



*A Service of Worship for
19 June 2022*

You have made your dwelling
among us, God,
and you are present
wherever people live—
we cling to this grace.

Let us honor your presence
and make us wise and strong enough
to build each other up
into your city on earth,
the body of Christ,
a world fit to live in,
today and forever.

Huub Oosterhuis

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour
Silence is kept

Prelude

Ralph Vaughn Williams
(1872-1958)

“Rhosymedre”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn

Ein Feste Burg

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

**A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Protecting us with staff and rod,
And power all-prevailing.
What if the nations rage
And surging seas rampage;
What though the mountains fall,
The Lord is God of all;
The Lord of hosts is with us.**

**The waters of God's goodness flow
Throughout the holy city,
And gladden hearts of those who know
God's tenderness and pity.
Though nations stand unsure,
God's kingdom shall endure;
God's power shall remain,
And peace shall ever reign,
The Lord of hosts is with us.**

**Behold what wondrous deeds of peace
God does for our salvation;
God knows our wars and makes them cease
In every land and nation.
The warrior's spear and lance
Are splintered by God's glance;
The guns and nuclear might
Stand withered in God's sight;
The Lord of hosts is with us.**

*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

[†]Opening Sentences

**Our God is the One who comes to us
in a burning bush,
in an angel's song,
in a newborn child.**

**Our God is the One who cannot be found
locked in the church,
not even in the sanctuary.**

**Our God will be where God will be
with no constraints,
no predictability.**

**Our God lives where our God lives,
and destruction has no power
and even death cannot stop
the living.**

**Our God will be born where God will be born,
but there is no place to look for the One who comes to us.**

**When God is ready
God will come
even to a godforsaken place
like a stable in Bethlehem.**

**Watch
for you know not when
God comes.**

**Watch, that you might be found
whenever
wherever
God comes.**

Scripture Lesson

1 Kings 8:22-23, 41-43

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

†Response:

Don Schlosser

“One Spirit Sends Us Onward”

MERLE'S TUNE

One Spir - it sends us on - ward in wit-ness to the earth,
as min - is - ters of jus - tice and mid-wives for re - birth:
to lead the church with cour - age on ven-tures new - be - gun,
re - formed yet still re - form - ing, 'til God's whole will is done.

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Spirit of life and love, we have gathered here in search of answers to hard questions.
We have come in search of understanding, in search of community.
We have come in search of hope and healing.**

**Let this be a place not only of searching, but of discovery.
Let this be a place not only of learning, but of wisdom.
Let this be a place not only of meeting, but of connection.
And let this be a place where healing fosters giving and hope fosters service.**

**This is our prayer: that we may create here a circle of love,
ever expanding, ever growing, as we seek to know you,
the source of our being.**

Amen.

Words of Assurance

Music

Christopher Teel
(b. 1971)

“Improvisation”

Silent Reflection

Prayer

Offering

Offertory

Jehan Alain
(1911-1940)

“Ballade en mode Phrygien”

+Prayer of Dedication

**We have entered into a new consciousness of God...
we are now God’s dwelling place.**

**There is no supernatural deity beyond the sky working miracles.
There is only a God-infused humanity through whom
the Source of Life, the Source of Love, and the Ground of Being lives.**

**We are the God-bearers of the world.
We must rise to this new vocation.
For in each of us is the promise of “Emmanuel,”
which means God with us.**

**The only way that God can be with us
now and through the ages
is for each of us to allow God
to live and love through us,
through our humanity.**

*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

Communion Hymn #291

“O God of Earth and Altar”

Llangloffan

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.

+Affirmation of Faith

**Why do you go to the forest in search of the Divine?
God lives in all, and abides with you too.
As fragrance dwells in a flower, or reflection in a mirror,
so the Divine dwells inside everything;
seek therefore in your own heart.**

+Closing Hymn #297

Vicar

“O God of Every Shining Constellation”

Benediction

Postlude

Samuel Scheidt
(1587-1654)

“Echo”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Jim Avera**.

Deacon **Jay Hooker** offers the pastoral prayer.

The Call to Worship is from Timothy Haley in *Rejoice Together: Prayers, Meditations, and Other Readings*, edited by Helen Pickett.

The text of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" is by Omer Westendorf, 1964, except verse 1, lines 1-2, which are by Martin Luther.

The Opening sentences are from “Kneeling in Bethlehem” by Ann Weems.

The Unison Confession is a prayer of Sue Ayer from the *1997 Unitarian Universalist Ministers’ Association Worship Materials Collection*.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from *The Sins of Scripture: Exposing the Bible’s Text of Hate to Reveal the God of Love* by John Shelby Spong.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Tegh Bahadur, of the Sikh religion, as reprinted from *Singing the Living Tradition*.

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

Adult Education - Sorrow and Joy: Alvin Ailey's Revelations

Sunday marks the 157th anniversary of Juneteenth. Celebrations throughout the United States have evolved over the years, but original observances by black Americans included prayer meetings where spirituals were sung.

For the next two Sundays, Linda Phenix will lead education hour with a focus on choreographer Alvin Ailey and his signature ballet *Revelations*. In 1958, Ailey founded his dance company in New York. Two years later, he embarked on a mission to create *Revelations*. Utilizing African-American spirituals, song-sermons, gospel songs and holy blues, he created a *ballet* that is the most widely seen modern dance work in the world.

Alvin Ailey was born in Rogers, Texas in 1931. Due to the Great Depression and racial segregation laws, his young mother struggled to find work which forced the family to move often. Ailey referred to those times as the nomadic years. No matter where they lived in Texas, Sunday was churchgoing day. He fell in love with the music played and sung at black church services. Songs like "I've Been Buked and I've Been Scorned" and "Wade in the Water" evoked profound emotions in Alvin.

This Sunday, Linda will share some of backstory of how *Revelations* was developed and talk about Ailey's brilliance at synthesizing music, dance, costumes, setting and lighting into a piece that continues to hold a prominent place in black culture and American modern dance. Video excerpts from a 2020 performance of *Revelations* by the Ailey Company will be shown and followed by facilitated discussion.

- Linda Phenix

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

Children and Youth Announcements

- TBA: 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 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

Houston PRIDE Celebration

Covenant's PRIDE Committee is excited to promote the return of the annual **Houston PRIDE Celebration on Saturday, June 25, 2022**. Although Covenant will not have an official float or parade entry this year, we do want to attend as a group to show our enthusiastic support. Details will follow, but we will likely gather at a member's nearby apartment and walk over together--ideally wearing Covenant t-shirts so that we can be a visible presence. Mark your calendars now to join the celebration!

Calendar

Sun, June 19	9:30 am	Adult Education, Adult Education classroom on the 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building
	9:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Room B, 2nd floor of the Huff Fellowship Hall Building
	10:20 am	Hospitality, Huff Fellowship Hall
	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Sanctuary
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
Tue, May 17	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom
Thur, May 19	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom

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
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

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