

*A Service of Worship for
24 July 2022*

The opposite of fear is not courage but compassion.

We fear what we do not know,
and the mother of fear is ignorance,
but we cannot fear that which we love,
for as Jesus tells us, perfect love casts out fear.
Compassion leaves no room for fear;
we are too busy doing what we can,
what we must, and what God wishes us to do,
to take time to fear the consequences.

Peter Gomes

If you are neutral in situations of injustice,
you have chosen the side of the oppressor.
If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse,
and you say that you are neutral,
the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.

Desmond Tutu

Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands
speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly.

Mahatma Gandhi

I read in a book that a man called Christ
went about doing good. It is very disconcerting to me that
I am so easily satisfied with just going about.

Toyohiko Kagawa

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ringling in the hour

Silence is kept

Prelude

John Stanley

“Voluntary No 9 in G”

Call to Worship

*+Opening Hymn #553

East Acklam

“For the Fruit of All Creation”

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.

For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,

Future needs in earth’s safekeeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor, God’s will be done.

In the help we give our neighbor, God’s will be done.

In our world-wide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,

In the harvests we are sharing, God’s will be done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.

For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.

For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,

Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

+Opening Sentences

**We pray together for sisters and brothers
who live in lands where war prevails
as a sign that we all share
both in the pain of war and the longing
and fight for peace and justice.**

**We pray together for brothers and sisters
of differing beliefs and religious affiliation
as an expression of the fact that we are all part of
the same humanity
and share this life on earth with one another.**

**We pray together for our wounded earth,
for fields, forests, and seas,
as a sign that we belong together
with the whole of God's creation
and want to take responsibility for the healing of the earth's
wounds.**

**We pray together for the division
and brokenness we experience within ourselves
and in relationships between people
as an expression that we want to open ourselves
to wholeness and life.**

Scripture Lesson

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

+Response:

Merle's Tune

**One Spirit sends us onward in witness to the earth,
as ministers of justice and midwives for rebirth:
to lead the church with courage on ventures new begun,
reformed yet still reforming, 'til God's whole will is done.**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Although Jesus had reason to fear,
and there is nothing to suggest
that he did not know fear,
he was not defined by his fear,
and his exercise of compassions,
his doing for others,
showed the power of his inner strength.**

**As we consider how we ought to manage
in a less-than-friendly world,
when we wonder on what we may rely,
perhaps the answer is found
in the exercise of compassion.**

Words of Assurance

Music

Alan Hovhaness
(1911–2000)

“Chahagir” Op. 56a

Silent Reflection

Prayer

Invitation

Offering

Offertory

Johannes Brahms

“Schmücke Dich”

⁺Prayer of Dedication

**Tender God,
who lives in heaven and earth,
in human reason and passion,
you are the Holy One in our midst.
Your justice is our peace;
your peace is our hope;
your presence, our delight!
Make our hands, your hands;
our hearts, your heart;
our lives, your life!
Give us this day and always
a bread of freedom to share,
a cup of hope to pour upon the earth.
Forgive us our hatreds and walls.
Teach us to forgive the walls of others as well.
Do not permit us tests beyond our strength.
And deliver us from Evil's death-grip.
For everything about us and under us,
everything within us and without us,
must bend the knee
to the Glory of your Freedom,
the everlasting Victory
of your Justice and Peace!**

⁺Doxology

*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.*

Old Hundredth

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

+Communion Hymn #504

Union Seminary

“Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether”

**Draw us in the Spirit’s tether,
for when humbly in Your name
Two or three are met together,
You are in the midst of them;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Touch we now Your garment’s hem.**

**As disciples used to gather
in the name of Christ to sup,
Then with thanks to God the Father
break the bread and bless the cup,
Alleluia! Alleluia! So now bind our friendship up.**

**All our meals and all our living
make as sacraments of You,
That by caring, helping, giving,
we may be disciples true.
Alleluia! Alleluia! We will serve with faith anew.**

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.

+Affirmation of Faith

Leader: This is a Blessing in a Time of Violence. Which is to say this blessing is always.
Which is to say there is no place this blessing does not long to cry out in lament,

**All: to weep its words in sorrow,
to scream its lines in sacred rage.**

Leader: Which is to say there is no day this blessing ceases to whisper into the ear of the dying, the despairing, the terrified.

**All: Which is to say there is no moment
this blessing refuses to sing itself
into the heart of the hated
and the hateful, the victim
and the victimizer,
with every last ounce of hope it has.**

Leader: Which is to say there is none that can stop it,
none that can halt its course, none that will still its cadence, none that will delay its rising,

**All: none that can keep it from springing forth
from the mouths of us who hope,
from the hands of us who act,
from the hearts of us who love,
from the feet of us who will not cease
our stubborn, aching
marching, marching
until this blessing
has spoken its final word,
until this blessing has breathed
its benediction in every place,**

Leader: in every tongue: Peace.

People: Peace.

All: Peace.

⁺Closing Hymn #343

Beecher

“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”

**Called as partners in Christ’s service,
called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment
fresh new lines of faith to trace.**

**May we learn the art of sharing,
side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring
to fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring,
Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering,
reconciling folk on earth.**

**Men and women, richer, poorer,
all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together
gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ's mission,
in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens,
breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision,
words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action,
make us colleagues free and fair.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow
ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow
with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living,
our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving
hope and confidence and peace.**

Benediction

Postlude

David German

“Festive Trumpet Tune”

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **David Ramsey**.

The Call to Worship is adapted from *My Heart in My Mouth* by Ted Loder.

The Opening Sentences are from Christina Lövestam, used in the Swedish mass for wisdom, the Sofia-mässa.

The Unison Confession is from *The Scandalous Gospel of Jesus: What's So Good about the Good News?* by Peter Gomes.

Jacy Grannis is the violist.

The Prayer of Dedication is “The Lord's Prayer (a paraphrase)” from *From Many, One* by Edward Francis Gabriele

The Affirmation of Faith is from “Blessing in a Time of Violence” by Jan Richardson

Education 9:30 - 10:20 a.m.

Adult Education - The new space telescope promises to greatly advance our understanding of when and how the universe was formed. The ultimate question, why the universe exists, remains in the realms of philosophy and theology. This Sunday we will view a video presentation “Why Did God Create the World and Why You Need to Know” by Miroslav Wolf, Founding Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. This topic is particularly relevant as we continue to consider our Covenant Vision and Mission in a world badly in need of cosmic perspective.
- *Bill Kline*

Children & Youth Education - Room B, 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building

Children and Youth Announcements

Summer Activities

- **July 30** - Children & Youth Lock-In
- **August 14, 12:30pm** - Children & Youth Picnic

Hi Friends and Families of Covenant,

As August approaches, we would like to get the Mentor and Youth program started. If you would like to volunteer your time and be a mentor to some of our

fantastic youth at Covenant Church, please reach out to Trena' Jamison, the Director of Children and Youth, at 832-273-3895 or Trena@CovenantHouston.org.
 - *Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth*

Announcements

Calendar

Sun, July 24	9:30 am	Adult Education, Adult Education classroom on the 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building
	9:30 am	Children & Youth Sunday School, Room B, 2nd floor of the Fellowship Hall Building
	10:20 am	Hospitality, Huff Fellowship Hall
	10:20 am	Virtual Communion, Zoom
	11:00 am	Worship/Communion in-person and via live-stream
Tue, July 26	1:00 pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom
Thur, July 28	10:00 am	Community Group, Zoom

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.

Newsletter: To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to office@covenanthouston.org.

Office Hours: The church office is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 2pm.

*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

Brian Buck, Facilities Coordinator

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

*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.*