not by sight.

By faith the prophets saw a day
when the longed-for Messiah would appear
with the power to break the chains of sin and death,
and rise triumphant from the grave.

*We will stand as children of the promise,
we will fix our eyes on Christ, our souls' reward;
'til the race is finished and the work is done
we'll walk by faith and not by sight.*

By faith the church was called to go
in the power of the Spirit to the lost,
to deliver captives, and to preach good news
in every corner of the earth.

By faith this mountain shall be moved,
and the power of the gospel shall prevail;
for we know in Christ all things are possible
for all who call upon his name.

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!

By faith we see the hand of God;
by faith this mountain shall be moved.
We'll walk by faith and not by sight—
we'll walk by faith!

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. Amen.
—*UCC Statement of Faith, Doxology*

*HYMN 474

I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me

I'M SO GLAD

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

John M. Edgerton

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 God require of us?

To do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

Micah 6:8

POSTLUDE

All Hail the Power

Joel Raney, *arr.*



This morning's musicians

Robert Schulz, *percussion*

Roberto Alaniz, *bass*

Join us for refreshments and fellowship
in the Gordon Chapel following the Postlude.

The flowers today are given by Kay Stamp,
in loving memory of David Stamp.

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

UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES AND EVENTS

SCARED FOR GOOD CONCERT

Saturday, October 31 | 7PM

Join a new rendition of the Scared For Good concert! Come, if you dare, to hear the spine-tingling sounds of the season, courtesy of the room-rattling Skinner organ. A suggested donation of \$25 will support young organists with a year of free lessons and resources. Costumes are welcomed!

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

November 1 | 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. This year, the Festival Choir presents Mozart's Requiem, which the composer famously left incomplete at the time of his own death.

MEETING HOUSE 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

December 24

Family Service with Impromptu Pageant | 5PM

Lessons and Carols | 8PM

Carols and Communion | 11PM

BOSTON FIRST NIGHT: PIPES AND POPS CONCERTS

December 31 | 6:30 & 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! Free and open to the public.

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, & Isaiah Wilkerson, *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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Sunday, October 11 at 9am in the Chapel and live stream.

Outdoor blessings 9:30am-10:30am.

Bring your furry friend, your scaly sidekick, a fetching photo, or even a stuffed animal - all are welcome! For those whose animals may not do well inside with others, we'll offer an outdoor blessing following the service.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION IN PASTOR ASHLEY'S OFFICE

October 11 at 10am, meet in Elevator Lobby

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 friends! Questions? Email ashley@oldsouth.org.

THE AMERICAN STORY YOU HAVEN'T HEARD:

DISCOVERING 250 YEARS OF MUSLIM-AMERICAN HISTORY

Thursday, October 15, 7pm reception, 7:45pm Film at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, 100 Malcolm X Boulevard, Roxbury. Register at tinyurl.com/ISBCC2026movie

Join our Muslim neighbors as they host a screening of the award-winning documentary, *The Great Muslim American Road Trip*, with a discussion led by Unity Productions Foundation Executive Director Jawaad Abdul Rahman. The 90-minute program is part of the America250 nationwide initiative celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

MEET WITH THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 15, 7PM during Thursday Night Supper

Sunday, October 18, 12:30PM following Festival Worship

and Sunday, November 1, 10AM during the Community Hour Forum

The Associate Minister Search Committee invites you to gather at an information session to discuss the search for our next Associate Minister. Everyone is also encouraged to reach out with comments and suggestions to members of the committee individually: Larry Bowers bowlaw@earthlink.net, Erik Brenner eskbre@gmail.com, Frankie Doolittle revdoolittle@gmail.com, Ashton Gregor agregor312@gmail.com, Eliette Hilaire eliette.hilaire@gmail.com, and Charles St. Amant castamant@att.net.

CHURCH GARDEN SPRUCE UP

Friday, Oct. 16 and Saturday, Oct. 24 at 10:00am.

RSVP to rebecca@oldsouth.org by October 12 and 19

Are you an avid gardener or are you interested in learning and getting your hands dirty? Come join us as we spruce up our church gardens! We'll be clearing out the old and planting bulbs for next spring. We need your help, whether you know every plant by name or can't tell a weed from a flower. Snacks and drinks will be provided.

SACRED TRANSCENDENCE CONCERT BY CASTLE OF OUR SKINS AND DINNER

Saturday, October 17, 3pm, Twelfth Baptist Church, 160 Warren St, Roxbury

tickets at tinyurl.com/CastleofSkinsOCT17, Questions? Email Curtis at creed@vtpfd.org

Join Curtiss Reed and other Old Southerners at this concert. Blending voice, strings, and piano, Sacred Transcendence traces the extraordinary journey of the African American spiritual from the church pew to the concert hall. Afterwards, head to dinner, paid on your own, and enjoy friendship and discussion to increase a sense of belonging at Old South.

