DIGNITY
BOSTON

www.dignityboston.org dignityboston@gmail.com

BULLETIN – September 15, 2026

Our Liturgies

Upcoming Liturgies

Please join us for our in-person and remote liturgies. We continue with our Ordinary Time liturgies. Our in-person liturgies are always live streamed as well.

Sunday, 9/20
In-Person
Eucharistic Liturgy
@ St. Stephen's
Live Streaming via Zoom
Healing Service
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
5:00 p.m. EDT

Sunday, 9/27
Remote
Liturgy of the Word
Zoom Only
26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
5:00 p.m. EDT

Our President's Message

From the Desk of Ron, Dignity Boston President

Mahalo for your thoughts, prayers, and donations for the people of Hawai'i. Since my last President's Message about Hurricane Lala, two additional tropical storms have ravaged the islands especially Kaua'i where my father grew up, but the recovery process continues and the aloha spirit prevails.

The 25th Anniversary of 9/11: Over the last few days, we have all marked the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. On 9/11/2001, I was attending a medical genetics conference at the UCLA Conference Center in Lake Arrowhead, in the mountains outside of Los Angeles and San Bernardino. I had flown from BOS to LAX a few days before 9/11, on American Airlines Flight 11. The plane was nearly empty, unlike flights these days. Later I found out that a colleague of mine at Boston Children's Hospital (BCH) had a ticket for Flight 11 on 9/11 but changed his plans at the last minute, and that the son of a surgeon at BCH perished on that flight. His widow later partnered with another 9/11 widow to start "Beyond the 11th" to support and empower widows in Afghanistan. In the early morning hours of 9/11, I and a group of medical geneticists had gotten up early to play tennis at dawn. In the distance, we saw someone lowering the American flag to half-staff. We ran over to see what was happening, then spent much of the morning mesmerized, as we watched the events of that morning on the two TVs at the conference center. Later that day, we gathered in a conference room to hear the president address the nation. We were a group of about a hundred medical geneticists from all over the U.S. and from Europe, stranded at a conference center in Lake Arrowhead. All flights were grounded, and no one knew how long we would be stuck there. A group from South Carolina jumped into their rental car and started driving home. The conference center let us stay for a few days; the attendees for the next conference had

no way to get there. I found a book of Broadway show tunes in a piano bench, and one night a group of us from the U.S., Canada, and the Netherlands gathered around the piano and sang (see picture on previous page). After a few days I drove down to Los Angeles to stay with my aunt, calling the airline each day wondering when I would get a flight home. On Saturday, 9/15, flights resumed; I arrived at LAX which was mobbed with endless lines and confusion. I managed to get on one of the first flights out that day from LAX to ORD in Chicago, and then interestingly to ORH in Worcester, MA, the first and last time I've ever been at ORH. As I reflect on 9/11, two prominent thoughts come to my mind: 1) I recall the sense of unity and patriotism, however tenuous, that seemed to capture the country in the days and months after 9/11—how different from the overwhelming sense of bitter division that has taken over our country. 2) More than a few people learned from hearing the stories of Father Mychal Judge, Mark Bingham, and others, that heroes could be gay, that gay people could be heroes — something we already knew.

Ron

Our Socials

Blessing of the Animals

Our next Dignity Boston social is the Blessing of the Animals. Please join us as we offer blessings for your precious pet or pets. This is an online event which, hopefully, makes it easy for you and your pet(s) to attend the event. There are three parts to this event: (1) there will be a brief introduction to the event and a prayer service, (2) you and your pet(s) will be introduced, share a little tidbit about them, and offered a blessing, and (3) we will remember and offer stories about our pets from the past as well as remember our original presider and longtime Dignity Boston member and presider, Gene Clegg. There will be a special start time of 6:30 p.m. EDT which will allow Dignity Boston board members to attend before their 7:30 meeting. Pictured above are Kate M.'s cats, Sophie and Nimbus.

Coffee Angels Needed for October

Are you interested in providing treats and beverages after liturgy? We are looking for 'Coffee Angels' for in-person liturgies on 10/4 and 10/18. Please contact Alice, alicemknowles@gmail.com, if you are interested.

