



*A Service of Worship for
World Communion Sunday
3 October 2021*

There is a kind of love called maintenance
Which stores the WD40 and knows when to use it

Which checks the insurance, and doesn't forget
The milkman; which remembers to plant bulbs;

Which answers letters; which knows the way
The money goes; which deals with dentists

And Road Fund Tax and meeting trains,
And postcards to the lonely; which upholds

The permanently rickety elaborate
Structures of living, which is Atlas.

And maintenance is the sensible side of love,
Which knows what time and weather are doing
To my brickwork; insulates my faulty wiring;

Laughs at my dry rotten jokes; remembers
My need for gloss and grouting; which keeps

My suspect edifice upright in air,
As Atlas did the sky.

U. A. Fanthorpe

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Jiri Benda

“Sonatina No. 3” in A minor

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #376

Hyfrydol

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

+Opening Sentences

**Compassion asks us to go where it hurts,
to enter into the places of pain,
to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish.
Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery,
to mourn with those who are lonely,
to weep with those in tears.
Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak,
vulnerable with the vulnerable,
and powerless with the powerless.
Compassion means full immersion
in the condition of being human.**

Scripture Lesson

Hebrews 2:5-7

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

*+Response:

New England

*Throughout the whole creation I see God's loving care
For everyone in every land, God's children everywhere.
Wherever I may wander, Wherever I may be,
I'm certain of my Maker's love; God's care is over me.*

*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**We pray for the power to be gentle;
the strength to be forgiving;
the patience to be understanding;
and the endurance to accept the consequences
of holding to what we believe is right.**

**May we put our trust in the power of good to overcome evil
and the power of love to overcome hatred.**

**We pray for the vision to see and the faith to believe
in a world emancipated from violence,
a new world where fear shall no longer lead people to commit injustice,
nor selfishness make them bring suffering to others.**

**Help us to devote our whole life and thought and energy
to the task of making peace,
praying always for the inspiration and the power
to fulfill the destiny for which we and all people were created.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Bless the Lord, O My Soul”

Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov

Silent Reflection

Meditation

Hymn

“Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table”

Beecher

**Look who gathers at Christ's table!
Hear the stories that they bring.
Some are weeping; some are laughing;
some have songs they want to sing.
Others ask why they're invited,
burdened by the wrong they've done.
Christ insists they all are welcome.
there is room for ev'ryone.**

**Clouds of light surround the table;
Ancient followers appear,**

**saints confessing how they wrestled
with their guilt, their doubt and fear.
Peter tells of his denying
Christ was ever in his sight;
Paul relates his fruitless effort
to obliterate the light.**

**Their sad stories are repeated
in the thousand different ways,
but they share one thing in common:
they all end in thanks and praise
for the host who has invited
north and south and east and west
to converge around this table,
where all life is fed and blest.**

**Bring your joy and bring your sadness,
and prepare to be surprised
by the host whose hands are wounded,
who will open wide your eyes
when he blesses bread and breaks it—
truth and manna from above—
and then passes wine that wakens
in your heart the taste of love.**

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Edward MacDowell

“To a Wild Rose from “Woodland Sketches””

+Prayer of Dedication

**Our many interconnections
draw us close to others and to the whole
created order; and thus we may both care
for or unwittingly oppress our neighbors
and our world. Help us to be mindful of
these potentials; encourage our acts of
compassion; grant us the grace of
loving community. Amen.**

*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.*

+Affirmation of Faith

**I find some comfort in our communal clumsiness.
We each stumble along the uncharted path.
Practicing with others is a useful antidote
to the isolation of insight.
We walk together sharing the silence,
giving each other support
as we investigate our lives.
We forget and remember, moment after moment,
each of us making an effort
to deepen our capacities
for observation of self and other.
By learning in community, we practice breathing
in a circle of friends and companions...

In this steady silence I ask for help to walk more gracefully,
for patience to cultivate an attentive heart.**

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

+Benediction Hymn #438

“Blest Be the Tie that Binds”

Dennis

**Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Maker's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.**

**We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.**

**From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.**

Sharing the Bread and the Cup Outside

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **John Preston**.

The prelude and offertory are played by **Karen Kline**, piano.

The Call to Worship is "Wheat" by B.H. Fairchild

The Opening Sentences are by Henri J.M. Nouwen.

The Unison Confession is by Prayer for World Peace, 1978, from *The OneWorld Book of Prayer*, edited by Juliet Mabey.

The text of "Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table" is by Thomas Troeger.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Simpler Living, Compassionate Life: A Christian Perspective*, edited by Michael Schut.

The Affirmation of Faith is from Stephanie Kaza in *The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees*.

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

Adult Education recorded education sessions will be made available on this page: [Adult Education Recordings](#).

Over the next few months, hundreds of refugees from Afghanistan will be arriving in Houston. Find out what's involved in welcoming them and how you can participate. On Sunday, October 3 at 9 a.m, Elena Korbut from Interfaith Ministries will provide an overview of the refugee resettlement process in the US, services provided by the Refugee Services department of Interfaith Ministries (local affiliate of Episcopal Migration Ministries), and discuss the co-sponsorship model in more detail.

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website: [Covenant Gatherings](#)

Announcements

Sunday schedule for this Sunday:

Adult Education (Zoom) 9am
Worship in-person (Covenant) 11am
Worship live-stream 11am
Online Communion (Zoom) 5pm

Calendar

Sun. Oct 3	9:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 a.m.	Worship live-stream
	After Worship	Outdoor Communion, Covenant
	5:00 p.m.	Online Communion, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Oct 7	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Oct 7	7:15 p.m.	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Thur. Oct 7	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Oct 8	1:00 p.m.	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, 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.

Newsletter: To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to 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
Laura Mayo, Senior Minister
Jodi Bash, Director of Communication
Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth
Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita
David Lee, Director of Music
Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

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Pursuant to Section 30.07, Penal Code (trespass by license holder with an openly carried handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a handgun that is carried openly.