



*A Service of Worship for
Third Sunday of Eastertide
18 April 2021*

Let me admonish you,
first of all,
to go alone;
to refuse the good models,
even those which are sacred in the imagination...
and dare to love God without mediator or veil.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

C. Hubert H. Parry

“God Moves in a Mysterious Way”

Call to Worship

+Opening Sentences

**Today we give ourselves
to the movement of hope in the world
adding our small lives
to its great cause
and joining our voices
to its song
without giving up
or giving in.**

Scripture Lesson

Acts 3:12-26

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Foundation

“How Firm a Foundation”

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

**Authenticity is a collection of choices
that we have to make every day.
It's about the choice to show up and be real.
The choice to be honest.
The choice to let our true selves be seen.**

Words of Assurance

Prayer

Invitation

+Prayer of Dedication

**With this new day,
we open our eyes
and we pray:
God, inhabit our seeing.
Live in our looking.
Be our vision and our sight.
Illumine us, that we may perceive you,
know you, welcome you
in all the ways you go hiding
in this world.**

*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.*

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

You are welcome to use whatever elements you have for communion this Sunday.

Music

Everett Titcomb

“O Love, How Deep”

+Affirmation of Faith

The role of Jesus as God-Incarnate was to liberate the oppressed: Jesus Christ is God God's-self coming into the very depths of human existence for the sole purpose of striking off the chains of slavery, thereby freeing humans from ungodly principalities and powers that hinder the relationship with God.

Benediction

Postlude

J.S. Bach

“In Thee is Joy”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Paula Ortega**.

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

The Call to Worship is “Blessing for Knowing” by Jan Richardson.

The Opening Sentences are by Jeremy Rutledge.

The Unison Confession is from *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* by Brené Brown.

“O Love, How Deep” is sung by The Covenant Singers, November 25, 2018, Fran Avera, directing.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *In the Sanctuary of Women: A Companion for Reflection and Prayer* by Jan Richardson.

The Affirmation of Faith is from *Black Theology and Black Power* by James H. Cone.

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

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

For the Adult Education class on Sunday, April 18, Richard Johnson will talk to us about sustainability. As his Rice bio makes clear, he is eminently qualified to share his knowledge and wisdom with us. Richard Johnson is the director of the Administrative Center for Sustainability and Energy Management at Rice. In this role he leads Rice's sustainability program and also oversees a team of energy managers and analysts. Richard holds appointments as a Professor in the Practice of Environmental Studies in Sociology and as an Adjunct Lecturer in Civil and Environmental Engineering. Richard also serves as the Co-Director of the Environmental Studies Program. He has taught over 20 classes at Rice. He is also the former President of the Board of the Houston Farmers' Market, now the Rice University Farmers Market.

Last Sunday, April 11, therapists Anne Slater and Amanda Young spoke about Examining Whiteness, a program they have developed that comprises six sessions of small groups (6-10 members) who, using various materials and methods, will develop a deeper understanding of myriad attitudes and behaviors that contribute to unequal and harmful treatment of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). The class was recorded, so anyone who did not watch but wish to learn more about this program can find it through our website. Anyone interested in participating in this program should notify Bill Martin at wcm@rice.edu.

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website: [Covenant Gatherings](#)

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. 18	9:00 a.m.	Worship Online
	10:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Coffee Time, Zoom Meeting
Mon. Apr. 19	1:00 p.m.	Book Group, Zoom Meeting
Wed. Apr. 21	7:00 p.m.	Covenant Singers, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Apr. 22	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Apr. 22	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Apr. 23	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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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.