



Meeting House Worship Old South Church *in* Boston

November 23, 2025 ❖ 11:00 a.m.

WELCOME TO THIS 70th ANNIVERSARY of the return of Old South Church to our ancestral home. While we left the Meeting House in 1872 for our current location in Copley Square, we return annually to honor our forebears in the faith — they who still rejoice with us, but upon a farther shore and in a greater light. Join us next Sunday back at 645 Boylston Street.

GATHER

PRELUDE

A Mighty Fortress
Music for a Solemn Occasion
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Calvin Hampton
Mitchell Crawford, *arr.*

Thanksgiving Carol
from “Three Carols” (1977)

Calvin Hampton

Fields of corn, give up your ears, now your ears are heavy,
wheat and oats and barley spears, all your harvest levy.
Where your sheaves of plenty lean,
we once more the grain shall glean
of the Ever-Living,
God the Lord will bless the field, bringing in its autumn yield
gladly to Thanksgiving.

Vines, send in your bunch of grapes, now the bunch is clustered,
be your gold and purple shapes 'round the altar mustered.
Where the hanging bunches shine we once more shall taste the wine
of the Ever-Living,
God the Lord will bless the root, bringing in its autumn fruit
gladly to Thanksgiving.

Garden, give your gayest flowers, hedge, your wildest bring in,
turn the churches into bowers little birds shall sing in.
Where all the children sing their glee
we once more the flower shall see
of the Ever-Living,
God the Lord will bless the throng, lifting up its Autumn song
gladly in Thanksgiving.

Kate Wood, *soprano*

How Firm a Foundation Emma Lou Diemer, *arr.*
Commissioned for the 50th Anniversary of Duke Chapel, October 19, 1980

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!
What more can be said than to you God hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
the rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to bless,
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

“When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake.”

Fanfare for the 25th Anniversary of Leonard Bernstein
the High School for Music and Art, NYC (1961) Mitchell Crawford, *arr.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP *Adapted from Psalm 33* Justin Dickerson

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

Praise befits the upright.

Sing to the Lord a new song;

Play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

For the word of the Lord is right and true

And all her work is done in faithfulness.

God loves righteousness and justice;

The earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

Our soul waits for the Lord;

He is our help and shield.

**Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.**

*HYMN *See insert*

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

ST. GEORGES’S WINDSOR
Setting: Richard Webster

WELCOME

*A SIGN OF OUR UNITY AND RECONCILIATION

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

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ANTHEM

In Praise of Light

Tim Harbold

Soon as the sun forsook the eastern main
the pealing thunder shook the heavenly plain;
majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
exhales the incense of the blooming spring.

Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
and through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heavens what beauteous dies are spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red.

So may our breasts with every virtue glow,
the living temples of our God below!

Filled with the praise of God who gives the light,
and draws the sable curtains of the night,
let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
at morn to wake more heavenly, more refined;
so shall the labors of the day begin
more pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.

Night's leaden scepter seals my drowsy eyes,
then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.

The morn awakes, and wide extends her rays,
on every leaf the gentle zephyr plays.
The bowers, the gales, the variegated skies
in all their pleasures in my bosom rise.
See in the east the illustrious king of day!
His rising radiance drives the shades away.

So may our breasts with every virtue glow,
the living temples of our God below!
Filled with the praise of God who gives the light.

(The text is adapted from Phillis Wheatley, “A Hymn to the Evening” and
“A Hymn to the Morning,” both of which may be found in her
Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, 1773)

LISTEN

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Rachel J. Barton

SCRIPTURE

Nehemiah 8: 1-12

Kat Woodard

SERMON

“Do not Grieve, for this is a holy day”

John M. Edgerton

*HYMN *See insert*

We Gather Together

KREMSER

Setting: Richard Webster

RESPOND

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Maren Batalden,
Moderator, Old South Church Council

**Indicates all who are able may stand*

CALL TO PRAYER

Ashley J. Popperson

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, powerful beyond measure, good beyond all understanding.

God's steadfast love endures forever.

Let us pray. *You may be seated.*

LITANY OF CONFESSION AND THANKSGIVING

We give hearty thanks, O God, for divine gifts granted to us and to this earth, gifts that are greater than we can ask for or understand.

Thanks be to you, O God.

We remember those coming to these shores seeking freedom to worship and to build a community with you at its heart. With poignancy, pain, and regret, we remember the indigenous inhabitants of this land, ranging from coast to coast, now diminished—victims of those claiming to “build a city on a hill.”

Have mercy on us, O God.

We sorrowfully recall oppression visited over the centuries upon Black Americans, immigrants, women, the poor, and persons of differing sexual orientations and gender identities, oppressions enshrined in law and blessed by the church.

Forgive us, O God.

In a season in which war, incivility, terror, the plight of refugees and asylum seekers, and economic chaos wreak havoc with human lives; as hunger, pandemics, and ecological disasters afflict hundreds of millions of our dear kindred and as your good Earth suffers at human hands—we beg you:

Have mercy on us, O God.

God of grace and God of glory, we ask your forgiveness and pray we may recast our priorities to more nearly coincide with those of your son: healer of the ill, feeder of the hungry, lover of the outcast, welcomer of the stranger, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Have mercy on us, O God,

and hear our earnest desire

to serve you and your realm all the days of our lives.

Thank you, O God, for bestowing forgiveness on those who seek it and who express a readiness to repent and radically change their ways.

Thanks be to you, O God.

Thanks indeed be to you, O God, forgiver of our sins and provider of all the good gifts of the earth.

Thanks be to you, O God.

