



*A Service of Worship for  
The Fourth Sunday of Lent  
27 March 2022*

The quality of human life on our planet is nothing more  
than the sum total of our daily interactions with one another.  
Each time we help, and each time we harm,  
we have a dramatic impact on our world.  
Because we are human, some of our interactions will go wrong,  
and then we will hurt or be hurt, or both.  
It is the nature of being human, and it is unavoidable.  
Forgiveness is the way we set those interactions right.  
It is the way we mend tears in the social fabric.  
It is the way we stop our human community from unraveling.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ring in the hour  
Silence is kept

Prelude

Alessandro Besozzi  
(1702-1793)

“Andante and Allegro” *from Sonata in C Major for Oboe and Piano*

Call to Worship

\*+Opening Hymn #376

Hyfrydol

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

+Opening Prayer

**Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.**

**Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

**While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.**

**For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.**

**Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

**Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.**

**You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.**

Scripture Lesson

Luke 15

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

\*Ushers will seat latecomers

+Please stand in body or spirit

Time for Children

+Response:

Au Clair de la Lune

**Jesus hands were kind hands, doing good to all;  
Healing pain and sickness, blessing children small.  
Let me watch you Jesus, till I'm gentle too,  
Till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**True reconciliation is based on forgiveness,  
and forgiveness is based on true confession,  
and confession is based on penitence,  
on contrition, on sorrow for what you have done.  
Forgiveness gives us the capacity to make a new start.  
That is the power, the rationale, of confession and forgiveness.  
It is to say, "I have fallen but I am not going to remain there.  
Please forgive me." And forgiveness is the grace by which  
you enable the other person to get up, and get up with dignity, to begin anew.  
Not to forgive leads to bitterness and hatred, which, just like self-hatred and  
self-contempt, gnaw away at the vitals of one's being.  
Whether hatred is projected out or projected in,  
it is always corrosive of the human spirit.**

Words of Assurance

+Hymn #347

Detroit

"Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive"

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

Music

David Ashley White  
(b. 1944)

"Amazing Grace"

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.  
Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.  
The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.  
Through many danger, toils, and snares, I have already come;  
'tis grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

Prayer

Invitations

Offering

Offertory

Alessandro Besozzi

*“Larghetto and Allegretto” from Sonata in C Major for Oboe and Piano*

+Prayer of Dedication

**For the labor that is never over,  
give us strength.**

**For the healing that is ever before us,  
give us courage.**

\*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

**The goal of Jesus' movement, ministry, and politics  
is a new creation: a political order that truly serves  
the good of all in equal measure.**

**Those of us who strive to practice Jesus' politics  
must always keep this as the focus  
of our prayers and our compassion,  
of our love and faithful social action.**

**If we do not work for, or in some way support  
the establishment of God's kingdom of love and justice,  
then our silence and inactivity will ultimately serve  
the forces of injustice.**

**We wish to be counted among those who truly tried  
to love our neighbors as ourselves.**

“Where Charity and Love Prevail”

Where Charity and Love Prevail

1. Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there  
 2. With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear true  
 3. For - give we now each oth - er's faults as  
 4. Let strife a - mong us be un - known, let  
 5. Let us re - call that in our midst dwells  
 6. Love can ex - clude no race or creed if

God is ev - er found; brought here to - geth - er  
 char - i - ty we learn; let us with heart and  
 we our faults con - fess; and let us love each  
 all con - ten - tion cease; be Christ the glo - ry  
 God's be - got - ten Son; as mem - bers of his  
 hon - ored be God's name; our com - mon life em -

by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.  
 mind and strength now love Christ in re - turn.  
 oth - er well in Chris - tian ho - li - ness.  
 that we seek, be ours his ho - ly peace.  
 bod - y joined, we are in him made one.  
 brac - es all whose Mak - er is the same.

WORDS: 9th cent. Latin; trans. by Omer Westendorf, 1961 (1 John 4:16)  
 MUSIC: Alexander R. Reinagle, 1836; harm. from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861  
 Trans. © 1961 World Library Publications, Inc.

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Benediction

Postlude

David Ashley White  
(b. 1944)

“Canzona for Oboe and Piano”

### **Worship Notes**

The worship leader is **Robert Carter**.

The Call to Worship is from an interview with Maya Angelou by Diane Rehm.

The Opening Sentences are adapted from Psalm 32.

The Unison Confession is by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

We welcome Grace Tice, oboist, this morning. Thank you, Grace, for sharing your talent with us.

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Where Love Is, There Is God,” in *The Mystery of Death* by Dorothee Sölle.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *The Politics of Jesus: Rediscovering the True Revolutionary Nature of Jesus’ Teachings and How They Have Been Corrupted* by Obery Hendricks, Jr.

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

### **Adult Education**

This session will be given over to open discussion of the Ukraine war. We will begin with a brief review of the history of the Russian and Ukrainian churches and how religious territoriality and some very familiar culture wars are fueling the conflict. Please bring your thoughts as we support one another in a time of contemplation and discernment.

- *Bill Kline*

### **Children & Youth Sunday School**

We will have two options for Sunday School: virtual from 10-10:30, and in-person in the Huff Fellowship Hall from 10:30-11 (masks required). This way, everyone can take part in the fun.

- *Trena' Jamison*

Zoom links and materials are available on the Online Gatherings page on our website:

<https://www.covenanthouston.org/covenant-gatherings.html>

## Announcements

### **Lend a Hand this Facility Work Day: April 9**

The facilities committee is having a work day on Saturday, April 9th from 9am - 11:30am, and would love to have your help! Here is a sample of the activities for the Facilities Workday Saturday. Make the yard safe for the Easter egg hunt the following week, garden activities, window washing, changing air filters, and cleaning up some graffiti in our alleyway. All ages are welcome. Thank you!

- *Facilities Committee*

### **New Sunday Morning Schedule for Educational Opportunities for all Ages and Hospitality**

Beginning **Sunday, April 10**, we will adopt the following Sunday morning schedule. Our worship time will not change.

For hospitality, we will offer coffee and snacks in the Huff Fellowship Hall. While eating and drinking, everyone is welcome to remove masks. Our new dishwasher is not yet installed. We will begin hospitality using disposable cups and plates. We encourage you to bring a travel mug for your coffee so you can take it home with you and wash it. We hope to have our new dishwasher installed soon.

**9:30-10:20 - Adult Ed (Zoom and in-person) and Children and Youth Education**

**10:20 -11:00 - Hospitality**

**10:30 - Choir Rehearsal**

**11:00 - Worship**

- *Laura Mayo, Senior Minister, Church Council, Adult Education Committee, Children and Youth Committee, Hospitality Committee, and Worship Committee*

## Children and Youth Activities

We are approaching the annual Children and Youth auction. If you have any handmade items or any experiences you would like to donate, please feel free to reach out to me or anyone on the Children and Youth committee.

- April 10 Easter Egg stuffing with youth after church
- April 16 Annual Easter Egg Hunt
- May 8 Youth Moving Forward Planning Meeting
- May 15 Children & Youth Auction

- Trena' Jamison, Director of Children & Youth

## Calendar

Sun, Mar 27	9:00 am	Adult Education, Zoom Meeting
	10:00 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Zoom
	10:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship in-person, Covenant
	11:00 am	Worship live-stream
Tue. Mar 29	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar 31	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Mar 31	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant

## 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](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

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

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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