

*Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
consecrate a fast; call a*

# solemn assembly;

*gather the people;  
consecrate the congregation;  
assemble the elders.*

*from Joel 2*

*Park Street Church, Boston  
Friday, October 25, 2024 | 7:00 pm*

*The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him.*

*All stand to sing, and may kneel or stand (as invited) when praying.  
You are welcome to move around the sanctuary.*

## GATHERING

Welcome and Prayer

Hymn 490 *Out of the Deep*

Introduction

The Senior Minister

The Exhortation

The CCCC Conference Minister

## CONFESSION of PERSONAL SIN

Scripture, *read in unison*

from Psalm 139 and 1 John

**Search me, O God, and know my heart!**

**Try me and know my thoughts!**

**And see if there be any grievous way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting!**

**If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.  
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to  
cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make  
him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these  
things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an  
advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation  
for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.**

*Silence is kept for several minutes.*

Lord God, eternal and almighty Father: We acknowledge before your holy majesty that we are poor sinners, conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of our own power to do good. Because of our sin, we endlessly violate your holy commandments.

For all our unfaithfulness and disobedience;  
for the pride, vanity, and hypocrisy of our lives;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our self-pity and impatience, and our envy of those  
we think more fortunate than ourselves;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our unrighteous anger, bitterness, and resentment;  
for all lies, gossip, and slander against our neighbors;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our sexual impurity, our exploitation of other people,  
and our failure to give of ourselves in love;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our self-indulgent appetites and ways,  
and our intemperate pursuit of worldly goods and comforts;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our dishonesty in daily life and work,  
our ingratitude for your gifts, and our failure to heed your call.  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our blindness to human need and suffering,  
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For all false judgments, for prejudice and contempt of others,  
and for all uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our negligence in prayer and worship;  
for our presumption and abuse of your means of grace;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For seeking the praise of others rather than your approval;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

For our failure to commend the faith that is in us;  
Lord, have mercy upon us:

**For we have sinned against you.**

O Lord, with heartfelt sorrow we repent and turn away from all our offenses. Show favor to your people, O Lord, who turn to you in weeping, fasting, and prayer. For you are a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and abounding in steadfast love. You spare when we deserve punishment, and in your wrath you remember mercy. Spare your people, good Lord, spare us; in the multitude of your mercies, look upon us and forgive us; through the merits and mediation of your blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn 486 *God, Be Merciful to Me (Psalm 51)*

## CONFESSION of CORPORATE SIN

Corporate Confession of Halfhearted Devotion to the Lord, and of Worldliness

**Our Father, we confess the sin of being halfhearted all too often in our Christian life. Though you have loved us first and at great cost in the death of your Son, we have not been consistent and fervent in our love for you. We confess that we are so busy with good things in our lives that the best things—our time with you and service for you—are short-changed many times. We confess that we are often conformed to the patterns of this world and that we love the world more than we should. Forgive us for not honoring you with first place in our lives and for resisting transformation by your love and grace.**

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing halfhearted devotion and worldliness.*

## Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

In Jesus' Name, we renounce our halfhearted commitment to you and our conformity to the world. We affirm that you are worthy of being loved with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. We pray that we will be wholehearted, full of zeal and spiritual fervor, and that we would seek first your kingdom and your righteousness. We dedicate ourselves to be your loving children who make time for those things that are a priority in your eyes. Amen.

## Corporate Confession of Pride and Arrogance

Our Father, we confess the sins of pride and arrogance. Though you have called us to love our neighbors as ourselves and to be servants of all, we have considered ourselves better, more important, and more deserving than others. We have thought of this church as better than other churches. We have been too impressed with our own steeple, history, gifts, knowledge, and resources. Our pride has deceived us and blinded us from your love, mercy, and grace. Forgive us for our pride and for thinking too highly of ourselves.

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing pride and arrogance.*

## Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

In Jesus' Name, we renounce pride and arrogance. We acknowledge that we are sinners saved by grace and that all that we have is a gift from you. We pray that we will never lose sight of our sin and your grace. We dedicate ourselves to walking humbly with you all our days, to exalting and proclaiming you and not ourselves, and to serving and learning from others. Amen.

