

Education Hour

Children's Education:

Pre-K - 2nd Grade- We are studying stories from the Bible through creative activities and crafts using The Seasons of the Spirit curriculum. This class will meet in the Library (to the left of the Workroom.)

3rd Grade - 5th Grade - We are using The Seasons of the Spirit curriculum, music, and art projects to examine the stories of the Bible through the lectionary. This class will meet in the Classroom (to the right of the Workroom.)

Youth Education: We continue with the problem of suffering by exploring "J.B." by Archibald MacLeish and the Biblical book of Job. The class will meet on the third floor of the Meeks House (across Caroline Street from the church).

Adult Education:

Bible Discussion: We will not be meeting this Sunday.

In The Sanctuary: Sharing Christmas Stories And Poems - Bring a memory, or maybe a poem, or maybe an anecdote. Guided by Bruce Yaeger, we will deepen our awareness of the Sacred at work in our lives by listening to experiences or poetry that have opened our lives to the deep meanings of Christmas.

Parents Forum - We will have a Parents Forum meeting every 3rd Sunday during Education Hour in Laura's office in Meeks House.

We will have Education Hour on Jan. 3 at 9:30 a.m.
We will have one service that Sunday at 11 a.m.

Calendar

Sunday 12/27	No service at 8:15 a.m.	
	9:30 a.m.	Education
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Tuesday 12/29	6:30 p.m.	Yoga
Wednesday 12/30	10:00 a.m.	Garden Workday
Sunday 1/3	No service at 8:15 a.m.	
	9:30 a.m.	Education
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship

Helpful Information

Childcare Childcare is provided in the nursery beginning at 8:45 a.m.

Communication Cards If you're a visitor with us, please fill out a blue Communication Card and drop it in the Offering basket.

Covenant Membership Membership in Covenant Church is open to all persons who affirm the loving presence of God, the life and teachings of Jesus, and the revealed Spirit throughout the ages. Those interested in learning more about Covenant are encouraged to express that interest to one of the Ministers or the Worship Leader. Any person desiring membership first becomes an inquirer and is asked to attend an orientation class designed to acquaint inquirers with the church and its beliefs. After a period of eight weeks, the inquirer may indicate a desire to become a member.

Celebrations and Concerns If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please post it on the announcements board in the Narthex or e-mail it to prayer@covenanthouston.org.

Covenant Newsletter There is a weekly Newsletter available online at www.covenanthouston.org. To have this Newsletter e-mailed to you, please send an e-mail request to office@covenanthouston.org.

Covenant Recycles If you do not wish to keep your bulletin this Sunday, please recycle it by placing it on the stand located in the Narthex on your way out.

Covenant Church affirms the sanctity, dignity, and equality of human beings and the value of all life in the universe. We welcome persons of all racial and ethnic heritages, all sexual orientations, and all faith perspectives to our Christian community. We stand for each individual's right to worship God and to respond to God's call to ministry in her or his own understanding of God's all-encompassing love.

We value a holistic approach to faith and seek to worship in ways that are intellectually credible, emotionally stimulating, spiritually engaging and contemporarily relevant.

We value music and art and ritual to express what we cannot ever fully say.

We value participation so that we might hear many approaches to our shared faith.

Covenant Church
an ecumenical liberal baptist
congregation

Members of Covenant
Ministers

Jeremy Rutledge
Minister

Laura Mayo
Associate Minister

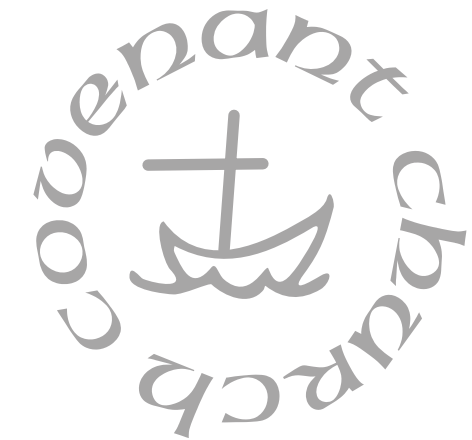
Fran Avera
Minister of Music

Carl McAliley
Organist

Pat Long
Office Administrator

Hanh-Nhi Ngo
Office Administrator

Covenant Church
4949 Caroline
Houston, TX 77004
713.668.8830



*A Service of Worship
for
27 December 09*

*Life aspirations come
in the guise of children.*

Rabindrath Tagore

please enter for worship in silence

* Prelude “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” Johannes Brahms

Choral Introit “Lord of Our Growing Years” Little Cornard

Call to Worship

*+ Processional Hymn 69: “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright” Wie schön leuchtet

* Opening Prayer

Spirit of life and love, we have gathered here in search of answers to hard questions.

We have come in search of understanding, in search of community.

We have come in search of hope and healing.

Let this be a place not only of searching, but of discovery.

Let this be a place not only of learning, but of wisdom.

Let this be a place not only of meeting, but of connection.

And let this be a place where healing fosters giving and hope fosters service.

This is our prayer: that we may create here a circle of love, ever expanding, ever growing, as we seek to know you, the source of our being.

Scripture Lesson Luke 2:41-52
These are our sacred stories.
Thanks be to God.

A Time for Children

*+ Response: Mueller
Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, and teach us to love Thee and help us to share.

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Spirit of Wisdom,
When I am in the midst of experiencing my own sin and evil give me the Wisdom to know my own goodness.
When I am inflated and identify with my goodness, blinded to my own evil and sin,
Give me the Wisdom to know the truth.
Great Wisdom abiding in me,
create me anew,
bring me to my own fullness and the fullness of time.
Wisdom, let me be the source of bringing others and this world of ours
to your fullness of time.**

Words of Assurance

Music “Unto Us A Boy Is Born” Traditional carol

Reflection Heather Laureles

Reflection Jme Guehring

Reflection Kathleen Cook

Hymn 239 “How Happy Is Each Child of God” Winchester Old

Invitation

Prayer

Offering Offertory: “Il est né, le divin Enfant” Denis Bédard

+ Prayer of Dedication

**O God, through the offering of these gifts may we become a more open people . . .
open-minded in hearing your Word and wisdom,
open-hearted in healing a broken world,
open-handed in heeding your call for charity and acts of love.**

With thanks for all good gifts, we present a portion of our substance and the whole of ourselves. Amen.

+ Doxology Old Hundredth
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Sing praise all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly host.
Praise Maker, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Affirmation of Faith

**Loving God,
Mother and Father of us all:**

**Whenever we fail to teach our children faithfully,
or forget to care for them lovingly,
Help us to recall those who taught and cared for us.**

**Whenever we forget what it is like to be a child,
or cannot remember how to be childlike ourselves,
Help us to relearn from our children.**

+ Recessional Hymn 450 “O Day of Peace” Jerusalem

Words of Dismissal

+ Choral Benediction “Lord of Our Older Years” Little Cornard

Postlude Fantasia on “In Dulci Jubilo” J. S. Bach

Worship

The Acolyte lights the candles at the beginning of worship and carries the light out at the conclusion of the service. The acolyte for the second service is **Ruben Milano**.

The Worship Leaders are **Casey Gambill** and **Chuck Fleming**.

The Call to Worship is from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran, as printed in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

The Opening Prayer is adapted from a prayer of Sue Ayer from the *1997 Unitarian Universalist Ministers’ Association Worship Materials Collection*.

The Unison Confession is by Janice Brewi and Anne Brennan, reprinted in *Soul Weavings: A Gathering of Women’s Prayers* and edited by Lyn Klug.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Touch Holiness*, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from words by Jay Leach.