



*A Service of Worship for
Third Sunday of Lent
20 March 2022*

Welcome to this place.
Here we seek justice and truth.
Here we celebrate life and contemplate mystery.
Here we find healing and wholeness.
Welcome.

Raymond Nasemann

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Hermann Schroeder
(1904-1984)

“Prelude V”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #303

Cwm Rhondda

“For the Healing of the Nations”

**For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
to a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word,
help us rise and pledge our word.**

**Lead us forward into freedom; from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase,
fear will die and hope increase.**

**All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned;
pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life’s brief span,
may we hallow life’s brief span.**

**You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind,
that by our response and service earth its destiny may find,
earth its destiny may find.**

*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

+Opening Sentences

Why have we come together?

Not to escape life, but to see life as it really is.

Not to avoid reality, but to confront reality and affirm Ultimate Reality.

We gather to hear the Word that come what may, we can live.

And to embrace life in all its ambiguity - sorrow and joy, healing and hurt, suffering and love.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 55:1-13

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

+Response:

Au Clair de la Lune

Jesus hands were kind hands, doing good to all;

Healing pain and sickness, blessing children small.

Let me watch you Jesus, till I'm gentle too,

Till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

O Spirit of Life and Renewal,

We have wintered enough, mourned enough, oppressed ourselves enough.

**Our souls are too long cold and buried, our dreams all but forgotten,
our hopes unheard.**

We are waiting to rise from the dead.

**In this, the season of steady rebirth, we awaken to the power so abundant,
so holy, that returns each year through earth and sky.**

We will find our hearts again, and our good spirits.

**We will love, and believe, and give and wonder,
and feel again the eternal powers.**

**The flow of life moves ever onward through one faithful spring,
and another, and now another.**

May we be forever grateful.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

Music

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

“O Come, Ye Who are Thirsty”

O Come, ye who are thirsty, O come ye to the waters.
Come drink; your soul shall live; I will be with you.
O Come ye with no money, my food is freely offered.
O come, ye who are thirsty; I will be with you.

Silent Reflection

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Communion Hymn #298

In Babilone

“There’s a Wideness In God’s Mercy” Verse 1

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

If you would like to take communion, please move outside. Deacons will be serving communion on the garden side and labyrinth side of the church. Our communion elements include both wine and water and gluten free and vegan crackers. All are always welcome to communion at Covenant.

Communion Hymn #298

In Babilone

“There’s a Wideness In God’s Mercy” Verse 2

Prayer

Invitations

Offering

Offertory

Cesar Franck
(1822-1890)

“Panis Angelicus”

+Prayer of Dedication

**Our flourishing as human beings
is dependent upon
aligning ourselves with the law of love,
which stretches from mother love
to a social manifestation
in nonviolent action for justice.**

*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

In the beginning and in the end, God is relation:

God is not a self-contained entity or a self-absorbed being.

**God is love—the constant, immediate yearning and effort to
make mutuality incarnate throughout the cosmos.**

God is the commitment, against all odds, to justice with compassion.

**God is the Spirit celebrating mutuality,
the Energy generating justice,
the Root of compassion,
the Power in yearning,
the effort, the commitment.**

+Closing Hymn

Finlandia

“This Is My Song”

**This is my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for lands afar and mine.
This is my home, the country where my heart is,
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine.
But other hearts in other lands are beating,
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.**

**My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
And sunlight streams on cloverleaf and pine.
But other lands have sunlight too, and clover,
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine.
O hear my song, thou God of all the nations,
A song of peace for their land and for mine.**

Benediction

Postlude

Kenneth Leighton
(1929-1988)

“Choral Prelude on Rockingham”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Robert Carter**.

The Call to Worship is from *If Darwin Prayed* by Bruce Sanguin.

The Opening Sentences are from a Covenant Order of Worship, October 12, 1980.

The Unison Confession is from *Singing the Living Tradition, the 1993 Unitarian Universalist hymnal* by Jane Rzepka.

The text of "For the Healing of the Nations" is by Fred Kaan, 1965.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Jesus Was a Liberal: Reclaiming Christianity for All* by Scotty McClennan.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *Saving Jesus From Those Who Are Right: Rethinking What it Means to Be a Christian* by Carter Heyward.

The text of "This Is My Song" is by Lloyd Stone, 1934.

Education 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Adult Education

Ginger Clarkson from Insight Meditation Houston will be speaking about: "Thich Nhat Hanh: Engaged Buddhism and Interbeing". She will lead a small meditation period at the end of the hour. Her bio can be found here: <https://insighthouston.org/about-us/>

- Ann Stout

Children & Youth Sunday School

We will have two options for Sunday School: virtual from 10-10:30, and in-person in the Huff Fellowship Hall from 10:30-11 (masks required). This way, everyone can take part in the fun.

- Trena' Jamison

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website:

<https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>

Announcements

- April 9 Facility Work Day
- April 10 Easter Egg Stuffing with Youth after Church
- April 16 Annual Easter Egg Hunt

We are approaching the annual Children and Youth auction. If you have any handmade items or any experiences you would like to donate, please feel free to reach out to me or anyone on the Children and Youth committee.

- Trena' Jamison

Calendar

Sun, Mar 20	9:00 am	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	10:00 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Zoom
	10:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
Tue. Mar 22	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar 24	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar 24	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant

Helpful Information

Visitor's Card: If you're a visitor with us, please submit a [Visitor's 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

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Christopher Teel, Organist

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