



*A Service of Worship for  
Martin Luther King Day  
16 January 2022*

Now that he is safely dead,  
Let us praise him.  
Build monuments to his glory.  
Sing Hosannas to his name.  
Dead men make such convenient heroes.  
For they cannot rise to challenge the images  
That we might fashion from their lives.  
It is easier to build monuments  
Than to build a better world.  
So now that he is safely dead,  
We, with eased consciences will  
Teach our children that he was a great man,  
Knowing that the cause for which he  
Lived is still a cause  
And the dream for which he died is still a dream.  
A dead man's dream.

Carl Wendell Hines, Jr.

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!  
**And also with you!**

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

“Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier” *Dearest Jesus, we are here*

Call to Worship

\*+Opening Hymn #425

St. Michael

“O Day of God, Draw Nigh”

+Opening Sentences

**Love cannot remain by itself–  
it has no meaning.  
Love has to be put into action  
and that action is service.  
It is not how much we do,  
but how much love we put in the doing;  
a lifelong sharing of love with others.**

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 62:1-5

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Time for Children

+Response:

Lasst uns erfreuen

**In every land begin the song,  
To every land the strains belong:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
In cheerful sound all voices raise  
And fill the world with joyful praise.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Eternal God,**

**Forgive us when we separate ourselves from you –  
when we pay attention to our agenda  
and overlook someone who is trying to speak to us,  
when we laud the best examples of your love –  
Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jesus the Christ,  
and we forget  
that our lives matter.**

**Forgive us, Gracious God,  
when we, at Covenant,  
even as we gather together,  
forget to think, to hope, past ourselves.**

**Encourage us, God  
to be attentive to your word  
that is spoken in the lives around us,  
to dare to involve ourselves  
in some desire greater than ourselves. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Music

African American Spiritual

“My Lord! What a Morning”

*Refrain*

My Lord, what a morning,  
My Lord, what a morning,  
My Lord, what a morning,  
When the stars begin to fall.

You'll hear the trumpet round, to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall.

You'll hear the sinner moan, to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall.

You'll hear the Christian shout, to wake the nations underground,  
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall.

*Refrain*

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn #418

Ich Halte Treulich Still

“God, Bless Your Church with Strength!”

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Christopher Teel  
(b.1971)

“Improvisation”

+Prayer of Dedication

**Let every word  
be the fruit  
of action and reflection.  
Reflection alone  
without action  
or tending toward it  
is mere theory,  
adding its weight  
when we are overloaded  
with it already.  
Action alone  
without reflection  
is being busy  
pointlessly.  
Honor the Word eternal  
and speak  
to make  
a new world possible.**

\*Doxology

Old Hundredth

*Praise God the Source of life and birth.  
Praise God the Word, who came to earth.  
Praise God the Spirit, holy flame,  
All glory, honor to God's name! Amen.*

<sup>+</sup>Affirmation of Faith

Leader: We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.

**People: Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**

Leader: There are some things in our social system to which all of us ought to be maladjusted.

**People: Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear, only love can do that.**

Leader: We must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation.

**People: The foundation of such a method is love.**

Leader: Before it is too late, we must narrow the gaping chasm between our proclamations of peace and our lowly deeds which precipitate and perpetuate war.

**People: One day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek but a means by which we arrive at that goal.**

Leader: We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means.

**People: We shall hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope.**

“God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian”

**God the Spirit, guide and guardian,  
wind-spiced flame and hovering dove,  
breath of life and voice of prophets,  
sign of blessing, power of love:  
give to those who lead your people  
fresh anointing of your grace;  
send them forth as bold apostles  
to your Church in every place.**

**Christ our Savior, Sovereign, Shepherd,  
Word-made-flesh, Love crucified,  
teacher, healer, suffering Servant,  
friend of sinners, foe of pride:  
in your tending may all people  
learn and live a Shepherd's care;  
grant them courage and compassion  
shown through word and deed and prayer.**

**Great Creator, Life-bestower,  
Truth beyond all thought's recall,  
fount of wisdom, womb of mercy,  
giving and forgiving all:  
as you know our strength and weakness,  
so may those the Church exalts  
oversee her life steadfastly  
yet not overlook her faults.**

**Triune God, mysterious Being,  
undivided and diverse,  
deeper than our minds can fathom,  
greater than our creeds rehearse:  
help us in our varied callings  
your full image to proclaim,  
that our ministries uniting  
may give glory to your Name.**

Benediction

Postlude

Ned Rorem

(b. 1923)

“There is a Spirit That Delights to Do No Evil...” from *A Quaker Reader*

## **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **K.T. Tilford**.

The Call to Worship is from *The Content of Our Character* by Shelby Steele.

The Opening Sentences are from *Words to Love By* by Mother Theresa.

The Unison Confession is by **Jeannie Gambill**.

The soloist on “My Lord, What A Morning” is **K.T. Tilford**.

The text of “God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian” is by Carl P. Daw, Jr.

The Prayer of Dedication is from Dom Helder Camara as reprinted in *Imaging the Word*.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Martin Luther King, Jr.

## **Education 9:00 - 9:40 a.m.**

### Adult Education

Our topic this week will be “Making Empathy a New Year's Resolution”. We will consider both personal and collective empathy as we equip ourselves to navigate 2022. The Adult Education committee has decided to stop recording most of our classes, but we do plan to record and make available special sessions, such as featured presentations.

- *William Kline*

### Children & Youth Sunday School

As we are getting started in the new year, we will be starting Sunday School this Sunday, January 16. We will have two options for Sunday School: virtual from 10-10:30, and in-person from 10:30-11 (masks required). This way, everyone can take part in the fun.

- *Trena Jamison*

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website:

<https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>

## **Calendar**

Sun, Jan 16	9:00 am	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	10:00 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Zoom
	10:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
Tue. Jan 18	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan 20	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan 20	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Fri. Jan 21	1:00 pm	Book Club, Zoom Meeting

## Helpful Information

**Visitor Cards:** If you're a visitor with us, please submit a [Visitors Card](#).

**Celebrations and Concerns:** If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please submit a [Celebrations and Concerns Form](#).

**Membership:** If you are interested in learning more about Covenant, we encourage you to talk with one of the ministers or the worship leader. Email [Office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:Office@covenanthouston.org).

**Newsletter:** To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to [office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:office@covenanthouston.org).

**Office Hours:** The church office is currently not open, but we are responding to emails and phone calls.

*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,  
all gender identities, 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

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Christopher Teel, Organist

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