



COVENANT CHURCH
HOUSTON

A Service of Worship for the
Sixth Sunday of Eastertide
10 May 2026

Consider the lilies is the only commandment I ever obeyed.

—Emily Dickinson

Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

*Prelude

“Notte di maggio (May Night)”

Barbara Heller
(b. 1936)

Call to Worship

+Opening Hymn

“Where Charity and Love Prevail”

St. Peter

**Where charity and love prevail,
There God is ever found;
Brought here together by Christ's love,
By love are we thus are bound.**

**With grateful joy and holy fear,
true charity we learn;
Let us with heart and mind and strength
Now love Christ in return.**

**Forgive we now each other's faults
As we our faults confess;
And let us love each other well
In Christian holiness.**

**Let strife among us be unknown,
Let all contention cease;
Be Christ the glory that we seek,
Be ours his only peace.**

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

+Please stand in body or spirit

**Let us recall that in our midst
Dwells God's begotten Son;
As members of his body joined,
We are in him made one.**

**Love can exclude no race or creed
If honored be God's name;
Our common life embraces all
Whose Maker is the same.**

⁺Opening Sentences

**Into this world Christ comes
and proclaims a different peace:
the pax Christi.**

**He proclaims liberation for the poor
and a different Spirit.**

**It is no longer the spirit of mourning
and weariness,
of divine resignation –**

“as it was, so it will always be”

- but a new and different Spirit:

“Where the Spirit of God is, there is freedom!”

The oldest Christians prayed for this Spirit.

It defined their lives;

**it determined their association with one another
and with the realities of existence.**

**Like us they often lived dull, dispirited, indifferent, mundane lives
and they prayed for a Spirit to strengthen them.**

“Come Holy Spirit, abide with us!”

Invitation

Scripture Lesson

John 14:15-21

These are our sacred stories.

Thanks be to God.

+Please stand in body or spirit

Time for Children

+ Response:

Truro

**Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**Lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Let peace fill our hearts,
our world, our universe.
Let us dream together,
pray together,
work together,
to build one world
of peace and justice for all.**

Words of Assurance

Music

“It Is Well With My Soul”

Cathy Moglebust
(b. 1958)

Silent Reflection

Proclamation

+Hymn #522

Land of Rest

“Lord, When I Came Into This Life”

**Lord, when I came into this life
You called me by my name;
Today I come, commit myself,
Responding to Your claim.**

+Please stand in body or spirit

**Within the circle of the faith
As member of Your cast,
I take my place with all the saints
Of future, present, past.**

**In all the tensions of my life,
Between my faith and doubt,
Let Your great Spirit give me hope,
Sustain me, lead me out.**

**So, help me in my unbelief
And let my life be true:
Feet firmly planted on the earth,
My sights set high on You.**

Prayer

Offering

Offertory

“Have Mercy on Me, O God”

Miriam Carpinetti
(b. 1954)

+Prayer of Dedication

**Love is the spirit of this church,
and service is its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in love,
And to help one another.**

+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.**

+Please stand in body or spirit

+Affirmation of Faith

**Effortlessly,
Love flows from God into people,
like a bird
who feels the current of the air
without moving her wings.
Thus we move in God's world,
one in body and soul,
though outwardly separate in form.
As the Source strikes the note,
Humanity sings—
The Holy Spirit is our harpist,
and all strings
which are touched in Love
must sound.**

+Closing Hymn #420

Cwm Rhondda

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

**God of grace and God of glory, on Thy people pour Thy power;
Crown Thine ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.**

**Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn Thy Christ, assail Thy ways!
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days,
For the living of these days.**

**Cure Thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to thy control;
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal,
Lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal.**

+Please stand in body or spirit

**Set our feet on lofty places; gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christ-like graces, pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, that we fail not them nor Thee!
That we fail not them nor Thee!**

**Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;
Let the gift of Thy salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving Thee whom we adore,
Serving Thee whom we adore.**

Benediction

*Postlude

“Toccatà”

Domenico Zipoli
(1688-1726)

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

Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Nancy Henry**, Liturgical Artist in Residence, who creates our beautiful banners.

The Call to Worship is adapted from Marcus Borg in *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* by Marcus Borg and N. T. Wright.

The Opening Sentences are adapted from *On Earth as in Heaven: A Liberation Spirituality of Sharing* by Dorothee Sölle.

The Unison Confession is an anonymous prayer reprinted in *Life Prayers from Around the World*, edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon.

Alan Vaughn is the flutist.

Deacon Susan Reeves gives the Prayer.

The Prayer of Dedication is from James Vila Blake in *Singing the Living Tradition*, the 1993 hymnal of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from the writing of Mechtild of Magdeburg, a 13th-century German mystic.

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About Today's Service

New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and N.T. Wright maintained a respectful and close friendship despite having vastly differing theologies (especially concerning the historical Jesus). They collaborated on multiple books. N.T. Wright is conservative/orthodox, whereas Marcus Borg was liberal/progressive. They were deeply engaged in scholarship and in the practice of Christianity. To give an example of disagreement: Borg interpreted much of the gospels as metaphorical in nature, as “history metaphorized.” Wright interprets most of the gospels as historical in nature, while admitting that a small part of the gospels contains metaphors, for example, the parables. Their dedication to Jesus and their friendship are excellent examples of holding differences while maintaining community.

—*Laura Mayo*

Announcements

This coming Wednesday, May 13 Covenant will prepare and serve a meal together at Montrose Grace Place. Sign up to serve or donate food at the link in the newsletter or using the bulletin QR code.

The Covenant Singers will present Will Todd's Jazz Missa Brevis in worship, accompanied by the Rob Landes Trio, on May 17.

Calendar

Mon. May 11	7pm	Insight Meditation, Huff Fellowship Hall.
Wed. May 13	5:30pm	Dinner Volunteer Day, Montrose Grace Place.
Thurs. April 30	10am	Community Group, Zoom.
	1:15pm	Lunctime Lectionary Lab, Zoom.
	7pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary.
Sat. May 16	10am	Covenant Singers Major Work Rehearsal, Sanctuary.
Sun. May 17	9:30am	Adult Education, 2nd floor of Huff Fellowship Hall building or on Zoom: Joseph Ewoodzie will present on Sociology.
	9:30am	Inquirers Class, Library in Sanctuary building.
	10:00am	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 & Communication

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Jason Steiner, Organist and Associate Director of Music

Raymond Stubblefield, Minister of Congregational Life

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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.