

The background of the poster is a dramatic landscape. A long, straight path made of large, rectangular stone tiles leads from the bottom center towards a bright sun on the horizon. The sun is low, creating a strong lens flare and casting a golden glow over the entire scene. To the left of the path, there are ancient stone ruins, including a wall and a cross standing on a small hill. To the right, there are more ruins and a few trees. The sky is filled with large, billowing clouds, with a vertical band of darker, blue-tinged clouds in the center. The overall color palette is dominated by warm, golden, and orange tones, with the central blue band providing a contrast.

A LETTER THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

# ROMANS

SERMON SERIES

MODERN WORSHIP  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 | 11:15 AM

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE | HOUSTON, TX

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## WELCOME

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Welcome to St. John the Divine. We want to get to know you! Take your first step by completing a welcome card and placing it in the offering plate or scan this QR code to introduce yourself online.

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## ORDER OF SERVICE

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Songs and Prayers

Holy Scripture and Sermon

Prayers and Peace

Offerings and Holy Eucharist

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## HOLY SCRIPTURE

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### **Romans 12:9-21 (ESV)**

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

## **The Gospel**

## **Matthew 16:21-28 (ESV)**

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

[illegible]

# HOLY EUCHARIST

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Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People:** *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

**People:** *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People:** *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Celebrant and People (said):**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat. This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

***Celebrant and People:***

***Christ has died.***

***Christ is risen.***

***Christ will come again.***

Celebrant: We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

***Celebrant and People: AMEN.***

- *All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion.*
- *If you are not baptized, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*
- *Gluten-free wafers are available upon request from the clergy.*
- *Please be guided by our ushers for Communion.*
- *Prayer Ministers are always present on either side of the stage for personal prayer.*
- *Interested in baptism, have questions about the faith, or want to connect with the clergy?*  
*Email the Rev. John Sundara at [jsundara@sjd.org](mailto:jsundara@sjd.org).*

*Your financial offerings help us be a light for the city. You may make your Sunday offering in one of two ways:*

- *By placing your offering in the plate during the Offertory or*
- *By scanning the QR code with your phone.*



## WHAT DOES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE LOOK LIKE?

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*Christians do not always get this right, but Romans 12 shows us what kind of transformation takes place when we become Christians. In short, people should be able to tell that we serve a God of love. It is not just about being “nice.” It is about responding to what God has done for us by sharing that love with others, even our enemies. Romans 12 tells us to leave the judgement to God. So the next time you are tempted to comment on that social media post with something snarky, roll your eyes at your boss, tell that unflattering story about your friend, or complain about your sibling, reflect on these marks of faith in our passage today, starting with “Let love be genuine.”*

## CLERGY

The Rev. Dr. R. Leigh Spruill, *Rector*  
The Rev. Reagan W. Cocke, *Senior Vice Rector*  
The Rev. John D. Sundara, *Vice Rector*  
The Rev. Louise Samuelson, *Associate Rector*  
The Rev. Trent Pettit, *Associate Rector*  
The Rev. Libby Garfield, *Associate Rector*  
The Rev. Dr. Douglas W. Richnow, *Priest Associate*  
The Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon, *Bishop in Residence*  
The Rev. Dr. Charles M. Stiernberg, *Deacon*

## MUSIC AND WORSHIP STAFF

Sarah Gividen, *Director of Modern Music*  
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CHANGING LIVES FOR GOD IN CHRIST

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