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

Come Christian, Join to Sing
THE OLD SOUTH RINGERS
Peter Coulombe, *director*

Arnold Sherman &
Larry Shackley, *arrs.*

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Rachel J. Barton



To give via ApplePay, GooglePay,
or Credit Card, scan the QR code.
You can also Text 44-321
and enter OSC to make a gift.

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



OFFERTORY

The Battle Hymn
of the Republic

Peter J. Wilhousky, *arr.*

***When directed by the Minister of Music,
you are invited to rise and sing the final refrain.***

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
he hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:
God's truth is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! God's truth is marching on.

I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps;
they have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence in the dim and flaring lamps,
God's truth is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
as he died to make us holy, let us live to make all free,
while God is marching on.

...Amen! Amen!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN *See next page*

Now Thank We All Our God

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT
Setting: Richard Webster

*BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION

John M. Edgerton

POSTLUDE

Semper Fidelis

John Philip Sousa

"Semper Fidelis" is the official march of the United States Marine Corps, which celebrated its 250th birthday on November 10th, 2025. The composer, John Philip Sousa, served as leader of the U.S. Marine Band from 1880-1892. More information about this march may be found in the music notes below.

THE OLD SOUTH BRASS

Mary-Lynne Bohn, Andrew Sorg, & Steve Banzaert, *trumpet*
Kevin Owen, *horn* • Hans Bohn, *trombone* • Don Rankin, *tuba*
Robert Schulz, *timpani* • Amy Budka & John Hanchey, *percussion*
Leslie Amper and Jonathan Reddix, *piano*
Agita Arista, *flute*

Now thank we all our God, with heart, and hands, and voices,
 O may this boun - teous God through all our lives be near us!
 All praise and thanks to God our Mak - er now be giv - en,
 who won - drous things hath done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
 With ev - er - joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us;
 to Christ, and Spir - it, too, who reign in high - est heav - en,
 who, from our par - ents' arms hath blessed us on our way
 to keep us in God's grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heav'n a - dore;
 with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 for thus it was, is now, and shall be, ev - er - more.

Text: Martin Rinkart, c. 1636; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1858, alt.
 Tune: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1647; harm. Felix Mendelssohn, 1840



*Old South's Ministers and staff wish you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving.
 A reminder that Old South Church will be closed November 27th and 28th*

*First and Festival Worship return to 645 Boylston Street on Sunday, November 30th.
 Thursday Night Church resumes Thursday, December 4th.*



NOTES ON TODAY'S MUSIC

It is unfortunate that President Chester A. Arthur, the man responsible for John Philip Sousa's "Semper Fidelis" march, did not live to hear it. In a conversation with Sousa, then leader of the U.S. Marine Band, he expressed his displeasure at the official use of the song "Hail to the Chief." When Sousa stated that it was actually an old Scottish boating song, the President suggested he compose more appropriate music. Sousa responded with two pieces, not one: first, he composed "Presidential Polonaise" (1886); then, two years after Arthur's death, he wrote "Semper Fidelis" (1888).

The march takes its title from the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps: "Semper Fidelis" — Always Faithful. The trio is an extension of an earlier Sousa composition, "With Steady Step," one of eight brief trumpet and drum pieces he wrote for The Trumpet and Drum (1886). It was dedicated to those who inspired it — the officers and men of the U.S. Marine Corps. In Sousa's own words: "I wrote 'Semper Fidelis' one night while in tears, after my comrades of the Marine Corps had sung their famous hymn at Quantico."

For the first performance, Sousa demonstrated his flair for theatrics: "We were marching down Pennsylvania Avenue, and had turned the corner at the Treasury Building. On the reviewing stand were President Harrison, many members of the diplomatic corps, a large part of the House and Senate, and an immense number of invited guests besides. I had so timed our playing of the march that the 'trumpet' theme would be heard for the first time, just as we got to the front of the reviewing stand. Suddenly ten extra trumpets were shot in the air, and the 'theme' was pealed out in unison. Nothing like it had ever been heard there before — when the great throng on the stand had recovered its surprise, it rose in a body and led by the President himself, showed its pleasure in a mighty swell of applause. It was a proud moment for us all."

"Semper Fidelis" subsequently gained recognition as the official march of the U.S. Marine Corps. Sousa regarded it as his best march, musically speaking. It became one of his most popular marches, and was played by the Sousa Band in many foreign countries — always to great acclaim. Few knew that it had been sold outright to the publisher for the unbelievably low sum of \$35.

—Paul E. Bierley, "The Works of John Philip Sousa"

This morning's musical offering by the Old South Ringers showcases our brand new low bass bells, which were received from the foundry earlier this fall. The new bells complete our five octave range of Malmark handbells. This is a milestone moment for the handbell ministry, as it allows us to shift away from the use of our fragile Whitechapel bells for regular rehearsals and performances. We gratefully acknowledge the church's material investment in this ministry.

—Peter Coulombe, Director, The Old South Ringers



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! 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 8:45am-12:30pm every Sunday and Church School at 10am. For questions about our children's and family ministries, email children@oldsouth.org.

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

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*

Kat Woodard, *Nancy S. 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*

Aislin Kate Anderson, *Children's Choir Director* ❖ Yuexuan Joyce Wang, *Children's Choir Accompanist*

Amelia Gerrard, *Director of Administration* ❖ Rebecca Pasipanodya, *Director of Operations*

Rémy Hatfield-Gardner, *Administrative Assistant* ❖ Kathleen Steen, *Staff Accountant*

Emily Ross, *Archivist* ❖ 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* ❖ Ozo Nwodo, Richard Serebour, Tahmina Aktar & MD Rahman, *Sextons*

Corey Spence, *Weekday Receptionist*

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