Our Meetings

Upcoming Board and Liturgy Committee Meetings

Dignity Boston Liturgy Committee Meeting
Sunday, 9/27
following our Remote Liturgy of the Word service
All are welcome!

Dignity Boston Executive Board Meeting
Thursday, 10/1
7:30 p.m. EDT **PLEASE NOTE THIS SPECIAL START TIME**
To attend a board meeting as a guest, email dignityboston@gmail.com
Meeting minutes and treasury reports are available per request.
All are Welcome!

Our Social Justice

Nepal Tragedy

If you'd like to help the people of Nepal, you can donate by clicking on any of these links.

World Central Kitchen: **https://tinyurl.com/ye2a4ydr**
Project Hope: **https://tinyurl.com/yt9eh6vm**
Care: **https://tinyurl.com/mr3ejy5p**
UNICEF: **https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/deadly-flash-flooding-hits-nepal?form=donate**

Our Bulletin

An Update on Our Bulletin

Our next issue of the Dignity Boston Bulletin is Wednesday, 9/30 with no Bulletin issued on 10/15. The next Bulletin after the 9/30 edition is 10/30. In-between we'll keep you updated with announcements via our listserv.

Our Elections

Serve as a Member of the Dignity Boston Board

Consider whether you'd like to serve our community as an Executive Board member. There are four open positions for our 2027 board. You must be a dues-paying member of Dignity for six months before running for the board. Serving on the Executive Board is a great way to show your commitment to Dignity Boston. Our Nominations Night Membership Meeting is on Sunday, 10/25 online after liturgy. Ballots will be sent out during the week of 10/25 but no later than 11/1. Ballots must be received by 12/5. On Sunday evening 11/8, there will be a Candidates Night event where candidates will talk about why they decided to run for the Executive Board and you'll be able to ask questions of the candidates. During the day on Saturday, 12/5 after the election committee meets, candidates will be informed as to whether or not they were elected to the board. The 2027 board will be announced at liturgy on Sunday, 12/6 following our anniversary liturgy.

Our Collaborations

Catholic Collective

The Greater Boston LGBTQIA Catholic Collective, of which Dignity Boston is a part, will be hosting a discussion on the Synod Study Group 9's document which partially covers LGBTQ people and the Church. It will be held at 1:00 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Church on 18 Belvidere St. in Boston on Sunday, 10/4. All are welcome! We hope you can attend.

Our Parent DignityUSA

40th Anniversary Conversations on the Halloween Letter

Dignity USA marks the 40th anniversary of the release of the Vatican's Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons which was issued on 10/30/86. There will be a series of four conversation about the document. More details will be released by DignityUSA soon but please hold the following dates which are all Tuesday evenings: 9/29 (impact of the letter), 10/3 (impact on DignityUSA and chapters), 10/27 (continuing the conversation of the impact on DignityUSA and chapters), and 11/10 (the ongoing impact). The start time is 8:00 EDT for 9/29, 10/3, and 10/27 and 8:00 EST for 11/10. Register now here. Read the Halloween letter here.

Our Collections

September Collection

Our September Collection benefits the Virginia Thurston Healing Garden. This organization is strongly supported by K.A. and Alice and the Dignity Boston community. Its mission is to optimize the quality of life for adults affected by cancer in Massachusetts. To donate, please click here. The collection basket is passed around for our Second Collections during the first Sunday that we meet in-person each month. Additional in-person liturgies will have a basket labeled and available at the back of the church during church and moved to the Information Table during the post-liturgy social hour for Second Collection donations. At our remote Liturgy of the Word, the Second Collection link will be put into the chat at the start of service.

Summer Second Collections

Our summer second collections raised $325 for the Mass Coalition for Suicide Prevention in July and $313 for the Bisexual Resource Center in August. We thank you for your generosity!

