



# COVENANT CHURCH

## H O U S T O N

A Service of Worship for  
8 February 2026

1. What are the words you do not have yet? [Or, “for what do you not have words, yet?”]
2. What do you need to say? [List as many things as necessary]
3. “What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day and attempt to make your own, until you will sicken and die of them, still in silence?” [List as many as necessary today. Then write a new list tomorrow. And the day after.]
4. If we have been “socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition,” ask yourself: “What’s the worst that could happen to me if I tell this truth?” [So, answer this today. And every day.]

–“The Audre Lorde Questionnaire to Oneself,” adapted by Divya Victor  
from “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action”  
as printed in *The Cancer Journals* by Audre Lorde



Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

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

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

\*Prelude

“Prelude”

Maurice Ravel  
(1875-1937)

Call to Worship

+Opening Hymn #324

Open My Eyes

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

**Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.  
Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;  
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth Thou sendest clear;  
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.  
Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;  
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;  
Open my heart, and let me prepare Love with thy children thus to share.  
Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, my God, Thy will to see;  
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

+Opening Prayer

**From all that is broken  
let there be beauty.  
From all that is torn, jagged,  
ripped, frayed,  
let there be**

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

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

**not just mendings  
but meetings unimagined.  
May the God in whom  
nothing is wasted  
gather up every scrap,  
every shred and shard,  
and make of them  
new paths,  
doorways,  
worlds.**

Invitation

Welcoming New Members: please see bulletin insert

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 58:1-12, Matthew 5:13-20

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Time for Children

+ Response:

Servant Song

**We are pilgrims on a journey,  
We are trav'lers on the road;  
We are here to help each other  
Walk the mile and bear the load.**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Leave your windows and go out, people of the world,  
go into the streets, go into the fields, go into the woods  
and along the streams. Go together, go alone.  
Say no to the Lords of War which is Money  
which is Fire. Say no by saying yes  
to the air, to the earth, to the trees,  
yes to the grasses, to the rivers, to the birds**

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

**and the animals and every living thing, yes  
to the small houses, yes to the children. Yes.**

Words of Assurance

Music

Jane M. Marshall  
(1924-2019)

“Blessed Are the Ones”  
*Blessed are the ones who walk  
not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
nor stand in the way of sinners,  
nor sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
And on God’s law they meditate day and night.  
They shall be like trees  
planted by streams of water.*

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

+Hymn #335

O Waly Waly

“Though I May Speak”

**Though I may speak with bravest fire,  
And have the gift to all inspire,  
And have not love, my words are vain;  
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.**

**Though I may give all I possess,  
And striving so my love profess,  
But not be giv’n by love within,  
The profit soon turns strangely thin.**

**Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,  
Our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed;  
By this we worship and are freed.**

+Please stand in body or spirit

Prayer

Offering

Offertory

“Hymn of Promise”

Brenda Portman

(b. 1980)

+Prayer of Dedication

**God of Love,**

**May I not forget I have a heart - to love a broken world.**

**May I not forget I have a voice - to speak out for the poor.**

**May I not forget I have hands - to reach out to other people.**

**May I not forget I have feet - to go where I am needed.**

**Let me never forget**

**You will be with me**

**Always.**

+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 world now is too dangerous**

**and too beautiful for anything but love.**

**May your eyes be so blessed you see God in everyone.**

**Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.**

**May your hands be so blessed**

**that everything you touch is a sacrament.**

**Your lips, so you speak nothing but the truth with love.**

**May your feet be so blessed you run**

**to those who need you.**

**And may your heart be so opened,**

**so set on fire, that your love,**

**your love, changes everything.**

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

“Here I Am, Lord”

**I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry,  
All who dwell in deepest sin My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?**

***Refrain:* Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night  
I will go, Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.**

**I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak My word to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain.***

**I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide 'til their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them. Whom shall I send? *Refrain.***

Benediction

+Postlude

“And All the Bells Rang Out the Good News”

Daniel Pinkham  
(1923-2006)

+*Please stand in body or spirit*

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

## Worship Notes

The worship leaders are **David and Janice Ramsey**.

The pianist is **Julian Laureles**.

The Call to Worship is by Jeff Chu.

The Opening Prayer is “Blessing” by Jan Richardson.

The Unison Confession is by Wendell Berry.

**Deacon Amanda Cox-Floyd** gives the prayer.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from a prayer by Max Khanna.

The Affirmation of Faith is from *The Black Rock Prayer Book*.

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## About Today's Service

Like many of my favorite poets and writers, I was introduced to Audre Lorde on Tumblr in the mid-2010s. Lorde's essay “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action” was first presented as a paper at the Modern Language Association's "Lesbian and Literature Panel," in Chicago, Illinois, on December 28, 1977. The first three questions of today's Epigraph are pulled verbatim from her original essay. The fourth is adapted from the essay's conclusion:

“We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition, and while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us.

“The fact that we are here and that I speak not these words is an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us, for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken.”

This questionnaire has been my north star in deciding how to live my life for over a decade. I hope it is valuable to you as well.

–*Jason Steiner*

## Announcements

The Young Adult Group will hold an exploration of Christian mysticism's intersection with pagan spirituality in the Library on Friday, February 13 at 7pm.

The Children & Youth auction is on February 15. Donations are still being accepted!

Ash Wednesday services on February 18: Rothko Chapel at noon, Covenant at 7pm.

Will Parker's Musical Improv workshop is on February 21.

The 2026 Covenant Safety Summit will be held on Saturday, February 28, at 9am.

Committees meet **today, February 8**, and on April 26; Aug. 9; and Nov. 8.

## Calendar

Sun. February 8	12:15pm	Committee Meetings, Huff Fellowship Hall.
Mon. February 9	7pm	Insight Meditation Houston, Huff Fellowship Hall.
Thurs. February 12	10am	Community Group, Zoom.
	1:15pm	Luncheon Lectionary Lab, Zoom.
	7:15pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary.
Fri. February 13	7pm	Young Adult Group: Christian Mysticism, Library.
Sun. February 15	9:30am	Adult Education, 2nd floor of Huff Fellowship Hall building or on Zoom: Celia Lightfoot presents on black history.
	9:30am	Handbell Rehearsal, Huff Fellowship Hall.
	10:30am	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary.

## Information

**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.

**All-Gender Restrooms** are located in the Huff Fellowship Hall building.

**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 with a personal 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, Children and Youth Coordinator

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.*