

First Sunday in Advent

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

GATHER

PRELUDE Choral Prelude on *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* J.S. Bach

INVOCATION Ashley J. Popperson

*HYMN 104 **We Hail You God's Anointed** ELLACOMBE

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH Bob and Candace Kosturko

Introductory Sentences

At Advent, we join in the tradition of lighting candles around the Advent Wreath [...] For like our ancestors, we know that though the days are long, God is with us, bringing about a new day.

Call to Worship

A tree stump left to rot puts forth new shoots.

Could it be that heaven is near at hand?

A wolf slinks toward sheep and joins their fold.

Could it be that heaven is near at hand?

A child plays while serpents slumber.

Could it be that heaven is near at hand?

A prophet cries out from the wild places:

Prepare the way! For heaven is near at hand.

People of God, prepare the way!

For hope rises today.

**Indicates all who are able may stand*

Lighting of Candle & Prayer

Spirit of God, you are with us. Though injustice persists, your Good News reigns eternally. Breathe into us, that we might be filled with your sustaining power to persist in hope. **Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE

Choir:

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us;
make us your living voice.

Congregation:

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the dark - ness. Christ, be our
light! Shine in your church gath - ered to - day.

Text and Music: Bernadette Farrell, 1993

WELCOME

Ashley J. Popperson

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Please greet those around you, wishing them "peace" or "the peace of Christ."

ANTHEM

Veni Emmanuel

Harry Huff, *arr.*

O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

O come, thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind;
bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace.

LISTEN

SCRIPTURE

Daniel 7:1-10

Ashton Gregor

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kate M. Nintcheu

*HYMN 275

Come Now, Almighty God

ITALIAN HYMN

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

SERMON

What in Heaven's Name

John M. Edgerton

*HYMN 122

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

STUTTGART

RESPOND

*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

Come now, O Prince of Peace

Jeremy Bankson, *arr.*

Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come now, O God of love; make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.

Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

Come, hope of unity; make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Ashley J. Popperson



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

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

John Rutter, *arr.*

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favored sinners slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN 112

Keep Awake, Be Always Ready

WACHET AUF

*BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION

John M. Edgerton

POSTLUDE

Choral variations on *Macht hoch die Tür*

Jung/Flügel



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

The flowers today are given by Deb Washington
with deep affection for the OSC Gospel Choir.

Close-Up, a twenty minute tour of the Sanctuary,
begins immediately following worship. Please meet at the pulpit.
Led by docent David Story.



CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2025

Family Service with Impromptu Pageant | 5PM
Lessons and Carols | 8PM
Carols and Communion | 11PM

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 worship or church business (excluding weddings & concerts). 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*

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* ❖ Yuxuan 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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT SERMON CONVERSATIONS: PRECEDENTED TIMES

Sundays, 10am, in Mary Norton Hall

November 30—John Edgerton; December 14—Rachel Barton; December 21—Ashley Popperson

The world feels as if it is spiraling out of control. Institutions that once seemed sturdy teeter, national commitments are abandoned, and rights are under attack. How is a Christian to understand these days? Join our ministers throughout Advent for conversations about their sermons and a chance to reflect together, ask questions, and share insights as we explore this year's Advent theme as a community.

GODLY PLAY FOR FAMILIES

Sunday, December 7 at 10am in the Green Room

Families are invited to gather in the regular childcare room on the 3rd floor to hear a Godly Play story together, to wonder a bit about the story, and then to have some work time to play around with the ideas and stories we heard. This is a great way for families who have not yet become regulars at church school to begin hearing the stories and practicing together. Families of any age are welcome - though this is geared towards preschool age 3 and under.

ANNUAL ADVENT & CHRISTMAS POETRY FEST

Sunday, December 7 at 10am in Mary Norton Hall

Join as host Don Wells leads a wonderful hour of Advent poetry selected or written by members and friends of Old South. There will be poetry to pull on your heartstrings, engage your mind, and bring laughter to your soul. It is an occasion not to miss.

PARTY LIKE IT'S 1875: CELEBRATING 150 YEARS @ BOYLSTON ST.

*Saturday, December 6 at 7pm, **RSVP at tinyurl.com/150yearsatBoylston***

It's been 150 years since Old South Church moved into our historic building at 645 Boylston Street. Join us for a celebration of the church's storied legacy with a special concert program, *If These Walls Could Talk: A Celebration of Sanctuary in the Heart of Boston*, followed by a fun reception in the Chapel.

HELP MAKE AND SERVE LUNCH AT *common cathedral*

Sunday, December 14, contact Carolyn Clark to volunteer at carolyneclark@comcast.net

There are many ways to participate! Join us for any part of the day.

All are welcome, including families.