THE ORDINATION OF GRACIE PATERSON

Sunday, October 18, 3pm, Fourth Presbyterian Church, 340 Dorchester Street, Boston

Former Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow Gracie Paterson is getting Ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Join us at Fourth Presbyterian Church on October 18th at 3:00pm to witness this holy and sacred moment in their life and ministry.

FIFTH THURSDAY OPEN MIC

Thursday, October 29, following Thursday Night Church

After Thursday Night Church, join us for our Fifth Thursdays TNC Open Mic Night. All are welcome to gather (costumes welcome!) after worship for an autumnal edition of our informal sharing of poetry, music, story, and art hosted by our Creative Director, Audrey Woodhams. Contact Audrey at audrey@oldsouth.org to sign up, or just show up and there's a spot for you!

COMMUNITY HOUR FORUMS: SUNDAYS AT 10AM

Come early or stay late to connect with and learn other Old Southerners on Sunday mornings at 10am on the 2nd floor. Programs change week to week, and are led by other Old South folks who want to invite you into what fires them up! This is a great way to get to know each other, and to get in on the discussions.

SUPPORTING UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS WITH *common cathedral* | October 11

In support of World Homeless Day and our unhoused neighbors, Old South Church is pleased to welcome Rev. Cristina Rathbone, executive director of *common cathedral*, to speak about *common cathedral's* ministry and ways we, as a church and as individuals, can offer caring support. This will be a casual and informative conversation led by Rev. June Cooper with Rev. Tina. Please join us to learn about our long-time partnership and consider putting faith into action in support of our unhoused neighbors in need.

WHAT GUIDES OLD SOUTH'S INVESTMENTS? | October 18

Join members of the Board of Trustees as they share the endowment's exposure to investments that align with Old South's values and seek feedback from members.

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.

A MONTH IN MARK

October 18 and 25, November 1 and 15 at 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

THE SPIRITUAL REBELS

Mondays, 7-9, Gordon Library,

Questions? Interested in joining? Contact Jenny Keenan at jenniferhkeenana@gmail.com

The Spiritual Rebels, a Monday night, in person Small Group will read *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson, as our 2026 Fall read. This book chronicles the decades-long exodus of six million Black citizens who fled the Jim Crow South for freedom in Northern and Western cities between 1915 and 1970. This was an unrecognized immigration, a leaderless revolution against oppression towards opportunity.

OLD SOUTH'S CHRISTIAN CENTURY COMMUNITY READING CIRCLE

Monthly, on Zoom

for schedule, link, or questions email Steve: smh00a@gmail.com or Jim: jamesjumper80@gmail.com

Want to build community with other Old Southerners, think theologically, and put your faith in action? You're invited to join Steve Holt and Jim Jumper for a small, monthly reading group they are co-facilitating reflecting on select theology- and social justice-themed articles from *Christian Century* magazine, connecting faith to everyday life, and exploring ways we all can take thoughtful, faithful action in our communities. As part of the virtual reading circle, all participants will receive a fully subsidized magazine subscription for the year and our group will be fully supported with discussion guides and opportunities to share ideas with participating congregations nationwide. This is a great opportunity for Old Southerners with a heart for rooting their progressive social action in solid theology. We hope you'll stop by!

SCARED FOR GOOD ORGAN CONCERT

Saturday, October 31, 7pm, in the Sanctuary

Join a new rendition of the Scared For Good concert! Come, if you dare, to hear the spine-tingling sounds of the season, courtesy of the room-rattling Skinner organ. A suggested donation of \$25 will support young organists with a year of free lessons and resources. Costumes are welcomed!

ALL SAINTS WORSHIP

Sunday, November 1, First and Festival Worship

A Sunday not to be missed as the Festival Choir presents Mozart's Requiem, which the composer famously left incomplete at the time of his own death. Please bring in photos of your beloved dead for our collective altar at both First and Festival Worship. Bring a photo before November 1 and leave at front desk. Questions? ashley@oldsouth.org. ashley@oldsouth.org.

WOMEN'S LUNCH PLACE & NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION OF THE BACK BAY HARVEST FESTIVAL AND AUCTION

Thursday, November 12, 6:00pm, 67 Newbury Street, Boston

Register at womenslunchplace.org/nabb

The event, featuring dinner, silent auction, and entertainment, is a fundraiser celebrating two non-profit organizations making a difference in Boston. Women's Lunch Place addresses hunger, homelessness, and poverty through innovative and integrated services that promote hope, healing, and opportunity. The Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, founded in 1955, is a community-driven organization working to cultivate a healthy and vibrant neighborhood for the residents of Boston's Back Bay.

PRAYERS FOR OUR PILGRIMS

Nine members from our congregation will participate in a Civil Rights Pilgrimage in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, between October 15th and the 20th. Please keep them and their leaders, Rev. Nancy Taylor, Pastor Emeritus of Old South Church, and Rev. June Cooper, our Theologian in the City, in your prayers. Thank you. For additional information about future pilgrimages, reach out to june@oldsouth.org.

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.

Old South Church in Boston ❖ 645 Boylston Street, Boston 02116 ❖ www.oldsouth.org