



COVENANT CHURCH

H O U S T O N

A Service of Worship for
9 November 2025

seeker of truth

follow no path
all paths lead where

truth is here

– e. e. cummings

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

*Prelude

Ethel Smyth
(1858-1944)

“Prelude on ‘O Traurigkeit, O Herzeleid’ (O Sadness, O Heartache)”

Call to Worship

+Opening Hymn #380

Erhalt Uns, Herr

“O Christ, the Healer”

**O Christ, the healer, we have come
To pray for health, to plead for friends.
How can we fail to be restored,
When reached by love that never ends?**

**From every ailment flesh endures
Our bodies clamor to be freed;
Yet in our hearts we would confess
That wholeness is our deepest need.**

**How strong, O Lord, are our desires,
How weak our knowledge of ourselves!
Release in us those healing truths
Unconscious pride resists or shelves.**

**In conflicts that destroy our health
We recognize the world's disease;
Our common life declares our ills:
Is there no cure, O Christ, for these?**

**Please hold silence and remain seated during the prelude*

+Please stand in body or spirit

**Grant that we all, made one in faith,
In Your community may find
The wholeness that, enriching us,
Shall reach the whole of humankind.**

⁺Opening Sentences

**My Lord, God,
I have no idea where I am going,
I do not see the road ahead of me,
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think
I am following Your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe
that the desire to please You
does in fact please You.
And I hope I have that desire
in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything
apart from that desire to please You.
And I know that if I do this
You will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore I will trust You always
though I may seem to be lost
and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear,
for You are ever with me,
and You will never leave me
to make my journey alone.**

Invitation

Welcoming New Members: please see bulletin insert

+Please stand in body or spirit

Scripture Lesson

Job 19:23-27a

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

Time for Children

+ Response:

Tallis' Canon

**Go with us, Lord, and guide the way
Through this and every coming day,
That in Your Spirit strong and true
Our lives may be our gift to you.**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime;
Therefore, we are saved by hope.
Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense
in any immediate context of history;
Therefore, we are saved by faith.
Nothing we do, however virtuous,
can be accomplished alone;
Therefore, we are saved by love.
No virtuous act is quite as virtuous
from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own;
Therefore, we are saved by the final form of love
which is forgiveness.**

Words of Assurance

Music

Karen Marroli
(b. 1975)

"Hope Waits"

Hope calls us through the silence.

Hope clings like morning dew.

Hope stands amidst the violence.

Hope waits for you.

Hope sings when night is falling.

Hope lifts the dawn anew.

+ Please stand in body or spirit

Hope lives while fear is calling.

Hope waits for you.

When the world falls down and the drum beat sounds,

Let us lift up our eyes!

When our spirits shake and our tired hearts break

Hope will hear our cries!

Hope holds us as we're weeping.

Hope stills the churning blue.

Hope grows the bud now sleeping.

Hope waits for you.

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

⁺Hymn #402

Dickinson College

"Now Praise the Hidden God of Love"

**Now praise the hidden God of love,
In whom we all must live and move,
Who shepherds us at every stage,
Through youth, maturity, and age:**

**Who challenged us, when we were young,
To storm the citadels of wrong;
In care for others taught us how
God's true community must grow:**

**Who bids us never lose our zest,
Though age is urging us to rest,
But proves to us that we have still
A work to do, a place to fill.**

Prayer

Offering

Offertory

Georg Philipp Telemann
(1681-1767)

"Allegro" from *Fantasia No. 1*

⁺*Please stand in body or spirit*

⁺Prayer of Dedication

**Let us offer the world the best flowers and fruits of our practice:
lucidity, solidity, brotherhood and sisterhood,
understanding, and compassion.**

**Let us give rise to the determination
to look deeply into the nature of fear, anger, hatred, and violence
and to give rise to the eyes of compassion.**

**Breathing in,
we are aware of violence within ourselves and within the world.
Breathing out,
we are determined to look with the eyes of compassion
at the violence within ourselves and the world...**

**We know that with the energy of mindfulness, concentration,
and awakened wisdom,
we can lessen violence every day.**

**We know that responding to violence with compassion
is our only path.**

⁺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

**In community we affirm
that our lives take on deeper meaning
through relationship.
In community we affirm
that we become the people we want to be
mostly as a result of love.**

+Please stand in body or spirit

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
Then wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.**

**Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!**

Benediction

^{*}Postlude

Dale Wood
(1934-2003)

“Toccata on ‘I Know that My Redeemer Lives’ (Antioch)”

+Please stand in body or spirit

**Please hold silence and remain seated during the postlude*

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Lisa Sparkes**.

