



*A Service of Worship for  
17 January 2021*

Make a career of humanity.  
Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights.  
You will make a better person of yourself,  
a greater nation of your country,  
and a finer world to live in.

It is not enough to say 'We must not wage war.'  
It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.  
We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war,  
but the positive affirmation of peace.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!  
**And also with you!**

Ring in the hour  
Silence is kept

Prelude

J.S. Bach

“Prelude in A Major”

Call to Worship

+Opening Sentences

**We face some difficult days ahead,  
but don't let anybody tell you  
America hasn't seen worse.  
Our foremothers and fathers faced  
far greater odds with far fewer resources.  
It's our time now.  
Arm in arm,  
we're moving forward together,  
not one step back.**

Scripture Lesson

Mark

1:4-11

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Music

arr. Donald P. Moore

“Deep River”

Time for Children

+Response:

Hymn to Joy

***Joyful, Joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee, Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the gloom of doubt away;***

*Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day.*

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**We must pray for peace.**

**but we must also use our minds as rigorously to plan for peace  
as we have used them to plan for war.**

**We must pray with unceasing passion for racial justice,  
but we must also use our minds.**

**and employ every resource of our bodies and souls  
to bring an end to racial injustice.**

**We must pray unrelentingly for economic justice,  
but we must also work diligently to bring into being  
those social changes that make for a better distribution of wealth  
within our nation and in the undeveloped nations of the world.**

**No problem is solved when we idly wait for God  
to take full responsibility.**

Words of Assurance

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Music

U2, arr. Bob Chilcott

“MLK”

Prayer

Invitation

†Prayer of Dedication

We bring our prayers for an end to white supremacy.

**We bring our prayers for our nation and for our democracy.**

We bring our prayers for a just and peaceful end to the mob attack that has happened in  
and around our capitol building.

**We bring our prayers for an end to the absolute insanity of these days.**

We bring our prayers for an end to the sedition.

**We bring our prayers for the soul of our nation as we endure - and inflict - so much  
trauma.**

In this season of Epiphany, may we find new light to lead us out of this chaos. Amen.

\*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

**The Christian gospel is more than a transcendent reality,  
more than “going to heaven when I die,  
to shout salvation as I fly.”  
It is also an immanent reality  
—a powerful liberating presence  
among the poor right now in their midst,  
“building them up where they are torn down  
and propping them up on every leaning side.”  
The gospel is found wherever people struggle for justice,  
fighting for their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**

Benediction

Postlude

J.S. Bach

"Toccatà in F Major"

### **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **KT Tilford**.

The prelude is played by Patrick Parker, organ.

The Call to Worship is from *In Wisdom's Path* by Jan Richardson.

The Opening Sentences are by Rev. Dr. William Barber.

“Deep River” is sung by The Covenant Singers, directed by **Fran Avera** from 1-22-2017.

The Unison Confession is by Martin Luther King, Jr.

“MLK” is sung by The Covenant Singers, directed by **Fran Avera** from 1-15-2017.

The Prayer of Dedication was adapted from Rev. Dr. Stacey Simpson Duke.

The Affirmation of Faith is from *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James Cone.

The postlude is played by Patrick Parker, organ.

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

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

This Sunday Ben Ball will lead us in an exercise of using our own life experience in thinking theologically.

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website: <https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>

### **Announcements**

#### **Sunday schedule for this Sunday:**

9:00 - Adult Education with Zoom

10:00 - Worship via videos on the worship website

11:00 - Gather together for coffee time with Zoom

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

### **Calendar**

Sun. Jan. 17	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education via Zoom
	11:00 a.m.	Zoom coffee time
Wed. Jan. 20	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan. 21	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Jan. 21	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Jan. 22	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](mailto:Office@covenanthouston.org).

**Newsletter:** To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to [office@covenanthouston.org](mailto: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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*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.*