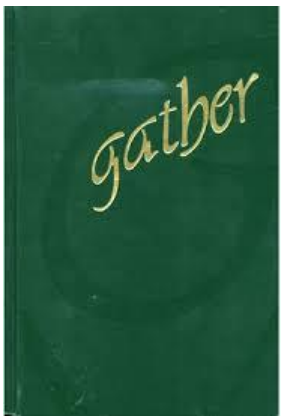
Our History

Did You Know?

Dignity Choir from 12/2/2012
Front row left to right: Abdel S., Mike S., Erina D., Jane P., Chris C., Steve B., and Ron L.
Back row left to right: Bob P., M.A. L., Matt M., Julia S., Robbie L., Steven Y., Scott M., and Lourdes R.N.

… that most people who come through our doors are most impressed that at Dignity Boston everyone sings - not everyone has a singing voice, mind you, but you can hear everyone joining in. Dignity Boston has always had a "choir;" the music ministry has always been active. In the "old days" we were often led by the late Father Tom Oddo, choosing the songs himself and leading the community in song, or by one song leader (like the late Bob Grady on his guitar). At times we were led by a few singers and a pianist, and at other times by a conductor, 15-20 singers, piano accompanist and other instrumentalists - clarinet, guitar, bongos, viola, percussion, and gong…just about any combination! The choir led us all and everybody sang, as we still do. We sing with our voices, we sing with our hearts, we sing with passion, and we bring life to our prayer and to everyone's soul.

Our singing has very often been enhanced by the liturgical dancing ministry, with the participation of many, led and inspired by Kathy Ann. Those of us who were here decades ago perhaps remember the late David M., a kind, gentle man who led our choir and accompanied us on piano. Marianne D.- B., who was in the choir back then, remembers the choir singing his compositions, especially responsorial psalms. The fiery, Richard K., was a leader for many years, and he could get a sound from all of us that was heard outside of Arlington Street Church. There was also, Tom S., conductor and accompanist, who loved to wear his smoking jacket when he conducted on special occasions, and later Karl S. So many talented and committed music directors, accompanists, and singers who have come and shared their talents to make Dignity Boston always a singing congregation. And talking about talent, how about our members who composed music especially for Dignity's celebrations of Easter and Anniversary and for the DignityUSA Conference, like, for example, Prophets to the World by Chris C. and Roll Away the Stone by Steve B, songs that we still sing together. On many of the big liturgies we had a special choir with additional singers and instrumentalists. And let us not forget the sound of our choir at our weddings, ordinations, baptisms, and funerals. Starting in the 80's Dignity Boston made the decision, after many discerning chapter-wide conversations, to start including inclusive language in prayer and music. That meant that we had to "inclusify" all the lyrics to all the songs and to print our own Hymnals - a monumental task. Every song had to be rewritten with inclusive language in prayer and music typed, printed, and compiled in a three ringed binder - we made 250 of them! Much of this work was done by some of our members, especially Cliff B. and Diane S. After many years of using these (there are still some copies around somewhere). Ron L. initiated a campaign to buy the green Gather Comprehensive hymnals (the Green Books) that we still use today. The community rallied to cover the cost of the new hymnals, each person buying as many books as they wished, dedicating them in memory or in honor of someone. Way back, when in need of a piano, we also started a campaign, "Buy a Key", we called it, to buy the piano. The community never disappoints, and we sold as many keys as needed in order to have a new piano!



In the early to mid 1990's, Ron L., who had many years of choral singing experiences, became the leader of our music ministry, and continued for seven years. For Ron, this position coordinating music ministers brought musical and personal growth and confidence. In those days we worshipped at the episcopal church of St. John the Evangelist in Beacon Hill. Every Sunday we would wheel the piano down a wooden ramp (made by a member of the community) from a side chapel and up the ramp into the sanctuary. In the summer, we would have a cantor and a smaller choir. We often would start the new liturgical season with a choir retreat/brunch in September. Some of us became choir nerds and attended the National Pastoral musicians conference in Pittsburgh one summer. Ron has remained active in music ministry to the present and has served as music director for DignityUSA conferences, most recently in Dublin, OH in 2025. In the mid 90's, Steve B, a high school music teacher in Bedford and later in Waltham, became the music director and was our leader for nearly a decade. Because of his experience directing bands and choirs, as well as being an accomplished clarinetist and conductor, his skills lent themselves to expanding the Dignity choir's repertoire with more challenging pieces and a more polished and disciplined sound that developed from having an experienced conductor and teacher. Steve also led the choir at various community celebrations and at two Boston-based DignityUSA conferences in 1997 and 2017.

