

Worship Notes

The acolyte lights the candles at the beginning of worship and carries the light out at the close of worship.

The worship leader is **Christa Robbins**.

The Call to Worship is by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Opening Sentences are by Walter Wink from *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*.

The Unison Confession is by Walter Wink from *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*.

Jay Hooker and **K. T. Tilford** sing at the 9am service.

Eric Avera wrote the words to the hymn "Abiding Maker, Make us Strong."

The adapted Prayer of Dedication is by Ted Loder from *My Heart in My Mouth*.

The Affirmation of Faith is a Christian prayer, as reprinted in *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnal.

Education 10:00 - 10:40 a.m.

Adult Education

This Sunday, February 24, Becky Udden from the Main St. Theater will come talk to our Adult Education class. Becky is the founder and artistic director Main Street Theater.

Children & Youth Sunday School

The PreK class - Ages 3-Kindergarten will read the story Food for all, from Mark 6:30-44. Using the pretend food we created at Camp Community the class will share with each other.

Elementary class - Grades 1-5 will discuss the story The loving father, Luke 15:11-32. They will play the "what's fair?" game.

Youth Group - Meet at 10am in the Orange room with Jodi to go over plans for our Auction next week. All youth on deck!

Announcements

Sunday, March 3: The Children and Youth Auction will take place directly after the second service on March 3rd. Join us in the Huff Fellowship Hall for a silent auction, drinks, food, and FUN!

Wednesday, March 6: Our Ash Wednesday service will be in our sanctuary at 7:30pm.

Calendar

Sun. Feb. 24	9:00 a.m.	Worship
	10:00 a.m.	Education
	10:40 a.m.	Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Thurs. Feb. 28	7:15 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sun. Mar. 3	9:00 a.m.	Worship
	10:00 a.m.	Education
	10:40 a.m.	Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	12:00 p.m.	Children & Youth Auction
Thurs. Mar. 7	7:15 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal

Helpful Information

Childcare: Childcare is provided in the children's area beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Visitor Cards: If you're a visitor with us, please fill out a blue card and place it in the offering plate, or give it to the worship leader or one of our ministers after the service.

Celebrations and Concerns: If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please complete a green Celebration and Concerns card and place it in the offering plate, or give it to the worship leader or a minister after the service.

Membership: If you are interested in learning more about Covenant, we encourage you to talk with one of the ministers or the worship leader.

Newsletter: To subscribe to the newsletter, please send an email request to office@covenanthouston.org.

Office Hours: The church office is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Covenant Recycles: If you do not wish to keep your order of worship, please recycle it by placing it on the stand located in the narthex.

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

Fran Avera, Minister of Music

David Lee, Associate Minister of Music

Patrick Parker, Organist

Jodi Bash, Director of Children & Youth

Director of Communication

Kathleen Yaeger, Financial Administrator

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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.



A Service of Worship for 24 February 2019

*Jesus was killed.
This is one of those facts that everybody knows,
but whose significance is often overlooked.
He didn't simply die; he was executed.
We as Christians participate
in the only major religious tradition
whose founder was executed by established authority.
And if we ask the historical question,
"Why was he killed?"
the historical answer is
because he was a social prophet and movement initiator,
a passionate advocate of God's justice,
and radical critic of the domination system
who had attracted a following.
If Jesus had been only a mystic, healer,
and wisdom teacher, he almost certainly
would not have been executed.
Rather, he was killed because of his politics -
because of his passion for God's justice.*

Marcus Borg

Preparing for worship with silence

Prelude "Intermezzo on an Irish Air" Charles Stanford

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #313 "Come Down, O Love Divine" Down Ampney

+Opening Sentences

The command to love our enemies reminds us that our first task towards oppressors is pastoral: to help them recover their humanity. Quite possibly the struggle, and the oppression that gave it rise, have dehumanised the oppressed as well, causing them to demonise their enemies. It is not enough to become politically free; we must also become human. Nonviolence presents a chance for all parties to rise above their present condition and become more of what God created them to be.

