



*A Service of Worship for
Evolution Sunday &
Transfiguration Sunday
14 February 2021*

We go about our daily lives
understanding almost nothing of the world.
We give little thought to the machinery
that generates the sunlight
that makes life possible,
to the gravity that glues us to an Earth
that would otherwise send us
spinning off into space, or to the atoms
of which we are made and on
whose stability we fundamentally depend.

Except for children
(who don't know enough not to ask the important questions),
few of us spend much time wondering
why nature is the way it is;
where the cosmos came from,
or whether it was always here;
if time will one day flow backward
and effects precede causes;
or whether there are ultimate limits
to what humans can know.

Carl Sagan

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

J.G. Walther

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

Call to Worship

†Opening Sentences

**Our task, like Thomas Aquinas’s, Thomas Jefferson’s,
or Martin Luther King’s,
is to take the many parts of a complicated
social and conceptual inheritance
and stitch them together into a pattern
that meets the needs of the moment.
It has never been otherwise.**

Scripture Lesson

Mark 9:2-10

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Deo Gracias

“O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair”

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

**I can't reconcile the way that the world is jolted
by events that are wonderful and terrible,
the gorgeous and the tragic.**

**Except that I am beginning to believe
that these opposites do not cancel each other out.**

**I see a middle aged woman in the waiting room of the cancer clinic,
her arms wrapped around the frail frame of her son.
She squeezes him tightly,
oblivious to the way he looks down at her sheepishly.
He laughs after a minute, a hostage to her impervious love.**

Joy persists somehow and I soak it in.

**The horror of cancer has made everything seem like it is painted in bright colors.
I think the same thoughts again and again.**

**Life is so beautiful.
Life is so hard.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Gavotte I” from Suite No. 5 in C minor

J.S. Bach

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Prayer

Invitation

+Prayer of Dedication

**Blessed be the tie that binds. It anchors us.
We are embedded in the great evolutionary story
of planet Earth, the spare, elegant process
of mutation and selection, and bricolage.
And this means that we are anything but alone.**

*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

**Science is not only compatible with spirituality;
it is a profound source of spirituality.
When we recognize our place
in an immensity of light-years and in the passage of ages,
when we grasp the intricacy, beauty, and subtlety of life,
then that soaring feeling, that sense of elation
and humility combined, is surely spiritual.
The notion that science and spirituality are
somehow mutually exclusive does a disservice to both.**

Benediction

Postlude

arr. Vernon

Charter

"Praise to the Lord" (Lobe den Herren)

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Laura Mayo**.

The guest proclaimer is **Kristy Kyle**.

The prelude is played by Andrew Bowen, organ.

The Call to Worship is from *The Great Partnership: Science, Religion, and the Search for Meaning* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

The Opening Sentences are from *Ethics After Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents* by Jeffery Stout.

The Unison Confession is from *Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved* by Kate Bowler.

"Gavotte I" from Suite No. 5 in C minor is played by **Susan Wegner**, cello

The Prayer of Dedication is by Carl Sagan.

The postlude is played by **Karen Kline**, piano.

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

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

Bill Kline will present "Pumps & Pipes: How I came to discover Houston, love my neighbors, and have more fun than the law allows."

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

Announcements

Honoring Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021, with Covenant Church

Covenant is offering two ways to participate in marking Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021:

Noon - 1:00PM in the color garden at Covenant ashes will be available in individual cups. You are invited to come by yourself or with your household and place ashes on your own forehead or on each other's foreheads if you come with your household. There will be members of the Worship Committee present. They will be masked and at a physical distance. If you come alone, these members will offer the ritual words of Ash Wednesday: "From ashes you have come and to ashes you will go." Please wear a mask and maintain 6ft of physical distance from everyone not in your household. If you arrive and there are many other people already present, please feel free to make use of the labyrinth or walk among the vegetable garden while you wait.

7:00PM - 8:00PM Zoom Ash Wednesday Service and small group discussion (using Zoom rooms). We will begin and end our time together with a ringing of the Buddhist singing bowl. We will hear scripture and poetry. We will all be invited to impose ashes on ourselves and/or on our households. Please use anything you have as "ashes" (you might use glitter, a washable marker, lipstick, dirt, etc). After the service we will transition into small groups using Zoom rooms. In our groups we will be asked to reflect on our experiences of Ash Wednesday in a pandemic and to simply be together. We will return to the large group for a final blessing.

The Zoom information is on our online gatherings page:

<https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>. You will need a password to open this webpage. Please let the office know if you need help with the password.

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

Calendar

Sun. Feb. 14	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Coffee Time, Zoom Meeting
Mon. Feb. 15	1:00 p.m.	Book Group, Zoom Meeting
Tue. Feb. 16	5:30 p.m.	Kid & Youth Group, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Feb. 17	12:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday, Ashes at Covenant
Wed. Feb. 17	7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Feb. 17	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Feb. 18	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Feb. 18	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Feb. 19	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

Andrew Bowen, Interim Organist

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

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