



*A Service of Worship for
Second Sunday of Lent
28 February 2021*

The gospel of Jesus
is not a rational concept
to be explained in a theory of salvation,
but a story about God's presence
in Jesus' solidarity with the oppressed,
which led to his death on the cross.

What is redemptive is the faith that
God snatches victory out of defeat,
life out of death,
and hope out of despair.

James H. Cone

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour
Silence is kept

Prelude

Gerald Near

“Jesus, Still Lead On”

Call to Worship

+Opening Sentences

**We are called on not to mirror
but to challenge culture,
not to sustain
but to upend the status quo,
and if that to some
sounds overly bold,
isn't it true that God
is always beckoning us
toward horizons
we aren't sure
we want to reach?**

Scripture Lesson

Mark 8:27-38

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

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

**Listen! I will be honest with you. I do not offer the old
smooth prizes, but I offer rough new prizes.**

These are the days that must happen to you:

You shall not heap up what is called riches,

You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve.

However sweet the laid-up stores.

However convenient the dwelling,

You shall not remain there.

However sheltered the port, and however calm the waters,

You shall not anchor there.

However welcome the hospitality that welcomes you,

You are permitted to receive it but a little while.

Afoot and lighthearted, take to the open road,

Healthy, free, the world before you,

The long brown path before you leading wherever you choose.

Say only to one another:

Camerado, I give you my hand!

I give you my love more precious than money,

I give you myself before preaching or law:

Will you give me yourself? Will you come travel with me?

Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

Words of Assurance

Music

“Forth in Thy Name”

Judy Davis Sclater

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Prayer

Invitation

⁺Prayer of Dedication

**May I, may you, may we
not die unlived lives.
May none of us live in fear
of falling or catching fire.**

**May we choose to inhabit our days,
to allow our living to open us,
to make us less afraid,
more accessible,
to loosen our hearts
until they become wings,
torches, promises.**

**May each of us choose to risk our significance;
to live so that what comes to us as seed
goes to the next as blossom
and that which comes to us as blossom,
goes on as fruit.**

^{*}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

**Through Jesus' life and teachings
we see that God's power consists
not in coercion but in God's willingness
to forgive and have mercy.**

**God wills nothing less than that
men and women should love their enemies
and forgive one another.**

**Jesus challenged both the militaristic
and ritualistic notions of what God's kingdom required.**

**He issued this challenge not only through his teaching
but through his life. The announcement of the reality
of the kingdom, its presence here and now,
is embodied in life.**

**In him we see that living a life of forgiveness and peace
is not an impossible ideal
but an opportunity now present.**

Benediction

Postlude

Old Southern Melody
arr. Cindy Berry

“The Wayfaring Stranger”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Amy Corron**.

The Lent banner was created by **Nancy Henry**.

The prelude is played by Andrew Bowen, organ.

The Call to Worship is from *War Talk* by Arundhati Roy.

The Opening Sentences are from *Credo* by William Sloane Coffin.

The Unison Confession is from “Song of the Open Road” by Walt Whitman.

The Covenant Singers sang “Forth in Thy Name,” directed by **Fran Avera**, from November 16, 2014.

The Prayer of Dedication is a prayer by Dawna Markova from *Prayers for a Thousand Years* edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon.

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](#).

This Sunday, Lisa Spiro will share her spiritual journey.

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

Announcements

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. 28	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Coffee Time, Zoom Meeting
Mon. Mar. 1	1:00 p.m.	Book Group, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Mar. 3	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar. 4	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar. 4	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Mar. 5	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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