



*A Service of Worship for
20 February 2022*

The disciples, then, must not only think of heaven;
they have an earthly task as well.

Now that they are bound exclusively to Jesus
they are told to look at the earth whose salt they are.

It is to be noted that Jesus calls not himself,
but his disciples the salt of the earth,
for he entrusts his work on earth to them...

The call of Jesus makes the disciple community
not only the salt but also the light of the world;
their activity is visible as well as imperceptible.

It is the property of light to shine.

A city set on a hill cannot be hid;
it can be seen for miles away,
whether it is a fortified burgh,
a stronghold or a tottering ruin.

This city set on the hill is the disciple community.

But this is not to say that the disciples
have now to make their first decision.

The only necessary decision has already been taken.

Now they must be what they really are—otherwise they are not followers of Jesus.

The followers are a visible community; their discipleship visible in action
which lifts them out of the world—otherwise it would not be discipleship.

And of course the following is as visible to the world
as a light in the darkness or a mountain rising from a plain.

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

Tielman Susato
(1500-1561)

“Saltarelle”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #372

I Want to Be a Christian

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

+Opening Sentences

**There are some things in our society and in our world
of which I'm proud to be maladjusted,
which I call upon all people of good will to be maladjusted,
until the good society is realized.
I never intend to become adjusted to segregation and discrimination.
I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions
that will take necessities from the many
to give luxuries to the few.
I never intend to adjust myself to the madness of militarism
and the self-defeating effects of physical violence.**

Scripture Lesson

Luke 6:17-26

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

+Response:

Lasst uns erfreuen

**In every land begin the song,
To every land the strains belong:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
In cheerful sound all voices raise
And fill the world with joyful praise.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Quite simply, sin for privileged people
is taking more than our share. It is
a rejection of Jesus' parable of the feast,
in which all are invited to the table,
regardless of who they are.
It is a refusal to attend to the basic,
bodily needs of earth's creatures
while we adorn ourselves with luxuries.
At an individual level, it means
amassing goods one does not need
when others—humans and other life forms—
are going hungry, deteriorating, and dying.
It begins with millions of individuals
making daily and often implicit
or unconscious decisions to be selfish...**

**Our denial is deep, as is our need
for repentance and change of heart.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“Blessed Are the Ones Who Love God”

Felix Mendelssohn

Silent Reflection

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

If you would like to take communion, please move outside. Deacons will be serving communion on the garden side and labyrinth side of the church. Our communion elements include both wine and water and gluten free and vegan crackers. All are always welcome to communion at Covenant.

“Christ, Your Words of Love Confound Us”

**Christ, your words of love confound us, even as we give you praise,
for the lessons that you teach us seem so far from this world's ways.
How can we love those who hate us? How can we love enemies?
What of people who abuse us? How can we love even these?**

**Make us mindful: love is action, not a feeling that uplifts.
In each daily situation, love's the greatest of all gifts.
It's the wiser, stronger person who will break the chain of hate.
Love can usher in redemption; love can make a people great.**

**Faced with those who seek to hurt us, make us confident and free:
you don't call us to be helpless but to stand with dignity.
Lord, when others are demanding, may we know they matter more
than our money or possessions. May we share, not keeping score.**

**If we love just those who love us, where's the giving? Where's the grace?
Even sinners try to do this; they have friends that they embrace.
May we do, Lord, unto others as we'd have them also do.
You have shown us: Love is action. May we love, and make things new.**

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Anonymous
(16th century)

“My Lady Careys Dompe”

+Prayer of Dedication

**What we choose
changes us.
Who we love
transforms us.
How we create
remakes us.
Where we live
reshapes us.**

**So in all our choosing,
O God, make us wise;
in all our loving,
O Christ, make us bold;
in all our creating,
O Spirit, give us courage;
in all our living
may we become whole.**

*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

**By coming to understand ourselves as social beings,
liberals may come to see forms of participation
such as social justice work
not simply as a choice we make
(or do not make) as individuals
but as a fundamental factor
in the formation of our own identities.**

**In other words, we must think of social justice work
not simply as something we do,
but as a part of who we are.**

**If I cannot see myself in solidarity with others
whose circumstances are different from my own,
then something is missing from my own identity.**

**Our own well-being is deeply connected
to the well-being of others...**

**We can be healed only when there is healing,
and justice, for others as well.**

+Closing Hymn #434

Kingsfold

“Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples”

Benediction

Postlude

Anonymous
(1557)

“Cortege Final”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Tim Wegner**.

The banner was created by **Nancy Henry**.

The Call to Worship is adapted from and inspired by the weekly order of worship.

The Opening Sentences are from “Drum Major Instinct” by Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Unison Confession is from Sallie McFague’s essay, “Sin, Evil, and Economics” in *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes*, edited by Serene Jones and Paul Lakeland.

The text of “Christ, Your Words of Love Confound Us” is by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *In Wisdom’s Path* by Jan Richardson.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *Faith Without Certainty: Liberal Theology in the 21st Century* by Paul Rasor.

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

Adult Education

Covenant has embraced becoming an antiracist church. How might we make even more progress towards this goal? In Adult Education on Sunday, February 20, we will evaluate Covenant’s strengths and weaknesses in pursuing antiracism, examine strategies used by similar organizations, and brainstorm concrete steps that we can take. While we won’t figure it all out in 50 minutes, this workshop will help to build the framework for action.

- Lisa Spiro

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>

Calendar

Sun, Feb 20	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. Feb 22	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Feb 24	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom Meeting
Thur. Feb 24	7:15 pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Covenant
Fri. Feb 25	1:00 pm	Book Club, 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.

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

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

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