



*A Service of Worship for  
19 September 2021*

**Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself  
that I am growing older and will someday be old.  
Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something  
on every subject and on every occasion.  
Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs.  
Make me thoughtful but not moody,  
helpful but not bossy.  
With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all,  
but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.**

**Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details;  
give me wings to get to the point.  
Seal my lips on my aches and pains.  
They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them  
is becoming sweeter as the years go by.  
I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains,  
but help me to endure them with patience.**

**I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility  
and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash  
with the memories of others.  
Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.**

**Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint –  
some of them are so hard to live with –  
but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.  
Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places,  
and talents in unexpected people.  
And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so. Amen.**

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ring in the hour  
Silence is kept

Prelude

J.S. Bach

“Menuet I from Partita No. 1”

Call to Worship

\*+Opening Hymn #439

St. Peter

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

+Opening Prayer

**O God, empty me of angry judgments,  
and aching disappointments,  
and anxious trying,  
and breathe into me  
something like quietness  
and confidence,  
that the lion and lamb in me  
may lie down together  
and be led by a trust  
as straightforward as a little child.**

**Catch my pride and doubt off guard  
that, at least for the moment,  
I may sense your presence  
and your caring,  
and be surprised  
by a sudden joy  
rising in me now  
to sustain me in the coming then.**

Scripture Lesson

Mark 9: 30-37

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

*\*Ushers will seat latecomers*

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

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

**I seek you, God, in the spaces of my life.  
The spaces between what I've done  
and what I've left undone.  
The spaces between my convictions  
and my actions,  
the spaces between all that I hoped to do,  
and what I've actually done.  
I come with humility,  
knowing that I can't always see  
the way I've disappointed,  
nor can I always see  
the long-term effects of the good I've done.  
This is a prayer for the road ahead,  
which is an empty space stretching before me.  
Fill me with a burning compassion  
for my brothers and sisters,  
a love that will not let me go.  
Give me courage to give boldly,  
love simply,  
hope deeply,  
risk greatly.  
My light is small,  
my time is short,  
but let it shine for you,  
always, ever, all for you.  
Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Give Me the Lowest Place”

Thomas Avinger

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Hymn

Beach Spring

“Who is Greatest in the Kingdom?”

**“Who is greatest in the kingdom? Who among us is the best?”**  
**The disciples were debating: “In God's reign, who will be blest?”**  
**Jesus, had those twelve forgotten? Faithful living has a cost —**  
**And to journey where you'd lead them, they would journey to the cross.**

**“Who is greatest in the kingdom?” The disciples heard your call:**  
**“If you want to be the first one, you must be the last of all.”**  
**Do not think that high position is a thing that you deserve!**  
**“If you want to be the first, then, be the first to humbly serve.”**

**“Who is greatest in the kingdom? Who will take the throne and reign?”**  
**Christ, you put a child among them, and you told them once again:**  
**“If you give a child a welcome, then you also welcome me.”**  
**Faithful service, not ambition, builds up God's community.**

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

“Praeludium from Partita No. 1”

J.S. Bach

+Prayer of Dedication

**Ancient One**  
**who makes all things new,**  
**may we receive with gentleness**  
**and touch with hopefulness**  
**and protect with fierceness**  
**and love with tenderness;**  
**and may we celebrate with gratefulness**  
**and welcome with humbleness**  
**and tend with gracefulness**  
**all that you give**  
**into our care.**

+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

**Given the scientific fact  
that all creation is part  
of one unified web of life,  
the practice of justice and love  
now needs to embrace  
both human and nonhuman life,  
and the humble walk with God  
is a walk of holy reverence and awe  
across the planet.  
being attuned to and learning from  
the divine Spirit that pulsates  
at the heart of it all.**

+Closing Hymn #421

“The Church of Christ in Every Age”

Wareham

Benediction

Postlude

“Sonata No. 6”

Domenico Cimarosa

## **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **Laura Mitchell**.

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

The Call to Worship is by Jeremy Rutledge.

The Opening Prayer is from Ted Loder's *Guerrillas of Grace*.

The Unison Confession is Prayer for the Road Ahead from *Worship Resources in a Mennonite Voice for Ears of All Kinds*.

The text of "Give Me the Lowest Place" is by Christina Rossetti.

The text of "Who is Greatest in the Kingdom" is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas* by Jan L. Richardson.

The Affirmation of Faith is from Carol Dempsey's reflection on Micah 6.1-8 in *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*, edited by David Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor.

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

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

For the Adult Education class this coming Sunday, Bill Kline will present what he has learned as a lay person who has undertaken a personal study of eco-theology. Eco-theology is about how our understanding of God's love informs our response to God's Creation. We will be exploring that love from four different perspectives – stewardship, justice, virtue, and sacrament. This exploration will help us to hear a call for action on climate change, which will bring us to Richard Johnson and Lisa Spiro, who will talk on September 26 about taking action against climate change. We hope you can be part of both sessions.

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 19	9:00 a.m.	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 a.m.	Worship live-stream
	After Worship	Meet new Children & Youth Director, Color Garden
Thur. Sept 23	10:00 a.m.	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Sept 23	7:15 p.m.	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Thur. Sept 23	8:00 p.m.	Community Group w/Communion, Zoom Meeting
Fri. Sept 24	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 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.*