The Call to Worship is from *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living* by Krista Tippett.

The Opening Sentences are from *Thoughts in Solitude* by Thomas Merton.

The Unison Confession is from *Becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood* by Reinhold Niebuhr.

The soprano soloist is **Mary Hines Lee**.

The violist is **Jacy Grannis**.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from *Creating True Peace: Ending Violence in Yourself, Your Family, Your Community, and the World* by Thich Nhat Hanh.

The Affirmation of Faith is by Jeannette Dixon and Jeremy Rutledge.

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About Today's Service

Today's postlude sets a mid-nineteenth century shape-note tune attributed to Francis C. Wood, a blacksmith and farmer from central Alabama. It always goes with the hymn text "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" by English Baptist minister Samuel Medley, with the added chorus, "Shout on, pray on, we're gaining ground; the dead's alive and the lost is found!" In Medley's text, God is depicted as destructive—"He lives to crush the fiends of hell"—and then immediately turns personal and docile: "He lives and doth within me dwell." This is one of my favorite shape-note songs; the Houston area shape-note singers will sometimes refer to "Jason's fiends of hell." Shape-note singing is loud, a capella, and intentionally unrefined. Covenant will host a monthly session on third Monday nights starting this December for the greater Houston shape-note community. If you are interested in trying this out, please talk to me or Perry Primm for more information.

—Jason Steiner

Announcements

Committees will meet **after church TODAY, November 9**.

Houston Compassion Week event — November 15 at 7pm.

There will be a congregational business meeting after church on November 16.

Advent Secret Friends returns this year. See the newsletter or Jason Steiner for more info.

All-Church "Advance" — an on-site retreat, November 21-23. Register online!

Children and Youth Announcements

November 16 - Youth Fellowship after church

November 30 - Youth Social: Pecan Grove Christmas Hayride (RSVP by November 16)

December 7- Advent Celebration & Tree Decorating: all are welcome to participate!

Calendar

Sun. November 9	12pm	Committee Meetings, Huff Fellowship Hall.
Mon. November 10	7pm	Insight Meditation Houston, 2nd floor of Huff Fellowship Hall building.
Tues. November 11	7pm	Young Adult Intentional Discussion Group, Library.
Thurs. November 13	10am	Community Group, Zoom.
	1:15pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom.
	7:15pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary.
Sat. November 15	7pm	Compassion Week Presentation, Sanctuary.
Sun. November 16	9:30am	Adult Education, 2nd floor of the Huff Fellowship Hall Building: Raymond Stubblefield presents on spiritual practices.
	9:30am	Handbell Rehearsal, Huff Fellowship Hall.
	10:30am	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary.

Information

Childcare: Childcare is provided in the children's area beginning at 9:30 a.m. Children aged 2 and under are invited to the nursery. Children aged 3 to 9 are invited to the children's area after the Time for Children.

Covenant Recycles: If you do not wish to keep your order of worship, please recycle it by placing it on the stand located in the narthex.

Office Hours: The Church Office is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8am-3pm, and Tuesday from 1pm-5pm.

Helpful Links: Scan here for digital Visitor and Celebration & Concern Cards; any sign-up forms mentioned in the Announcements; and other useful information.



*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

Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth

Heather Laureles, Director of Administration & Communications

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Jason Steiner, Organist and Associate Director of Music

Raymond Stubblefield, Minister of Congregational Life

Brendon Young, Moores School of Music Artist in Residence

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Covenant Church recognizes the laws of the State of Texas and the rights of its citizens. Consistent with this acknowledgment and with respect for the values of our Church, we also acknowledge that our congregants and visitors seek a safe and comfortable space for worship and celebration. In that spirit, we request that all firearms be left in a secure place outside of the Church. We thank God for providing us with the opportunity to worship together and to continue to respect each other as human beings.