



Old South Church

Copley Square, Boston

*A Congregation of the
United Church of Christ*

Gathered 1669

September 13, 2026 ❖ 11:00am

Welcome Back Sunday

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

GATHER

PRELUDE

Interludium for Piano and Organ

Frederik Magle

WELCOME

Ashley J. Popperson

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We have gathered—
new followers and lifelong disciples,
the powerful and the powerless,
those who have too little and those who have too much.

We have gathered, for we are one in Christ.

We have come—
seekers and skeptics, sinners and saints,
the poor in spirit and the rich in faith.

We have come, for we are eager to hear God's word.

We are here, together,
a family fashioned by faith:

Let us glorify the one true God!

*HYMN 407

How Firm a Foundation

FOUNDATION

**Indicates all who are able may stand*

***CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

...We name aloud before God and this community...

One word that describes how you feel as you begin this week:

One word that names a burden or worry you brought with you here:

One place you long for God's presence:

One place you look for hope:

Silence is kept.

Friends, hear and believe this good news:

Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

As recipients of Christ's grace, you, my beloved,
will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

We will bear Christ's witness to the ends of the earth.

***PASSING THE PEACE**

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

ANTHEM

Let the People Sing Praise Unto the Lord

Lena J. McLin

Let the people sing praise unto the Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Praise God with the psalter and the harp.

Praise God with the sound of the trumpet!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!

Let all the people sing praise to the Lord,

sing praise to the Lord.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Graham Attipoe

PRESENTATION AND INTRODUCTION

John M. Edgerton

LITANY OF BAPTISM

Do you desire to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

I do.

Do you renounce powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

I do.

Do you profess Jesus Christ as your brother, lord, and savior?

I do.

And do you promise by the grace of God to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

I promise, with the help of God.

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

I promise, with the help of God.

People of God, will you promise to uphold and support Graham in his life in Christ through your prayers? If so, say we will, with the help of God.

All: We will, with the help of God.

BLESSING OF THE WATER

BAPTISM

CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME

Laurie Stickels, *deacon*

We rejoice in God's empowering love, freely given to each and all. We welcome you, Graham, into the circle of love in Christ's Church. We promise to pray for you, to seek the depths of faith with you, to support you, and to love you. We covenant with you to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Ashton Gregor

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:1-9

ANTHEM

Carillon on Simple Gifts
THE OLD SOUTH RINGERS

Danny Lyons, *arr.*

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

SCRIPTURE

Mark 1:1-13

John M. Edgerton

SERMON

Even Christ

*HYMN 49

Ask Me What Great Thing I Know

HENDON

*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rachel J. Barton

Holy God, we long to be your people.

Sometimes we are called to plan, to act, to protest, to march, to respond, to advocate.

And sometimes our witness is one of waiting and trusting you will speak.

As your people, we pause.

Trustworthy God, we long to be your people.

We look around for signs of your action and proof of your presence.

Open our eyes to the ways you are at work repairing the world before we can see it.

As your people, we wait.

Faithful God, we long to be your people.

We carry around the worries of the world, the weight of injustice, the pain of your people.

When we feel stuck, help us surrender to your plan being prepared with love and mercy.

As your people, we pray.

Silence is kept.

Steadfast God, we are your people:

We trust that you go before us,

that you are here among us,

that you are calling us still.

Grant us clarity in where to turn for signs of hope

and assurance of your steadfast love.

Equip us, inspire us, empower us, prepare us — as we breathe, pause, wait, and pray.

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.

ANTHEM

Come and Worship God

Lim Swee Hong, *arr.*

Come and worship God with songs of praise,
give our thanks and bless God's name.
God is great, full of mercy and love,
in spirit and truth, let's worship God.

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

I'll Sing

Molly Ijames, *arr.*

I sing the mighty power of God that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;
the moon shines full at God's command, and all the stars obey.

I'll sing to the Lord while I live.

I sing the goodness of the Lord who filled the earth with food.
God formed the creatures with a word,
and then pronounced them good.

I'll sing to the Lord while I live.

Lord, how thy wonders are displayed where'er I turn my eye:
if I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant or flower below but makes thy glories known;
and clouds arise, and tempests blow, by order from thy throne;
while all that borrows life from thee is ever in thy care,
and everywhere that we can be, thou, God, art present there.