## Corporate Confession of Sins of the Tongue

**Our Father, we confess the sins of the tongue. We have not tamed our tongues, and as a result our speech has corrupted our lives and poisoned our relationships. We have engaged in gossip, slander, and destructive criticism, making others feel wronged and wounded. We have told half-truths or outright lies. We have passed by opportunities to say a word in season that would have supported or strengthened another. Forgive us for all of our unwholesome talk.**

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing sins of the tongue.*

Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

**In Jesus' Name, we renounce the many ways we have sinned with our tongues. We affirm that you have given us the gift of speech to bless you and to bless others, using the power of the tongue to express love and to enhance life. We pray that any criticism will always be constructive, spoken in ways that encourage and edify others. We commit ourselves to be people who frequently affirm, appreciate, and bless with our tongues. Amen.**

## Corporate Confession of Damaged and Unreconciled Relationships

**Our Father, we confess the sin of creating and then not addressing damaged and unreconciled relationships. We have become angry with others, and in our bitterness and resentment have either avoided them or in some way attacked them. We have talked about them rather than talking with them. Forgive us for our unrighteous anger toward others, for our unforgiving attitude, and for our failure to love and pray for our opponents.**

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing damaged and unreconciled relationships.*

Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

**In Jesus' Name, we renounce our failure to forgive and reconcile with others because of conflict. We affirm that Jesus, who loves his enemies, can empower us to reconcile with our friends and anyone else. Help us to forgive others as you have forgiven us. We dedicate ourselves to reconcile damaged relationships by the power of your love and, as far as it depends on us, to live at peace with everyone. Amen.**

## Corporate Confession of Over-reliance Upon Ourselves

**Our Father, we confess that we have sought to rescue ourselves. We put too much confidence in our resources, strategic thinking, and intellect and not enough confidence in your grace, love, and power. As a result, in times of trial, we turn too quickly to ourselves and others and too slowly to you. Forgive us for our misplaced confidence, for believing that we can escape our trials by ourselves. Forgive us for not trusting in you alone.**

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing over-reliance upon ourselves.*

Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

**In Jesus' Name, we renounce our excessive self-reliance. We affirm that You are our rock, our refuge, our strong tower, and our keeper who neither slumbers nor sleeps. You are worthy of our full and complete confidence, and we pray that we will put our confidence in you alone even as we faithfully steward our intellect, resources, and strategies in the service of your kingdom. Into your hands, O Lord, we commit our lives, and we dedicate ourselves to trusting in and depending upon you. Amen.**

## Corporate Confession of Unrighteous Anger

**Our Father, we confess our unrighteous anger. We know that our anger does not produce your righteousness. Too often we have acted out in anger, hurting others and damaging this community with our words and deeds. Forgive us for our anger, for justifying it and giving it safe harbor, and for not imitating you in being slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

*You are invited to pray silently, or to offer briefly at the microphone your own prayers confessing unrighteous anger.*

Renunciation, Declaration, and Prayer

**In Jesus' Name, we renounce our unrighteous anger. You have brought peace into the world through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is himself our peace, and who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Grant us grace to live in his peace, and to resist anger. We commit to surrendering our anger to you, and to seeking a pathway forward that is not tainted or dominated by anger. Amen.**

Hymn 500 *Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me*

## PRAYERS of LAMENT

Introduction to Lament

The Senior Minister

Psalm 13, *read in unison*

How long, O Lord? Will you forget me for ever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I take counsel in my soul  
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;  
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,  
lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"  
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.

But I have trusted in your steadfast love;  
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.  
I will sing to the Lord,  
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

A Prayer of Lament

Sovereign Lord, "you have fed us with the bread of tears and given us tears to drink in full measure. You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves." (Ps 80:5-6) We grieve the brokenness, division, and loss within your Church, particularly in this community. We pray each week that your Name would be hallowed, yet this conflict has dishonored you. We pray for your glory and love to be known and proclaimed in our city and across the world, yet our internal troubles have diminished your praise. We lament the public nature of this conflict and how it has hurt our witness to the city and world. We are grieved by our disunity and separation, and also by the strained and broken relationships among lifelong friends and within families. We lament the confusion and disorientation that has come upon us through this trial. How long, O Lord? "Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through us, O Lord God of hosts; let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through us, O God of Israel." (Ps 69:6) Lord, have mercy and hear our prayer. "Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil. Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes,



establish the work of our hands!” (Ps 90:14-17) “Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.” (Ps 80:7)

*You are invited to lament silently, or to offer brief laments at the microphone.*

Declaration and Prayer

**Sovereign Lord, “For you alone our souls wait in silence; from you comes our salvation. You alone are our rock and our salvation, our fortress; we shall not be greatly shaken.” (Ps 62:1-2) We pour our hearts out before you, O God, and we thank you for holding our laments, our griefs, our tears, our sorrows, and our disappointments. We turn to you, for we have nowhere else to turn. O Lord, you regard and do not despise the prayer of the destitute. (Ps 102:17) Thank you for hearing our prayers, and for receiving our laments. Amen.**

