



*A Service of Worship for
Ascension Sunday
24 May 2020*

God's presence with us means that we are always at home and not at home, rooted and uprooted, resting and wandering, being placed and displaced, known by one place and not known by any place.

Paul Tillich

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour
Silence is kept

Prelude

“Salut d’amour”

Edward Elgar

Call to Worship

+Opening Prayer

**God, each new day is a gift from you
filled with rich possibilities.
Let us be fully alive today,
with eyes open and ears attentive
to all that you want to share with us.
In this morning time, fill us with your love.
Then, all the day through,
let us live in your Spirit.
Open our hearts to care for one another.
Help us to greet you in all the people we meet this day.
And as we come to know and care for each other more deeply,
draw us all nearer to yourself. Amen.**

Scripture Lesson

Acts 1:1-11

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

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.***

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

Spirit of life, come to us to break down barriers;

to widen horizons;

to make us less judgmental.

Help us to see the larger picture and the kinder conclusion;

to love and let live;

to embrace and forgive;

to sustain and care.

Help us to reach out to our better selves,

that we may love more and hate less,

care more and reject less,

that bound together by understanding

we may sustain each other through trial and tribulation,

through joy and happiness,

through sickness and health.

Help us, O God, to be joined in a common purpose of hope and fulfillment.

Renew and revive us.

We seek a common, holy ground for one and all.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

Music
Grannis

Marta Keen, arr. Jay Althouse/Jacy

“Homeward Bound”

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn

Valet will ich dir geben

“O Christ, When You Ascended”

Prayer

Invitation

+Prayer of Dedication

**God of making and unmaking,
of tearing down and re-creating,
you are my home and habitation,
my refuge and place of dwelling.
In your hollows I am re-formed,
given welcome and benediction,
beckoned to rest and rise again,
made ready and sent forth.**

*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

**Faith is the quality that allows us to find a way to go on, to
feel empowered, to—no matter what—keep on trying.
This is not a sentimental faith that everything will be just fine,
according to our wishes or our timetable.
Rather, it is an awakened faith that gives us the courage
to go into the unknown,
the remembrance that nothing is fixed,
and the understanding that as long as we are alive, possibility is alive.
It is the power of faith that inspires us to step forward into the center of our
lives—to participate, to link up, to reach out to others and let others
reach out to us, to work for a better world.
And it is the vitality of faith that tells us, however easy it is to forget or
be overcome by fear, that the place for communicating, for
loving, for sheltering, for trying, is right where we are.**

Benediction

Postlude

“Ashokan Farewell”

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 **Jerrell Jones**.

The prelude is played by **Jacy Grannis**, viola.

The Call to Worship is *Stay* (A Blessing for Ascension Day) by Jan Richardson.

The Opening Prayer is adapted from *The Corrymeela Worship Book*, brought to Covenant by Harley Gambill after her stay with the Corrymeela community in Ireland.

The Unison Confession is a prayer of Rhys Williams.

“Homeward Bound” is sung by **Jadyn Grannis**, soprano, with **Jacy Grannis** playing viola.

“O Christ, When You Ascended” is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Night Visions* by Jan L. Richardson.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Sharon Salzberg.

The postlude is played by **Jacy Grannis**, viola.

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

May 24, Recorded Adult Education

Letting Go as a Part of Moving On from John Shuster

there are practical and spiritual elements to the Letting Go Process, some of which comes naturally to us and some of which is counter-intuitive and quite difficult for many if not most of us. This session will look at how the Covid factor in our lives has raised many an opportunity on both the practical and the spiritual level to let go, in order to expand or strengthen our soul-life for whatever we face and are managing and praying our ways through.

May 31, Live Zoom Meeting

We will hold a live adult education class via Zoom on Sunday, May 31 at 10am, right before our coffee time. Dr. Sravana Varma, who spoke to the class about basics of Hinduism, has agreed to give another lecture about the Hindu caste system. The information on the Zoom class is on our [Online Gatherings page](#). This page is password protected, if you need the password or the direct link to the zoom meeting please contact Jodi@covenanthouston.org. Questions can be asked during the lecture using the chat feature of Zoom and Dr. Varma will answer them after the lecture. You can also send questions ahead of time to Bill Martin (bmartin1937@gmail.com). He will forward them to Dr. Varma for consideration. We hope you will join us in the live experiment of education!

Announcements

Covenant will be holding smaller groups on Zoom. We will also hold virtual coffee time each Sunday at 11am on Facebook.

Calendar

Sun. May. 24	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	11:00 a.m.	Facebook Live coffee time
Wed. May 27	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. May 28	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. June 4	6:00 p.m.	Youth Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. May 28	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, 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 Children & Youth

Director of Communication

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

David Lee, Interim Director of Music

Patrick Parker, Organist

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

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