



*A Service of Worship for  
29 August 2021*

One of the most pertinent of all delusions  
is the conviction that the source of our dissatisfaction  
lies outside ourselves.

B. Alan Wallace

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Traditional African American Spiritual/Giamanco  
“Standing in the Need of Prayer”

Call to Worship

\*+Opening Hymn

“O God of All the Nations”

Llangloffan

**O God of all the nations, your ancient prophets saw  
That kings and institutions are not above the law.  
Integrity is precious, and truth will one day stand;  
Your way is peace and justice, and love is your command.**

**O God, when times are troubled, when lies are seen as truth,  
When power-hungry people draw praise and not reproof,  
When greed is seen as greatness, when justice is abused,  
We pray that those who lead us will know what they must choose.**

**We pray they'll gather wisdom and lift up high ideals,  
To guide our struggling nation along a path that heals.  
We pray they'll have the vision to value each good law,  
To put aside ambition, to seek the best for all.**

**O God of all the nations, may those who lead us see  
That justice is your blessing, that truth will set us free.  
Give all of us the courage to seek the nobler way,  
So in this land we cherish, the good will win the day.**

+Opening Prayer

**To be fully human, fully myself,  
To accept all that I am, all that you envision,  
This is my prayer.  
Walk with me out to the rim of life,  
Beyond security.  
Take me to the exquisite edge of courage  
And release me to become.**

*\*Ushers will seat latecomers*

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Time for Children

\*+Response:

Jesus Loves Me

*Jesus loves me still today, Walking with me on my way,  
Wanting as a friend to give Peace and love to all who live.  
Yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus loves me,  
Yes, Jesus loves me, The Bible tells me so.*

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Divine Grace,  
Forgive us for all times when we are so hard on ourselves:  
when we  
cannot distinguish between failing and being a failure,  
cannot differentiate between asking for help and being helpless,  
cannot discern the difference between self-evaluation and self-condemnation.**

**Forgive us, too, for all times when we are so easy on ourselves:  
when we  
excuse inactivity in the name of indecision,  
justify dishonesty by calling it necessity,  
rationalize the way we are out of fear for who we could be.**

**Give us the courage to see our lives  
in the true light of your grace,  
in which we are  
both judged and loved. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Turn Thee to Me”

Antonin Dvorak

Proclamation

Silent Reflection

Hymn #316

“Breathe On Me, Breath of God”  
**Verses 1 - 3**

Trentham

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

G. F. Handel

“O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”

+Prayer of Dedication

**We confess that we poison ourselves with anger,  
bitterness,  
regret;**

**We confess that we cripple ourselves with excuses,  
complaining,  
procrastination.**

**We repent.**

**We are ready to look at the most painful parts of our lives and live.**

**We are ready to answer the hardest question--  
the question of whether we are willing to change.**

**Show us.**

**Ask us.**

**Forgive us. Amen.**

+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

**Our shared search  
is part of the human condition.  
Some of us know what we seek  
and others stumble along unsure.**

**Yet we all come to this place  
with a yearning—  
to find or make meaning,  
to live conscious lives,  
to grow in kindness,  
to renew and remake the world  
in the image of love.**

**Today we affirm  
not that we are all the same  
or that we know exactly what we are doing  
but that we are resolved  
to ask, seek, and knock  
together.**

**Today we affirm  
that whatever God is  
is revealed to us slowly,  
in increments,  
patches and scraps of light  
pricking the shadows  
glimpsed only  
by the wide-eyed  
and the curious.**

+Closing Hymn #298

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

In Babilone

Benediction

Postlude

Southern Harmony/Berry

“Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

### **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **Lisa Spiro**.

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

The Call to Worship is from *Hope on a Tightrope: Words and Wisdom* by Cornel West.

The text of "O God of All the Nations" is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Opening Prayer is from *When the Heart Waits* by Sue Monk Kidd.

The Unison Confession is by Jay Leach.

“Turn Thee to Me” is sung by **Eric Avera**, tenor.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *An Improbable Gift of Blessing* by Maren C. Tirabassi and Joan Jordan Grant.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Jeremy Rutledge.

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

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

The adult education class for Sunday, August 29, will feature a second lecture by UH religion professor Jesse Rainbow, sharing fascinating information and insights about the kings of Israel and Judah. In his lecture on August 22, pertinent in a politically polarized time such as our own, he raised the question of whether Manasseh, the king of Judah described in II Kings 21 as a singularly wicked ruler, may have gotten a somewhat worse treatment than he deserved because of the prejudice(s) of the biblical writer(s). This is a pertinent question in our open time, when viewers of Fox News, MSNBC, and PBS/NPR are exposed to differing versions of current events. Professor Rainbow will pick up on this theme this coming Sunday.

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

### Calendar

Sun. Aug 29	9:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 a.m.	Worship live-stream
Mon. Aug 30	1:00 p.m.	Book Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Sept 2	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Sept 2	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Sept 3	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.*