Hymn *By Gracious Powers*



1. By gra - cious powers so won - der - ful - ly shel - tered,  
2. Yet is this heart by its old foe tor - ment - ed,  
3. And when this cup you give is filled to brim - ming  
4. Yet when a - gain in this same world you give us



and con - fi - dent - ly wait - ing, come what may,  
still e - vil days bring bur - dens hard to bear;  
with bit - ter suf - fering, hard to un - der - stand,  
the joy we had, the bright - ness of your sun,

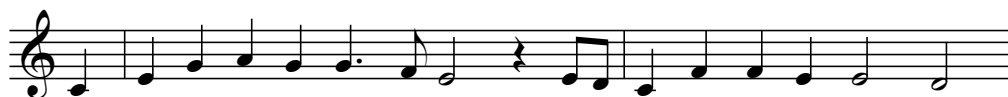


we know that God is with us night and morn - ing,  
O give our fright - ened souls the sure sal - va - tion  
we take it thank - ful - ly and with - out trem - bling,  
we shall re - mem - ber all the days we lived through,



and nev - er fails to greet us each new day.  
for which, O Lord, you taught us to pre - pare.  
out of so good and so be - loved a hand.  
and our whole life shall then be yours a - lone.

Hymn *Whate'er My God Ordains is Right*



1. What-e'er my God or-dains is right: his ho - ly will a - bid - eth;  
2. What-e'er my God or-dains is right: he ne - ver will de - ceive me;  
3. What-e'er my God or-dains is right: though now this cup, in drink - ing,  
4. What-e'er my God or-dains is right: here shall my stand be tak - en;



I will be still what-e'er he doth; and fol-low where he guid - eth;  
he leads me by the pro-per path: I know he will not leave me.  
may bit-ter seem to my faint heart, I take it, all un-shrink - ing.  
though sor-row, need, or death be mine, yet I am not for - sak - en.



he is my God; though dark my road, he holds me that I shall not fall:  
I take, con-tent, what he hath sent; his hand can turn my griefs a - way,  
My God is true; each morn a - new sweet com-fort yet shall fill my heart,  
My Fa-ther's care is round me there; he holds me that I shall not fall:



where-fore to him I leave it all, wherefore to him I leave it all.  
and pa-tient-ly I wait his day, and pa-tient-ly I wait his day.  
and pain and sor - row shall de-part, and pain and sor-row shall de-part.  
and so to him I leave it all, and so to him I leave it all.

Words: Samuel Rodigast; tr. Catherine Winkworth (1829-1878)

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## PRAYERS for HEALING

### Introduction to Healing

Scripture, *read in unison*

from John 5

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

### A Prayer for Healing

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who healed the Syrian commander Naaman of his leprosy by having him wash in the River Jordan seven times, we pray that you would heal us from our hurt and pain. For you are our healer, O God. We know that we cannot heal ourselves. Knowing that those who touched the fringe of your Son Jesus’ garment were made well, we come not merely to lay our complaints and griefs at his feet, but to receive the healing that he alone offers. We will gladly take our place with the paralytic, the man born blind, the woman with the issue of blood, the deaf, and the sick, whom Jesus healed. Lord, in your mercy, heal us too. Heal our hearts. Heal our relationships. Heal our pain. Heal our community. We ask this in Jesus’ Name and for his glory, and we commit ourselves into your hand. Amen.

*You are invited to pray silently for healing in your life and for our community, or if you wish, to offer brief prayers for healing at the microphone.*

### Declaration and Prayer

For your grace and mercy and power we praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is no one like you. Our soul clings to you; your right hand upholds us. (Ps 63:8) We trust you to bring the healing that we need, and to answer our prayers, in accordance with your good, pleasing, and perfect will, in Jesus’ Name. Amen.

## RENEWAL of COMMITMENT to THE LORD and to ONE ANOTHER

Scripture, *read in unison*

from John 15

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Declaration and Prayer

Our Father, we are yours; this church is yours. We surrender to you and depend upon you to build us and shape us, and we say with Jesus: not our will but yours be done. Have your way among us, for you are our Father and we are your children. This day we renew our commitment to live together as your people, surrendering to you and taking refuge in you. In your grace and mercy, empower us through your Holy Spirit to fulfill this commitment, to be holy, and to love one another as your Son has loved us—that we might stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, (Phil 1:27) for the glory of your Name.

Hymn 535 *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*

Hymn 26 *Tell Out, My Soul*

Closing Prayer

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*All are invited to the Welcome Center to break the fast.*

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*Thank you to Ron Hamilton and the members of the Vicinage Council,  
who recommended the Solemn Assembly to us.*

*Thank you to Dennis Reiter for his wise counsel and sharing his expertise about Solemn Assemblies.*