When Steve left Boston to go to graduate school for conducting in Chicago, Jane P took up the mantle and she has been leading our music ministry for over 25 years. As music leader, Jane has focused on planning music by liturgical season, so the musicians and singers would have a sense well in advance what the music selections would be. Did you know that songs are not only selected in advance, but that they are chosen based on the readings of each Sunday? They hopefully align with not only the Sunday readings, but often they seem to match what is going on in the world - the Holy Spirit at work! Jane has tried to continue expanding the repertoire of music heard and sung at Dignity Boston, trying to balance "old chestnuts" with newer compositions. Jane remains forever grateful for the music ministry, what she's learned from the other members and the opportunities she has had and to help others 'pray twice' through singing. It has been a great joy, Ron, Steve and Jane say, to participate together in music ministry over 3 decades.

Throughout the years, the music ministry has coordinated with the Liturgy Committee to celebrate liturgies every Sunday and for major feasts. The COVID years, however, presented a huge challenge to churches and choirs everywhere and Dignity was no exception. Because of Ron L.'s initiative, leadership, and expertise, he was able to create recordings of songs to use in our liturgies. Dignity choir members recorded their individual vocal track in the privacy and safety of their own homes which Ron then combined to produce a full song. We still use these recordings today at liturgy. We also use commercial recordings to supplement the sound of our choir, as it is smaller in number these days. Jane reminds us that new members are always welcome to join the choir. Talk to Jane!

We, at Dignity Boston, have been blessed during these 53 years with the generosity and dedication of so many who have led us in song and filled our liturgies with joy and grace. We are so grateful. And we will continue to sing out loud in faith, in hope and in love.

"Did You Know" is a frequent feature of the Dignity Boston Bulletin and is written by Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues.

Our Ongoing Announcements

A New Way to Donate

You can donate to Dignity Boston right here. That link can also be found on our Dignity Boston web site at http://www.dignityboston.org/donate. You can also donate via the QR code image to the left of this article. As an alternative, consider supporting Dignity Boston by contributing at our in-person liturgies or by sending donations to Dignity Boston, P.O. Box 262, Belmont, MA 02478. Please make your checks payable to "Dignity Boston". If it is for one of our Second Collections, please write "Second Collection" in the memo field. We thank you for the consideration of any donation to our chapter!

Monthly Social: Ideas and Hosting Needed

Monthly socials bring our community together online. Have an idea for a topic or a social? Perhaps you'd like to lead an event. If so, please contact Ron, Peggy B., or Robin at dignityboston@gmail.com.

Subscribe to the DignityUSA Monthly Newsletter

We hope you are enjoying the "Our Parent DignityUSA" section of the Dignity Boston Bulletin. For even more DignityUSA information, subscribe to the DignityUSA newsletter, Dateline. Please click here to subscribe to Dateline.

Contact Us!

Our Dignity Boston mailing address is: Dignity Boston, P.O. Box 262, Belmont, MA 02478. For questions, contact dignityboston@gmail.com . Please note that DignityUSA's address is: DignityUSA, 51 Pleasant St. #1107, Malden, MA 02148. The phone number is 781-309-7686.

Check Out Our Information Table

We have lots of information vehicles including, but not limited to, Dateline (the DignityUSA newsletter), emails through our listserv, the semi-monthly Bulletin, and our Information Table in our social hall at St. Stephen's where you'll find printed copies of our latest Bulletin as well as other materials. Please consider checking it out when you visit Dignity Boston in person next time around.

Please contact dignityboston@gmail.com if you have any items that you would like to suggest for our next Bulletin (9/15/26) by Noon on Sunday, 9/13/26.