



*Doubting Thomas* by Jesus Mafa

***A Service of Worship for  
Second Sunday of Eastertide  
11 April 2021***

Alone in the gospels,  
and in the whole of the Bible,  
Thomas is eternally remembered  
for the wrong distinction.

He doubted,  
and that has become his moniker,  
down through the ages:

Doubting Thomas.

But his doubt is far from unique,  
in fact it is universal among the disciples.

All of them doubted,  
every one hard pressed to recognize  
a reality different from the death they had witnessed.

Nancy Rockwell

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Ralph Vaughan Williams

“Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor”

Call to Worship

+Opening Sentences

**From the place where we are right  
flowers will never grow  
in the Spring.**

**The place where we are right  
is hard and trampled  
like a yard.**

**But doubts and loves  
dig up the world  
like a mole, a plough.  
And a whisper will be heard in the place  
where the ruined  
house once stood.**

Scripture Lesson

John 20:19-31

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Hymn

Ellacombe

“When Thomas Heard from Jesus”

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

**From arrogance, pompousness, and  
from thinking ourselves more important than we are,  
may some saving sense of humor liberate us.**

**For allowing ourselves to ridicule the faith of others,  
may we be forgiven.**

**From making war and calling it peace,  
special privilege and calling it justice,  
indifference and calling it tolerance,  
pollution and calling it progress,  
may we be cured.**

**God of our mixed up, tragic, aspiring, doubting,  
and insurgent lives,  
help us to be as good  
as in our hearts we have always wanted to be. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Music

W. Leonard Beck

“An Easter Carillon”

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Prayer

Invitation

†Prayer of Dedication

**All of us tend to hold certainty dearer than truth.  
We want to learn only what we already know;  
we want to become only what we already are.  
and doubts, Lord knows, are important  
for the development of religious faith if,  
with St. Augustine, you “believe in thinking  
and wish to think in believing.”**

**But if doubts are important, wonder is all-important.  
None of us scoffs at the stars, nor do we sneer at sunsets.  
Yet we depreciate so much else, it seems almost inevitable that,  
as civilization advances, the sense of wonder declines.  
We forget that both the tree of life and the tree of knowledge  
are deeply rooted in the soil of mystery.**

\*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

**It is more important  
to follow the way of Jesus  
than to believe or disbelieve  
the traditional claims about him.**

**The real task of Christianity today is the challenge  
not only to go on interpreting the world in the old way,  
but to start disturbing it with renewed power.**

Benediction

Postlude

John Rutter

“Toccata in Seven”

## **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **Paula Ortega**.

The prelude and postlude are played by Andrew Bowen, organ.

The Call to Worship is from *Singing the Living Tradition*, the 1993 Unitarian Universalist Hymnal.

The Opening Sentences are from Yehuda Amichai's poem, "From the Place Where We Are Right."

The hymn text is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Unison Confession is by Harry Meserve in *Singing the Living Tradition*, the 1993 Unitarian Universalist Hymnal.

"An Easter Carillon" is sung by The Covenant Singers, directed by David Lee.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *The Heart Is a Little to the Left* by William Sloane Coffin.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *Doubts and Loves: What Is Left of Christianity* by Richard Holloway.

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

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

The Adult Education class on Sunday, April 11, will feature a Zoom visit by [Amanda Yoder and Anne Slater](#) therapists who have developed and lead an innovative six-week program called [Examining Whiteness](#). This presentation will not be the first session in this program, but an introduction and explanation of what the program entails, described more fully [here](#). Those who choose to participate in the six sessions of the program would do so in groups of approximately ten people.

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

## Calendar

Sun. Apr. 11	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Coffee Time, Zoom Meeting
Mon. Apr. 12	1:00 p.m.	Book Group, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Apr. 14	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Apr. 15	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Apr. 15	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Apr. 16	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

Andrew Bowen, Interim 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.*