



*A Service of Worship
for Christ the King Sunday
21 November 2021*

His disciples said to him, “When will the kingdom come?”
Jesus said, “It will not come by waiting for it.
It will not be a matter of saying ‘here it is’ or ‘there it is.’
Rather, the kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and you do not see it.

The Gospel of Thomas

The Kingdom of God is either now or never.

Thich Nhat Hanh

The religion of Jesus had no boundaries.
His idea of the Kingdom of Heaven was an inclusive fellowship.

Leon Meeks

The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show;
neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there!
for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Luke 17: 20-21

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Dale Wood

“Amazing Grace”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #150

Madrid

“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”

+Opening Sentences

**In a real sense this is a great time to be alive.
Therefore, I am not yet discouraged about the future.
Granted that the easygoing optimism of yesterday is impossible.
Granted that we face a world crisis
 which leaves us standing so often
 amid the surging murmur of life’s restless sea.
But every crisis has both its dangers and its opportunities.
It can spell either salvation or doom.
In a dark, confused world
 the Kingdom of God may yet reign
 in the hearts of people.**

Scripture Lesson

Colossians 3:12-15, John 18:28-38 and 19:1-5, Psalm 95:1-5

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

**Hidden God,
wherever you are
in your own kind of space,
we watch and wait for you
to startle us to wakeful newness.**

**Come and bring to us
the spirit of daring and courage
to make flesh on earth
a bit of the kingdom of heaven.**

**Come and make your own transforming way
in the desert of our confusion
and wilderness of me and mine,
so we may walk with Jesus the hard way
of justice, mercy, and peace among the people of earth.**

Words of Assurance

Music

Jane Marshall

“He Comes to Us”

He comes to us as One unknown, without a name,
as of old, by the lake-side, he came to those men who knew Him not.
He speaks to us the same word: “Follow thou me!”
and sets us to the tasks that He has to fulfill for our time.
He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple,
He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings
that they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery,
they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn #300

Personent Hodie

“Down to Earth, as a Dove”

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

J.N. Hanff

“A Mighty Fortress is Our God”

+Prayer of Dedication

**I cannot claim
that I have found
the home I long for
every day of my life,
not by a long shot,
but I believe
that in my heart
I have found,
and maybe
have always known,
the way
that leads to it.**

**I believe
that home
is Christ’s kingdom,
which exists
both within us
and among us
as we wend
our prodigal ways
through the world
in search of it.**

+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.***

+Affirmation of Faith

**We recognize that the Kingdom of God
is somehow accessible within each of us.
We encourage each other
to take care of our own spiritual lives
as well as to reach out to others.
We accept the strong ethical requirements
of the inward kingdom
seeking outward incarnation.**

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

+Communion Hymn #515

Love Unknown

“Now to Your Table Spread”
(begin moving outdoors for communion during the third verse)

**Now to your table spread
we come, each one in faith
that you alone provide the words of life or death:
in wine and bread,
in promised food
we find your loving heart, O God.**

**Hands of the world stretch out
your mystery to touch
in longing to believe a truth beyond our reach,
to sing in joy,
to cry in grief,
to know your meaning for our life.**

**Here is our common wealth
in sharing what is good,
as though all humankind around one table stood,
this bread to break,
this wine to taste:
one people in the name of Christ.**

Sharing the Bread and the Cup Outside

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Paul Wilson**.

The guest proclaimer is **Ann Stout**.

Our guest organist is Andrew Bowen.

The banner was created by **Nancy Henry** and inspired by the art of He Qi.

The Call to Worship is from *When Jesus Came to Harvard: Making Moral Choices Today* by Harvey Cox.

The Opening Sentences are adapted from “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence” in *Strength to Love*, by Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Unison Confession is adapted from “We Watch and Wait for You” in *My Heart in My Mouth*, by Ted Loder.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from *The Longing for Home* by Frederick Buechner.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from and inspired by *Jesus Was a Liberal: Reclaiming Christianity for All* by Scott McClennan.

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

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

Our esteemed Senior Minister, the Rev. Laura Mayo, is going to base her sermons during Advent on passages in The Gospel according to Luke. For the adult education class this coming Sunday, November 21, she will be providing background information about Luke, the nature of his gospel, to whom he was primarily addressing it, and other characteristics, including a comparison with The Gospel according to Matthew. On the following four Sundays, Bill Kline will lead reflection, discussion, and sharing on the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy, and love—in that order, coinciding with the themes of Laura's sermons. We expect these to be enjoyable and valuable opportunities to deepen our mutual experience of the Advent season and Christmas and urge you to make a special effort to come together for these gatherings of our beloved community.

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

Announcements

The nomination process for committees, and council and diaconate openings are underway. Please check the newsletter for the link to nominate yourself or others online. There is a form in your worship order to make committee nominations. Those can be placed in the offering plate.

Calendar

Sun. Nov 21	9:00 am	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	10:00 am	Virtual Communion, Zoom Meeting
	10:20 am	C&Y Vegetable Garden Planting, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
	12:00 pm	Communion in-person, Covenant
	3:00 pm	Cello & Piano Mini Concert, Covenant
Tue, Nov 23	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Nov 25	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Nov 25	7:15 pm	Thanksgiving Day, No Choir Rehearsal
Fri. Nov 19	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.

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

Christopher Teel, Organist

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

Pursuant to Section 30.06, Penal Code (trespass by license holder with a concealed handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a concealed handgun.

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.

Committees at Covenant

Adult Education Committee organizes weekly speakers for adult education. They work to enable participants to articulate the ways the divine is operative in their own lives by drawing upon scripture, tradition, reason, conversation, study, and experience.

Retreat Planning Sub-committee is responsible for planning and implementing the all-church retreat.

Children and Youth Committee works to create an environment where our children can experience the loving presence of the Divine. Members plan church events for children and youth, help choose curriculum, liaise with other committees, provide additional support to the Director of Children & Youth.

Facilities Committee is responsible for helping to organize the operation, maintenance, repair, security and budgeting for all facilities, grounds, equipment, supplies, furniture, furnishings and contracts, which are a part of the building and grounds. They organize work days and with the council hire contractors to complete necessary facility and grounds work.

Hospitality Committee coordinates refreshments during Sunday fellowship and at other specified Church functions.

Kitchen Sub-committee coordinates the use and maintenance of the kitchen and works with other committees or outside groups in the use and care of the kitchen.

Missions Committee develops, recommends, and, upon Church approval, coordinates the social-justice activities of the Church.

Outreach Committee creates an outward facing program to our greater community in order to offer others an invitation into the fellowship of Covenant. It promotes and coordinates outreach activities throughout the Church, including the work of existing committees and acts as an advocate for potential and newer members. The committee makes advertising decisions.

Pride Parade Sub-committee is dedicated to planning and implementing Covenant's participation in the annual pride parade.

Worship Committee assists the Minister(s) and Director(s) in planning worship services particularly our special services throughout the year like All Saints/All Souls and Christmas Eve. They also work to promote the arts within our worship experience.

Ushers Sub-committee is responsible for fulfilling the ushering duties at each worship service. Those include: handing out bulletins, helping the acolyte, taking the offering, etc.

Labyrinth Sub-committee is responsible for programming for our labyrinth.

EXPRESS INTEREST IN A COMMITTEE
OR COMMITTEES HERE:

Name: _____

Email and phone: _____

Committees that you are interested in joining (You are welcome to list more than one committee. The Nominating Committee will use your expressed interest in doing the work of staffing each committee):