I'll sing to the Lord while I live.

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 300

Jesus Shall Reign

DUKE STREET

*CHARGE & BENEDICTION

John M. Edgerton

Who will be a witness for our Lord?

I will be a witness.

Who will be a witness for our Lord?

I will be a witness.

Who will be a witness for our Lord?

I will be a witness!

POSTLUDE

Nun danket alle Gott
[Marche triomphale], Op. 65, No. 59

Sigfrid Karg-Elert



Join us for Refreshments & Fellowship outside under the portico following the Postlude.

The flowers today are given by Esther Seguin in loving memory
of Richard H. Sprano, faithful father, husband, and disciple of Christ.

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

Today's Guest Musician: William Parrack, *trumpet*

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, 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* ❖ 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* ❖ 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

FALL SERMON SERIES: The Good News for a World in a Hurry

The Gospel of Mark is in a great big hurry, as we will explore in worship throughout the Fall. A hurry to tell good news, a hurry to talk about Grace, a hurry to tell stories of wonder. When you have good news, why wait?

WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

This Sunday, September 13

Join us as we kick off the program year and welcome back both familiar faces and those new to church. The 9am First Worship service will feature the Blessing of the Backpacks, a touching tradition that encompasses the hopes and aspirations of students and all who carry life's journey with them. If you are or have a student in your life, be sure to bring a backpack. At 10am plan on brunching with us on the 2nd floor as we enjoy a Potluck Welcome Back Brunch. Bring something to share, and enjoy the bounty of community and cuisine.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION IN PASTOR ASHLEY'S OFFICE

meet in Elevator Lobby

September 20th at 10am and 12pm and September 27th and October 11 at 10am

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.

GOSPEL CHOIR RESUMES REHEARSALS

Sunday, September 13, 12:30pm, in Mary Norton Hall

Gospel Choir provides a joyful ministry, singing at 1 rehearsal and 1 to 2 worship services each month. All are welcome! Please contact Tim Harbold at tim@oldsouth.org for the year's full schedule and additional details. We look forward to singing with you!

JAN MONSMA MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sunday, September 20, 1pm

Live streamed at tinyurl.com/JanMonsmaMemorial

Jan, a member of Old South Church for 44 years, passed away on August 13th, at the age of 91. She led by example, placing care of others and of God's creation at the top of her to do list. Jim, her husband of nearly 70 years, and her family have been involved in the church in many ways throughout the years, including her leadership in the Congregational Care and Support Committee. Many Old Southerners received and cherished the cards and notes that Jan wrote us in times of celebration, grief, and uncertainty. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made in Janice's memory to Old South.

EASTIE FARM TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Tuesday, September 22, 5:30-8pm, 6 Chelsea Terrace

The Christian Service and Outreach Committee along with the Climate Crisis Task Force invite you to celebrate the fall equinox with a group of Old Southerners and our friends at Eastie Farm with food, music, and fun! Eastie Farm provides critical access to fresh produce for the East Boston community. You can meet us there or meet with OSC member Steve Holt outside the church at 5:00 pm to take the T over together. RSVP not required but appreciated! You can email Steve at smh00a@gmail.com or outreach@oldsouth.org.

GOD'S BIG BOOK OF FAITH: BIBLE STUDY ON THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Begins Wednesday, September 30, at 7:00 p.m., on Zoom.

A "synopsis" is a summary or outline of a longer, more detailed account of something – in this case Jesus' life and work on this planet. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are similar, historical narratives, while John's gospel is a more personal "diary" of Jesus' ministry. Our study will center on Mark's gospel but we will also compare and contrast the way Matthew and Luke deal with the events and Jesus' teaching. (And, yes, we will study John's gospel following this effort.) Contact Rich Nelson at: richnelson28@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER FOR THE common cathedral LUNCH

Sunday, October 4, 9am, Mary Norton Hall Kitchen and Boston Common

Questions? Want to sign up? RSVP with Paul Brouillette at brouillettepaul@gmail.com.

There are many ways to participate in this Day of Service! Join us for any part of the day. All are welcome!