- **9:00-10:30am** Make bag lunches in OSC Mary Norton kitchen.
- **12-1pm** Meet at Boston Common (near Park St station) to unload and hand out lunches to the Common Cathedral congregation. Join for lunch. 12-1PM
- **1-2pm** Attend outdoor Common Cathedral service. 1-2PM

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

Looking for hope in these mean days? You're not alone! Hope is something that we create together. This Advent, we've created a devotional filled with entries from Old Southerners and community partners about what is giving them hope. Hope always arises amidst trouble and we know that trouble abounds, and so we know that hope does too. Grab a copy at church, or find it online at oldsouth.org/advent.

BOSTON FIRST NIGHT: PIPES AND POPS CONCERTS

Wednesday, December 31st at 6:30 and 8 p.m., Old South Church in Boston

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, this concert includes a seasonal sing of "Auld Lang Syne." Experience Old South's incredible E. M. Skinner organ, with over 7,000 room-shaking pipes! Free and open to the public.

SAVE THE DATE: CHURCH CENTER TRAINING ON DECEMBER 14TH

Our new church software, **Church Center**, will be launching soon! Starting December 1st, you will be able to access the church directory on the Church Center website and app. In January, we will introduce the giving and church calendar features. Please join Amelia Gerrard, Director of Administration, on December 14th, as they introduce the Church Center app and online directory. The training will be in-person from 12:15-1:00 PM and online from 2-2:45 (Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/OSCCChurchCenterTraining>). They will also be answering questions at the 10 AM coffee hour on December 7th and 14th. In the meantime, be sure to log in and update your profile information, including your profile photo, or create an account, by visiting <https://oldsouthchurch.churchcenter.com/me/profile-and-household>. Email Amelia at amelia@oldsouth.org with any questions.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS (IN LIEU OF FLOWERS)

Donations due by Sunday, December 14th, Questions? contact Remy Hatfield-Gardner at remy@oldsouth.org

The needs of the Allston Brighton Food Pantry are even greater this year. Your donation of \$20 in honor or memory of loved ones or special occasions will help our less fortunate neighbors. Go to oldsouth.org/donate and click on "Christmas Memorials" to make your donation and enter your message on the second page.

EMERGENCY DONATIONS TO BOSTON HEALTHCARE FOR THE HOMELESS

Please consider donating at tinyurl.com/Homelesshealthcarehelp
to support local families affected by SNAP cuts.



WELCOMING SARAH ACHESON-FIELD

We are excited to introduce you to a new member of our team, Sarah Acheson-Field (she/her), who is joining us as our new Night Receptionist on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesday evenings. Sarah comes to Old South Church with nearly a decade of reception and administrative experience from working at her family's hotel on the Coast of Maine. Outside of work, she enjoys dancing, spending time near the ocean and lakes, and reading. If you see her, please say hi!

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OLD SOUTH RINGERS CONCERT: WITH ANTHEMS SWEET

Sunday, December 7 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary and on live stream

Fun for the whole family, the annual Christmas Handbell Concert presented by the Old South Ringers will delight you with arrangements of beloved Christmas carols and songs that are sure to get you in the holiday spirit! Come and hear us in person if you can or join us online. Admission is free.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

First Sundays, 10am, in the Columbarium, next date December 7

Need some space to breathe? Time to rest in the spacious silence of God's presence? Please join us for Contemplative Prayer. Together, we'll engage in practices of contemplative prayer, share from our hearts, and find strength and solace in God's abiding love. Questions? Email ashley@oldsouth.org.

GIVING BACK: THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, Old South has several opportunities to give to the wider community. Beginning on November 13th, a Christmas tree will be near the reception desk decorated with ornaments. Each ornament will have instructions for a gift for one of the gift drives listed below. You can select an ornament from the tree or you can participate online at oldsouth.org/true-spirit-Christmas

THE TWELVE GREEN TIPS OF CHRISTMAS

- 1. Choose a real tree from a sustainable source and consider a tree with roots that can be replanted later.
- 2. Instead of tinsel and glitter decorations, use natural foliage and berries.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND OUTREACH

THE WEEKLY PUSHBACK - LUCE Immigrant Justice Network of Massachusetts

Learn more about their work at lucemass.org

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

To get involved or ask questions email Rachel Barton at Rachel@oldsouth.org

As this week's Advent candle calls us toward Hope, we affirm the hopeful work of LUCE, a coalition of immigrant-led, grassroots organizations across Massachusetts working to strengthen immigrant communities through coordinated support and collective action. LUCE operates a daily hotline in multiple languages to report suspected ICE or DHS activity and dispatch community observers. Their vision is for "a People's immigration justice" rooted in liberation, union, community, and esperanza/esperança/espwa (hope).

In addition to serving as this week's Weekly Pushback grantee, LUCE has also been selected as this year's recipient of Old South's Robert H. Christenson Award. This award honors organizations whose work embodies hope, dignity, and deep concern for all those seeking care, qualities central to the legacy of Old South minister Rev. Robert H. Christenson. This Advent, we give thanks for LUCE's work and for the enduring legacy of compassionate service that the Christenson Award commemorates.

WEEKLY WORSHIP

Join us in person, on Facebook, and YouTube

Thursday Night Church, 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, Second Sundays at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom



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.



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