



*A Service of Worship for  
15 August 2021*

When I see them,  
the children of my people,  
the world without voice:  
    emaciated,  
    bloated belly,  
    oversized head  
and, very often,  
empty, left behind,  
as if it were missing--  
it is Christ whom I meet.

Dom Helder Camara

To know God means to know what has to be done.

Emmanuel Levinas

I am what I do.

C. S. Lewis

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Erik Satie

“Gymnopedie No. 1”

Call to Worship

\*+Opening Hymn #343

Beecher

“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”

+Opening Sentences

**We are all of us more mystics  
than we believe or choose to believe—  
life is complicated enough as it is,  
after all.  
We have seen more than we let on,  
even to ourselves.  
Through some moment of beauty or pain,  
some sudden turning of our lives,  
we catch glimmers at least  
of what the saints are blinded by;  
only then, unlike the saints,  
we tend to go on as though nothing has happened.  
To go on as though something has happened,  
even though we are not sure what it was  
or just where we are supposed to go with it,  
is to enter the dimension of life  
that religion is a word for.**

Scripture Lesson

Proverbs 9:1-6, 13-18; Ephesians 5:15-20

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

*\*Ushers will seat latecomers*

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

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

**I find some comfort in our communal clumsiness.  
We each stumble along the uncharted path.  
Practicing with others is a useful antidote  
to the isolation of insight.  
We walk together sharing the silence,  
giving each other support  
as we investigate our lives.  
We forget and remember, moment after moment,  
each of us making an effort  
to deepen our capacities  
for observation of self and other.  
By learning in community, we practice breathing  
in a circle of friends and companions.  
In this steady silence I ask for help to walk more gracefully,  
for patience to cultivate an attentive heart.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Après un Reve”

Gabriel Faure

Proclamation

Silent Reflection

Hymn #405

“What Does the Lord Require”

Sharpthorne

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Ludwig van Beethoven

“Bagatelle, Op.119, No.11”

+Prayer of Dedication

**May I, may you, may we  
not die unlived lives.  
May none of us live in fear  
of falling or catching fire.  
May we choose to inhabit our days,  
to allow our living to open us,  
to make us less afraid,  
more accessible,  
to loosen our hearts  
until they become wings,  
torches, promises.  
May each of us choose to risk our significance;  
to live so that what comes to us as seed  
goes to the next as blossom  
and that which comes to us as blossom,  
goes on as fruit.**

+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

**So what gives our lives meaning?  
Here is my short list.  
Kindness does. Also forgiveness.  
Generosity. Enthusiasm.  
Ecstasy. Empathy.  
Above all love, given and received.  
For any of these things,  
one minute is not a bad start.  
Invest at least a few minutes  
in saving your life before you lose it.  
Finish a good project. Start a new one.  
Ponder the cosmos. Shake your head in wonder.  
Tell someone you love them. Kindness never hurts.**

+Closing Hymn #419

“How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord”

Repton

Benediction

Postlude

“We Are Called”

David Haas

### **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **Van Wheeler**.

The guest proclaimer is **Tim Wegner**

The prelude, offertory, and postlude are played by **Karen Klein**, piano.

The Call to Worship is adapted from *The Magnificent Defeat* by Frederick Buechner.

The Opening Sentences are from “Summons to Pilgrimage” by Frederick Buechner in *A Room Called Remember: Uncollected Pieces*.

The Unison Confession is from *The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees* by Stephanie Kaza.

“Après un Reve” is played by **Susan Wegner**, cello; and **Karen Kline**, piano.

The Prayer of Dedication is a prayer by Dawna Markova from *Prayers for a Thousand Years* edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon.

The Affirmation of Faith is from *Lifecraft: The Art of Meaning in the Everyday* by Forrest Church.

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

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

Bill Kline will add a Part II to his spiritual journey narrative with “Six Moments in Israel - Encounters with the Bible Through My iPhone Camera.”

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

### **Announcements**

#### **Sunday schedule for this Sunday:**

Adult Education (Zoom) 9am

Worship in-person (Covenant) 11am

Worship live-stream 11am (<https://youtu.be/aLSFXDDAXvg>)

### **Calendar**

|              |            |  |
|--------------|------------|--|
| Sun. Aug 15  | 9:00 a.m.  | Adult Education, Zoom Meeting          |
|              | 11:00 a.m. | Worship in-person, Covenant            |
|              | 11:00 a.m. | Worship live-stream                    |
|              | 1:00 p.m.  | Youth Pool Party, Sanborn’s Pool       |
| Mon. Aug 16  | 1:00 p.m.  | No Book Group, Zoom Meeting            |
| Thur. Aug 19 | 10:00 a.m. | Community Group, Zoom Meeting          |
| Thur. Aug 19 | 8:00 p.m.  | Community Group, Zoom Meeting          |
| Fri. Aug 20  | 1:00 p.m.  | Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting |

### **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

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

*4949 Caroline Street*

*Houston, Texas 77004*

*713-668-8830*

*[office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:office@covenanthouston.org)*

*[www.covenanthouston.org](http://www.covenanthouston.org)*

*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.*