



*A Service of Worship for
16 August 2020*

To bring about change,
you must not be afraid to take the first step.
We will fail when we fail to try.

Rosa Parks

The beauty of anti-racism
is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism
to be an anti-racist.
Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it,
including in yourself.
And it's the only way forward.

Ijeoma Oluo

Justice is what love looks like in public.

Cornel West

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

G. F. Handel

“Air” from Water Music

Call to Worship

+Opening Prayer

**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.

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 15:10-28

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

+Response:

Tallis' Canon

***Go with us, Lord, and 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

**For the bigotry that leads us to fear and hate
those different from ourselves,
we cry out:
God, have mercy.**

**For the times when we have been the instruments of discrimination
against our sisters and brothers,
we cry out:
Christ, have mercy.**

**For the times when our nation has closed the door of compassion
to the poor,
we cry out:
God, have mercy.**

**And may almighty God forgive us our sins,
grace us with new life,
and give us peace.
Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Music

Jane Marshall

“Love, Joy, and Peace”

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Invitation

+Prayer of Dedication

**“Courage is not the absence of fear,
but the strength to do what is right in the face of it,”
as the anonymous philosopher tells us.**

**Some of us are restrained by fear
of what could happen to us if we resist.
In our naïveté, we are less fearful of what could happen to us
—or is already happening to us—if we don’t resist.**

*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

**Let no one be discouraged by the belief that there is nothing
one man or one woman can do against the enormous array
of the world’s ills—against misery and ignorance, injustice and violence.**

**Few will have the greatness to bend history itself;
but each of us can work to change a small portion of events,
and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.**

**It is from the numberless diverse acts of courage and belief
that human history is shaped. Each time a person stands up for an ideal,
or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice,
that person sends a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other
from a million different centers of energy and daring,
those ripples build a current
which can sweep down the mightiest walls
of oppression and resistance.**

Benediction

Postlude

Olivier Messiaen

“I Adore You, O Hidden Lord”

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 **Joyce Courtois**.

The Call to Worship is by Ibram X. Kendi and Michelle Obama.

The Opening Prayer is by Rhys Williams.

The Unison Confession is a prayer by Edward Francis Gabriele from his book *From Many One: Praying our Rich and Diverse Cultural Heritage*.

“Love, Joy, and Peace” is sung by **Emily Holien** and **K. T. Tilford**.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from Robert Kennedy, as quoted by Jeffrey Sachs in *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*.

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

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

Please join me for the next two Sundays August 16 & 23, as we talk about race, culture, and identity. As we look within to see who we are, what we believe, and those things we hope for, we can look out to see how that affects those around us. We will look at Toni Morrison and her book, *The Bluest Eye* to see what she said about issues that still affect us today. As we open a safe space of equitable sharing, we will look at how we can become the change that is needed in our world today. Will we be allies or saviors in our world to affect change? I look forward to seeing you on Zoom at 10am this Sunday.

- *Laura Mitchell*

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

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

Announcements

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

Calendar

Sun. Aug 16	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education via Zoom
	11:00 a.m.	Facebook Live coffee time
Mon. Aug 17	1:00 p.m.	Book Club, Zoom Meeting <i>Dear White Christian</i>
Tue. Aug 18	7:00 p.m.	Inquirer's Class, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Aug 19	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Aug 20	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Aug 20	5:30 p.m.	Youth Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Aug 20	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Aug 21	1:00 p.m.	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom

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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