



## Old South Church

*Copley Square, Boston*

*A Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ*

*Gathered 1669*

September 8, 2024 ❖ 11:00 a.m.

## Welcome Back Sunday

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

### GATHER

PRELUDE                      Symphonie Op. 13, No. 3: IV. Adagio                      Charles-Marie Widor

\*CALL TO WORSHIP *New Century Hymnal 837, adapted*                      Ashley J. Popperson

Almighty God, whose breath quickened us,

whose tongue named us, whose language we are:

**Grant us grace to live as true words in the world—**

Not gentle when it is in anger that we live,

**Not smooth when it is desperation that we know,**

Not patient when the time has narrowed to now,

**Not wise, not neat, not all of our fences mended,**

But words, broken yet honest words, and lost,

**Stumbling their way towards silence.**

Take us back, recall us, then speak us once again.

**In the name of the Word made flesh, made dead, and made alive again. Amen.**

\*HYMN 70

**God Is Here!  
As We Your People Meet**

ABBOT'S LEIGH

*\*Indicates all who are able may stand*

\*INVOCATION

\*PASSING THE PEACE

*As a sign of our reconciliation with God and each other,  
please greet those around you, saying "peace" or "the peace of Christ."*

SUNG RESPONSE

**God Welcomes All**

God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;  
God's love is strong and it nev - er ends.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: 'God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;'. The second staff contains the melody for the second line: 'God's love is strong and it nev - er ends.' The notes are simple, using quarter and half notes.

Text: John L. Bell, 2008  
Music: South African song; trans. John L. Bell, 2008

WELCOME

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.

**LISTEN**

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Kate M. Nintcheu

SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 17:22-24

Gracie Paterson,  
*Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow*

\*HYMN 318

**Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast**

ST. FLAVIAN

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

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 13: 24-35

SERMON

A Very Unusual Farm

John M. Edgerton

\*HYMN 540

**We Plant a Grain of Mustard Seed**

NEW BEGINNINGS

\*CALL TO PRAYER

Rachel J. Barton

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

We've Come a Long Way, Lord

*Trad. Liberian;  
Wendell Glick, arr.*

We've come along way, Lord, a mighty long way.

You took our burdens in the heat of the day;

we know our God's gonna find a way.

We've come along way, Lord, a mighty long way.

# RESPOND

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Ashley J. Popperson



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

OFFERTORY

Come, Let Us Anew

Mack Wilberg, *arr.*

Come, let us anew our journey pursue,  
roll 'round with the year, and never stand still till the Savior appear.  
His adorable will let us gladly fulfill,  
and our talents improve by the patience of hope and the labor of love.

Our life is a dream: our time, as a stream,  
glides swiftly away, and the fugitive moment refuses to stay;  
for the arrow is flown and the moment is gone.  
The millennial year rushes on to our view, and eternity's here.

O, that each in the day of his coming may say, "I have fought my way through;  
I have finished the work thou didst give me to do!"  
O, that each from their Lord may receive the glad word:  
"Well and faithfully done! Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne!"

\*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures  
here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1695, 1709, alt.  
Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH, *Genevan Psalter*, 1551

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*HYMN 608

**Christ Will Come Again**

IDA

\*BENEDICTION

John M. Edgerton

POSTLUDE

Symphonie Op. 13, No. 3: III. Marcia

Charles-Marie Widor



Join us for Ice Cream and Coffee Hour outside under the Portico.

The flowers today are given by  
John and Carolyn Clark in celebration of their anniversary  
and their son and daughter-in-law's anniversary this weekend.

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

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

**ALL SAINTS SUNDAY — November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 | 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 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 | 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.

**CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE — December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

*Family Service with Impromptu Pageant* | 5PM

**LESSONS AND CAROLS** | 8PM

**CAROLS AND COMMUNION** | 11PM

**HOLY WEEK 2025**

*Palm Sunday* — April 13 | 9AM & 11AM

*Maundy Thursday* — April 17 | 7PM

*Good Friday* — April 18 | 7PM

**EASTER & MARATHON SUNDAY —**

**April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 | 9AM, 11AM, & 1PM**

The triumph of the Christian story of resurrection informs a service of worship that is characterized by joyous celebration. Our celebration continues with hundreds of marathoners joining us for worship, where we will pause to acknowledge the runners, their families, and volunteers in a special "Blessing of the Athletes."

