



*A Service of Worship for
12 September 2021*

The scandal is that the gospel means liberation,
that this liberation comes to the poor,
and that it gives them the strength
and the courage to break the conditions of servitude.
- James H. Cone

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

arr. Vernon Charter

“Praise to the Lord”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn

Lobe Den Herren

“God, May Your Justice Roll Down”

**God, may your justice roll down like the waters you send here,
And may your righteousness flow like a stream without end here!
Praying this prayer, many have struggled and dared,
All for the world you intend here.**

**Christ, we give thanks for past saints who renewed education,
Freed the oppressed, brought your healing and fought segregation.
Savior and Lord, great were the risks they endured,
Bearing your hope and salvation.**

**We as your church now remember these stories of others
And pray your Spirit will send us, as your sons and daughters.
Show us the way we, too, can serve you each day
Till justice rolls down like waters.**

+Opening Prayer

**The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom without weapons,
without oppressive powers,
without torture, without hunger,
without exploitation of individuals and peoples,
without racism,
without an irresponsible use of the goods we are given.**

**It is a Kingdom of full life,
faith, justice, peace, love,
of correct distribution of production,
of real possibilities for every human being.**

**Ushers will seat latecomers*

+Please stand in body or spirit

**This is what we should look towards
and we have no right as Christians
to settle for anything else.**

Scripture Lesson

Mark 8:27-38

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

**Our strategy should be not only to confront empire,
but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen.
To shame it. To mock it.
With our art, our music, our literature,
our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance,
our sheer relentlessness – and our ability to tell our own stories.
Stories that are different from the ones we're being brainwashed to believe.**

**The corporate revolution will collapse
if we refuse to buy what they are selling –
their ideas, their version of history, their wars,
their weapons, their notion of inevitability.**

**Remember this: We are many and they are few.
They need us more than we need them.**

**Another world is not only possible, she is on her way.
On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Intermezzo in A Major, Opus 118, No. 2”

Johannes Brahms

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn #394

“There Is a Balm in Gilead”

Balm In Gilead

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

“Sarabanda” in G minor

Domenico Zipoli

+Prayer of Dedication

**To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic.
It is based on the fact that human history
is a history not only of cruelty,
but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness.
What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives.
If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something.
If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—
where people have behaved magnificently this gives us
the energy to act, and at least the possibility
of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.
And if we do act, in however small a way,
we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future.
The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think
human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us,
is itself a marvelous victory.**

+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

**I can't reconcile the way that the world is jolted
by events that are wonderful and terrible,
the gorgeous and the tragic.
Except that I am beginning to believe
that these opposites do not cancel each other out.
I see a middle aged woman in the waiting room of the cancer clinic,**

**her arms wrapped around the frail frame of her son.
She squeezes him tightly, oblivious to the way he looks down at her sheepishly.
He laughs after a minute, a hostage to her impervious love.
Joy persists somehow and I soak it in.
The horror of cancer has made everything seem like it is painted in bright colors.
I think the same thoughts again and again.
Life is so beautiful. Life is so hard.**

+Closing Hymn #450

“O Day of Peace”

Jerusalem

Benediction

Postlude

“Be Thou My Vision”

arr. Heather Sorenson

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Linda Phenix**.

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

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

The text of "God May Your Justice Roll Down" is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Opening Prayer is adapted from the *Corrymeela Worship Book*.

The Unison Confession is by Arundhati Roy from *War Talk*.

“Intermezzo in A Major” by Johannes Brahms is played by **Karen Kline**, piano.

The pastoral prayer is given by Deacon **Ann Stout**.

The Prayer of Dedication is from “The Optimism of Uncertainty” by Howard Zinn.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Kate Bowler from *Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved*.

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 presenter on September 12 will be Madelyn Washington, music and performing arts librarian at the University of Houston. Ms. Washington is coordinating and leading anti-racist work and reading groups for the University of Houston arts college. While librarian at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Washington observed many students creating protest music. Understanding that today's activists believe that the political is social and cultural, Washington encourages library patrons to become multi-literate citizens. It is her hope that they may effectively engage each other, in high-quality, equitable, and effective participation in digital-age civics, activism, and politics. Washington's research interests combine her professional life as a librarian and performing artist. She is a working salsa musician, and has been part of a spirituals group. She also has a research specialty in Afro-Cuban music. Washington has assembled many documents and other information on the African American composer William Grant Still (1895-1978). Still wrote symphonies, choral music, and operas, receiving commissions from the major symphony orchestras of the day. Washington will talk to us about William Grant Still and his work with Harlem Renaissance poets. She will also talk about Rhythm and Blues musicians' response to Jim Crow restrictions.

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. Sept 12	9:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 a.m.	Worship live-stream
Mon. Sept 13	1:00 p.m.	No Book Group
Thur. Sept 16	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Sept 16	7:15 p.m.	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Thur. Sept 16	8:00 p.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Sept 17	1:00 p.m.	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Sat. Sept 18	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Family Gathering with new Children & Youth Director, Covenant
Sun. Sept 19	After Worship	Meet new Children & Youth Director, Color Garden

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.

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

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Jodi Bash, Director of Communication

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

David Lee, Director of Music

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

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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.