Welcoming New Members

Leader: Believing that it is in response to the call of God that we have come to this place, we publicly acknowledge the teachings of Jesus as the true pattern of life and all of life's relationships.

Community: Ginger Clarkson and Sally Smith, we welcome you into this community of faith. Your presence among us has already been a source of blessing and joy.

All: We now enter into covenant with one another in the spirit of Christ to live together in love and to care for one another and for our neighbors as God cares for each one of us.

Leader: In the understanding that we are called to a shared life, will both of you express your covenant with us?

New Members: We covenant with you to share the joys and sorrows and to bear the burdens of this community. We will pray sensitively for you, affirming in the spirit of Christ that we are our neighbor's keeper.

Community: Together with you, and with the help of God, we intend by the corporate sharing of our lives to build a witness of faith, love, understanding and strength in the world.

All: Realizing that it was to the world of human need that Jesus came, and it was for the world of people that he gave himself, and that it is in the world that we find ourselves called to be his servants, we dedicate our lives to ministry in the world, ever alert to the voice of human need wherever it may be found.

A Time for Children

*+ Response: Tallis' Canon
*Go with us, Lord, guide the way
Through this and every coming day,
That in your spirit strong and true
Our lives may be our gift to you.*

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 5:38-48

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**The issue is not,
"What must I do in order to secure my salvation?"
but rather,
"What does God require of me in response to the needs of others?"
It is not,
"How can I be virtuous?" but
"How can I participate in the struggle
of the oppressed for a more just world?"
Otherwise our nonviolence is premised
on self-justifying attempts to establish
our own purity in the eyes of God, others, and ourselves,
and that is nothing less than a satanic temptation
to die with clean hands and a dirty heart.**

Words of Assurance

Music (9:00) "God So Loved the World" John Stainer

(11:00) "Expectans Expectavi" Charles Wood

Proclamation

+Hymn "Abiding Maker, Make us Strong" Melita

**Abiding Maker, make us strong
to face hard days as they grow long.
Guide us through challenges, aware
that your pure love is always there.
Remind us that you're always part
of every person's beating heart.**

**Transforming God, our faith remake,
that through your Word our eyes awake
to what each person 'round us needs:
to share our food and sow the seeds
for future generations' growth
In spirit and in service, both.**

**Oh Fount of Wisdom, lead the way
to spread awareness every day.
Our deep acceptance we extend
to claim each stranger as a friend.
Help all to understand and see
the beauty in diversity.**

**Dear God of Love we celebrate:
with boundless joy we elevate
through song and worship and in prayer
the deep connections, love, and care
we share in this community,
our church, which sets our spirits free!**

Pastoral Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory "Andante Tranquillo from Sonata III" Felix Mendelssohn

+Prayer of Dedication

**O God,
Make us brave and bold and scrupled enough
to know that to love our enemies
does not mean to be afraid to meet them
in a daily thrust toward justice;
and in the bold venture of saying what we mean,
and meaning what we say,
to be trustworthy in striving toward intimacy.**

**Arouse us to pay the price of being merciful
that our lives may reflect your mercy to us.**

**Empower us to dare
to be compassionate
that your dreams for our humanity may come true,
to be disciplined yet flexible
that we may prepare the way for your kingdom
in our hearts and in your world. Amen**

+Doxology

Old Hundreth

*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

**Save us from weak resignation to violence,
teach us that restraint is the highest expression of power,
that thoughtfulness and tenderness are the mark of the strong;
Help us to love our enemies, not by countenancing their sins,
but remembering our own. Amen.**

+Closing Hymn #450

Jerusalem

"O Day of Peace"

Benediction

Postlude

"Allegro from Sonata III" Felix Mendelssohn

*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

+Please stand in body or spirit

+Please stand in body or spirit