**PHILLIS WHEATLEY SUNDAY — May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 | 9AM & 11AM**

Old South honors and learns from one of the saints of this church who was stolen from Africa, suffered the Middle Passage, was sold into slavery, and triumphed through her awesome wit and the mighty power of her pen.

## WELCOME TO OLD SOUTH CHURCH

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

Restrooms are available. Just ask!

An accessible, single-use restroom is available near Reception.

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 outfit itself for mission and ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a thriving church in the heart of Boston.

If you are interested in deepening your participation, or if you just love Old South, it's time to think about **membership**. For more information, contact Associate Minister Ashley Popperson at [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org)

## HEARING ASSISTANCE

Our hearing loop works directly with devices equipped with a "T-Coil." The sound is best if you sit further inside the pews, away from the aisles. The loop does not work in the upper galleries. If you would like to borrow a device paired with our system, please ask an usher.

## GARAGE PARKING VALIDATIONS

We have arrangements for discounted parking with two nearby garages for Old South Church worship or church business (excluding weddings and concerts). 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 at [www.oldsouth.org/calendar](http://www.oldsouth.org/calendar) for a calendar of events, and the general website [www.oldsouth.org](http://www.oldsouth.org) for more on the history and other information about this storied ship of faith!

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, *Assistant Minister*  
Gracie Paterson, *Nancy S. Taylor Leadership Fellow* ❖ Kat Woodard, *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*

Audrey Woodhams, *Creative Director for Twilight Worship*

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* ❖ Juniper Mai, *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*

Rémy Hatfield-Gardner & William Wei, *Livestream Production Assistants* ❖ Ava Welling, *Sound Technician*

Elias Perez, *Senior Sexton* ❖ Ozo Nwodo, Richard Serebour, & David Brode, *Sextons*

Corey Spence, *Weekday Receptionist*

Shirley Bivins, Shelia Randolph, & William Wei, *Evening & Weekend Receptionists*

Maren Batalden, *Moderator* ❖ Rob Gabler, *Clerk* ❖ Bill Bulkeley, *Treasurer*

Debby Kuenstner, *Chair, Board of Trustees* ❖ Kate Silfen, *Historian*

Christine Del Favero & Laurie Stickels, *Senior Deacons* ❖ Vicki Newman, *Pledge Secretary*

### 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



## WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

*Sunday, September 8*

Join us as we kick off the program year and welcome back both familiar faces and those new to church. Both worship services at 9:a.m. and 11 a.m. 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 10:00 a.m. 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.

Following Festival Worship - we will enjoy some cool ice cream treats under the portico outside.

Embrace a year of connection, growth, and shared experiences with us. Welcome back! Welcome home.

## INSTALLATION OF REVERENDS JOHN EDGERTON AND ASHLEY POPPERSON

*Festival Worship, Sunday, September 22, 11 a.m.*



Join us at Festival Worship on September 22nd for the installation service for Reverends John Edgerton and Ashley Popperson. What is an installation? An installation is the formal recognition by the denomination of the relationship between pastors and a congregation. How does this differ from the congregational vote to call a pastor? In

an installation, representatives from our denomination--the United Church of Christ--lead us in making promises to one another. As Old South embarks on a program year, this is an occasion to celebrate together the good work that God is calling us to do all together as a church.

## **2024 SNEUCC JUSTICE SUMMIT: POLITICS AS AN ACT OF FAITH**

*Saturday, September 14, Middletown, CT and online*

The Southern New England Conference's Center for Transformational Leadership presents the 3rd Annual Justice Summit: Politics as an Act of Faith. This day-long program will equip local church leaders, both lay and clergy, to engage with politics as people of faith. For more information and to register, visit [tinyurl.com/2024sneuccJustice](https://tinyurl.com/2024sneuccJustice).

## **OSC FALL RETREAT | SEPTEMBER 27-29 | CRAIGVILLE, MA**

Go to [oldsouth.org/all-church-retreat](https://oldsouth.org/all-church-retreat) for more information and to RSVP.

*"... and you shall find rest for your souls."*

Feeling a little fried? Join Old South for our annual intergenerational fall retreat. Grow in community with us as we find rest for our souls through practicing different kinds of prayer, playing games, and crafting our most creative skits in scenic and stunning Craigville, MA on Cape Cod. Childcare provided. Children's programming will include a nature walk with Captain Awesome! Bring a yoga mat, a snack to share, and your favorite game to a weekend of joy and relaxation!

