



*A Service of Worship for
Ascension Sunday
29 May 2022*

Stay *A Blessing for Ascension Day*

I know how your mind
rushes ahead
trying to fathom
what could follow this.

What will you do;
where will you go
how will you live?

You will want
to outrun the grief.

You will want
to keep turning toward
the horizon,
watching for what was lost
to come back,
to return to you
and never leave again.

For now
hear me when I say
all you need to do
is to still yourself
is to turn toward one another
is to stay.

Wait
and see what comes
to fill
the gaping hole
in your chest.

Wait with your hands open
to receive what could never come
except to what is empty
and hollow.

You cannot know it now,
cannot even imagine
what lies ahead,
but I tell you
the day is coming
when breath will
fill your lungs
as it never has before
and with your own ears
you will hear words
coming to you new
and startling.

You will dream dreams
and you will see the world
ablaze with blessing.

Wait for it.
Still yourself.
Stay.

Jan Richardson

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Christopher Teel
(b. 1971)

“Improvisation”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #361

Foundation

“How Firm a Foundation”

+Opening Sentences

**May it come soon
to the hungry
to the weeping
to those who thirst for your justice,
to those who have waited centuries
for a truly human life.
Grant us the patience to smooth the way
on which your kingdom comes to us.
Grant us hope that we may not weary
in proclaiming and working for it,
despite so many conflicts, threats and shortcomings.
Grant us a clear vision
that in the hour of our history
we may see the horizon,
and know the way in which your Kingdom comes to us.**

Scripture Lesson

John 14:15-29 and Isaiah 40:27-31

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

Time for Children

+Response:

Lasst uns erfreuen

In every land begin the song, To every land the strains belong:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

In cheerful sound all voices raise, And fill the world with joyful praise.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

Faith is the quality that allows us to find a way to go on, to feel empowered, to—no matter what—keep on trying. This is not a sentimental faith that everything will be just fine, according to our wishes or our timetable. Rather, it is an awakened faith that gives us the courage to go into the unknown, the remembrance that nothing is fixed, and the understanding that as long as we are alive, possibility is alive. It is the power of faith that inspires us to step forward into the center of our lives—to participate, to link up, to reach out to others and let others reach out to us, to work for a better world. And it is the vitality of faith that tells us, however easy it is to forget or be overcome by fear, that the place for communicating, for loving, for sheltering, for trying, is right where we are.

Words of Assurance

Music

Philip Dietterich
(b.1931)

“Come Down, O Love Divine”

Come down, O Love divine,
seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn
till earthly passions turn

to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

And so the yearning strong
with which the soul will long
shall far surpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace
till they become the place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

+Hymn #282

Wer nur den lieben Gott

“If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee”

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

David Briggs
(b. 1962)

“Ricerca: Llanfair”

+Prayer of Dedication

**Creator, open our hearts
to peace and healing between all people**

**Creator, open our hearts
to provide and protect for all children of the earth.**

**Creator, open our hearts
to respect the earth, and all the gifts of the earth.**

**Creator, open our hearts
to end exclusion, violence, and fear among all.**

Thank you for the gifts of this day and every day.

+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

...a promise defines the empty space between an insufficient present and a longed-for future – this is the space where creativity happens. A promise-maker sends the promise forth and anchors it in that longed-for future, without knowing how the fulfillment will come about. A promise is always accompanied by the risk of failure and the willingness to be surprised.

+Closing Hymn #281

Cwm Rhondda

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

Benediction

Postlude

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

“Today, God's Son Triumphs”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Sally Ridgway**.

Our guest proclaimer this morning is **Rev. Robert Carter**.

Deacon **John Preston** gives the pastoral prayer.

The Call to Worship is "Love Abides" by Barbara Pescan

The Opening Sentences are "Prayer for Nicaragua" in *Imaging the Word*, Volume 3.

The Unison Confession is by Sharon Salzberg.

The Prayer of Dedication is from the Native American, Micmac (Mi'kmaq) Tribe, by Alycia Longriver.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Martin Buber.

Education 9:30 - 10:20 a.m.

Adult Education - Adult Education will not meet this Sunday due to the Memorial Day holiday.

Children & Youth Education - Room B, 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building

Children and Youth Announcements

As we are getting ready to close out the school year, we would like to take the time to celebrate the graduates of our church. We will acknowledge our graduates and offer them a gift of celebration on June 5 during worship. If you or someone you know from Covenant is graduating, please reach out and let me know. My email is trena@covenanthouston.org and my number is 832-273-3895.

- June 5: Graduates of Covenant Celebration
- June 5: Youth Moving Forward Planning Meeting. If you are available, please join us. It will be a great conversation.
- June 11: Since we will not be attending Youth camp this year, we have planned a youth lock-in at the church.
 - We are planning a pool party for the Youth this summer as well. So please be on the lookout for some of that information.
- July 18-22: Children's Camp will take place. The cost for Camp this year is \$300. Children's Camp will occur at Disciple's Crossing in Athens, TX.

- Trena' Jamison, Director of Children & Youth

Announcements

All Church Mission/Vision Workshop will now be Saturday, June 18 from 9am to 11am. Please mark your calendars for that date and time and continue to think about your hopes and dreams for our wonderful congregation.

With anticipation,

- Laura Mayo and the Church Council

Calendar

Sun, May 29	9:30 am	Adult Education will not meet this Sunday due to the Memorial Day holiday.
	9:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Room B, 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building
	9:30 am	Inquirer's Class, Sanctuary
	10:20 am	Hospitality, Huff Fellowship Hall
	10:40 am	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	11:00 am	Worship in-person and via live-stream
Tue, May 31	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom
Thur, June 2	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom
Thur, June 2	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary

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 open Monday through Friday from 10am to 2pm.

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

Brian Buck, Facilities Coordinator

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

Pursuant to Section 30.06, Penal Code (trespass by license holder with a concealed handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a concealed handgun.

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.