- Make bag lunches in OSC Mary Norton kitchen. 9:00-10:30 AM.
- Meet at Boston Common (near Park St. station) to unload and hand out lunches to the Common Cathedral congregation. Join for lunch. 11:45 AM -1:00 PM.
- Attend outdoor Common Cathedral service. 1:00-2:00 PM.

Contact Paul Brouillette at brouillettepaul@gmail.com if you would like to participate in any of these activities.

AN EVENING AT RUCKUS • a private screening hosted by the Mary Norton Society

Monday, October 5, 2026, 6:00 PM, Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington Street

RSVP by October 3 to Rebecca at rebecca@oldsouth.org, more info at tinyurl.com/OSCRuckus

Old South Church members of all ages are invited to join us for an exclusive evening that features a private screening of Ruckus!, Revolutionary Spaces' immersive experience bringing Boston's revolutionary history to life. The evening will include a conversation about the work of preserving the Old State House and the Old South Meeting House and the evolving story that connects the Meeting House to Old South Church. Gather before the event for drinks and light refreshments.

INTRODUCING TAYLOR FELLOW: DIMITRI BAWOLE

We are excited to introduce you to our Taylor Fellow for the 2026-2027 program year, Dimitri Bawole! Dimitri (he/him) recently earned his Master of Theological Studies from Boston University School of Theology. Originally from Indonesia, he is passionate about queer theology, lived religion, and social justice. As the Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow, he is excited to serve, learn, and grow alongside the Old South Church community. Dimitri will serve primarily at Thursday Night Church.



QUEER BOOK CLUB'S NEXT BOOK DISCUSSION: *Detransition, Baby* by Torrey Peters

Tuesday, October 6, 7:15 on Zoom

RSVP to Mary Thurston for link at mthurston3@outlook.com

The book explores modern womanhood, gender identity and an unconventional co-parenting arrangement from the transgender perspective. It's a deep dive into transgender culture, but also a look at the complex nature of relationships and stereotypes in general, as well as what it means to be a mother or father.

THEOLOGICAL BOOK GROUP'S FALL BOOK:

The Land is Not Empty: Following Jesus in the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery

The author, Sarah Augustine, of Pueblo descent, looks at the laws stemming from the fifteenth century that gave Christian governments the moral and legal right to seize lands they 'discovered' despite already being populated by Indigenous Peoples. These laws were legitimized by the church and justified by a misreading of scripture. Writing in a narrative fashion, she describes her own experiences with this 'doctrine' as well. In it all, her deep Christian faith is ever present. Sound challenging? Ready to discuss some tough issues? We meet Monday evenings at 6pm, via zoom. Contact Don Wells to see if spaces are still available at granwell@comcast.net.

REGISTER FOR THE ALL-CHURCH RETREAT OCTOBER 2nd-4th

Save your space by filling out the form at tinyurl.com/2026OSCRetreat

Join Old South for our annual intergenerational fall retreat. Grow in community with us as we find rest, connection, and play games at stunning Craigville Retreat Center in Centerville, MA on Cape Cod. Questions? Email Kate Nintcheu at children@oldsouth.org.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND OUTREACH WEEKLY PUSHBACK

MATTAPAN FOOD AND FITNESS

To volunteer, donate, or receive services: www.mattapanfoodandfit.org/

Have other weekly action ideas? Email outreach@oldsouth.org

The Mattapan Food and Fitness organization was created by concerned residents to offer community residents access to healthy food, providing youth engagement training and volunteer opportunities and physical activities. The organization serves over 7000 residents annually. It hosts a weekly farmers market from July - October engaging farmers to sell produce at reasonable rates and accepting SNAP benefits. This attracts between 200 - 400 shoppers weekly. It also engages youth by offering leadership training and volunteer opportunities throughout the year. OSC, as part of our weekly pushback grant programs, is pleased to offer a \$1000 grant to MFFC.

FALL GREEN TIPS: Support Local Farmers

Learn more at tinyurl.com/OSCFallGreenTips

Safeguard Harvests: Autumn's harvest is being disrupted by erratic weather. By choosing locally grown, seasonal produce, you not only reduce the carbon emissions tied to food transportation but also support farmers facing climate challenges.

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