## **VOLUNTEER WITH THE NEW NEIGHBORS TASK FORCE**

Massachusetts is facing an acute crisis as shelters are overwhelmed, leaving migrant families and young children without a place to sleep. The Old South New Neighbors Task Force is responding by partnering with the Brazilian Workers Center and BIJAN to offer support, but we need your help. If you feel called to assist, please fill out the form at the QR code to get involved in hosting, donating, providing compassionate support to our new neighbors in need, or other ways of helping.



## **CONNECTIONS CLASS**

*Sunday, September 15, Noon*

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 and break bread with other newcomers and church members? Join our Connections Info Session! Contact Ashley Popperson at [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org) for more info.



## MEET GRACIE PATERSON, NANCY S. TAYLOR FELLOW

Gracie is a third-year Seminarian at Boston University School of Theology and a Candidate for Ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Gracie has worked with interfaith coalitions across three states and is passionate about the Church's role in strengthening multicultural communities. Originally from Virginia, she now lives in Jamaica Plain with her partner, Mamie, and cat, Omen.

## FESTIVAL CHOIR

*Rehearsals on Thursdays, 7-9pm*

Singers, get ready to lift your voices in harmony as Festival Choir resumes in Mary Norton Hall. Our rehearsals are a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow choir members, fine-tune skills, and prepare an inspiring season of music ministry. Whether you're a seasoned singer or new to choir, this is the perfect time to come together in song and fellowship. We hope you'll join us! For more information, contact Mitchell Crawford at [mitchell@oldsouth.org](mailto:mitchell@oldsouth.org).

## GREEN TIP: Join the Keep America Beautiful #152 Pick Up Challenge

Sign up at [tinyurl.com/KABGreatCleanup](https://tinyurl.com/KABGreatCleanup)

Make sure to take pictures and tag us on social @KeepAmericaBeautiful and #152PickUpChallenge

According to the Keep America Beautiful 2020 National Litter Study, there are 50 billion pieces of litter across the country. If everyone picked up 152 pieces, we would clean it all up! Do your part by joining the #152PickUpChallenge. Don't forget to share your progress and let us know how you did. Together, we can clean up 50 billion pieces of litter.

## VOLUNTEER TO READ SCRIPTURE

Go to [tinyurl.com/Sep-Dec2024ScriptureReader](https://tinyurl.com/Sep-Dec2024ScriptureReader) to sign up

Reading the Bible in community is an essential Christian spiritual practice. Each week at Festival Worship a volunteer reads scripture before the sermon. People of all ages are encouraged to volunteer! Questions? Email [ashley@oldsouth.org](mailto:ashley@oldsouth.org).

## JOIN OUR USHER TEAM

Go to [oldsouth.org/hospitality](https://oldsouth.org/hospitality) to sign up

Whether you're looking to meet more people at Old South or wondering how you can contribute to our wide open door, this may be just the thing! Serving as an usher, welcomer, or coffee hour host is an easy way to get more involved at Old South. Everyone is welcome, training is provided, and you only need to be friendly and willing to help. Email [hospitality@oldsouth.org](mailto:hospitality@oldsouth.org) for info.

## **VESPERS HEALING WORSHIP:**

*Next service Sunday, July 14, 5 p.m. on Zoom, [tinyurl.com/OSCHealing](https://tinyurl.com/OSCHealing) to join*

Please join us to take a moment for rest and renewal in the presence of God and other spiritual companions gathering by Zoom. All are welcome to share this quiet space and lift up our concerns, our losses, our hurts, and our celebrations in the Healing Presence of God and one another.

## **THURSDAY NIGHT CHURCH**

*Thursdays,, 6pm*

Thursday Night Church is here! After a year of dreaming, planning and working, we're excited to introduce our redesigned Thursday service. Thursday Night Church is a worship service where the music is contemporary, the space is open-hearted and in-the-round, and the preaching is focused on how we can be the church together in the world.

## **THURSDAY NIGHT SUPPER CLUB**

After worship, join us for Thursday Night Supper Club. Each week, folks can gather after worship for dinner and an informal small group hosted by some of our friendly and hospitable lay leaders.

### **WEEKLY WORSHIP**

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

**TWILIGHT Worship**, Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.

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

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

**VESPERS HEALING Worship**, the second Sunday at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom



*To give via ApplePay, GooglePay, or with a Credit Card,  
scan the QR code with your smartphone camera.*

*You can also Text 44-321 and enter OSC to make a gift.*

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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)