



Saint Francis and the Sow

The bud
stands for all things,
even for those things that don't flower,
for everything flowers, from within, of self-blessing;
though sometimes it is necessary
to reteach a thing its loveliness,
to put a hand on its brow
of the flower
and retell it in words and in touch
it is lovely
until it flowers again from within, of self-blessing;
as Saint Francis
put his hand on the creased forehead
of the sow, and told her in words and in touch
blessings of earth on the sow, and the sow
began remembering all down her thick length,
from the earthen snout all the way
through the fodder and slops to the spiritual curl of the tail,
from the hard spininess spiked out from the spine
down through the great broken heart
to the sheer blue milken dreaminess spurting and shuddering
from the fourteen teats into the fourteen mouths sucking and
blowing beneath them:
the long, perfect loveliness of sow.

REJOICE
in hope
BE PATIENT
in suffering
persevere in
PRAYER

by Galway Kinnell

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
TWELFTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST**

August 27, 2017

10:55 AM

Gathering Music

Jared Fischer

Welcome and Announcements ✕

Nancy Ellett Allison

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you!

*(Please pass the friendship pads so that all worshippers
might have the opportunity to sign them)*

Opening Voluntary

Jared Fischer

* Call to Worship

Keith Dennis

One: God of love, call us together as your people; transform us with your love.

**Many: Transform our hearts, that we may love generously.
Transform our eyes, that we may see your grace in all people.
Transform our hands, that we may serve others.
Transform our spirits, that we may be the body of Christ,
gathered to worship, equipped for service.**

One: God of justice, open our hearts to each other.

**All: Give us the courage to resist oppression and protect the
world from evil. Give us the wisdom to see ourselves as we
truly are. Give us the vision to see you and hear your voice.
Give us the endurance to use our gifts for the transforming of
this world.**

* Passing of the Peace

Keith Dennis

One: We are renewed by the love of God and the love of our sisters and brothers in Christ. So let us now greet one another as a sign of God's peace, for the peace of Christ is here to stay.

Many: Thanks be to God.

** All rise in body or spirit ☩ Sing Response ✕ Hymnals located below pews*

1. I sing the might-y power of God
that made the moun-tains rise,
That spread the flow-ing seas a-broad,
and built the loft-y skies.
I sing the wis-dom that or-dained
the sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at God’s com-mand,
and all the stars o-bey.

2. I sing the good-ness of our God
that filled the earth with food;
God formed the crea-tures with a word,
and then pro-nounced them good.
Oh, how your won-ders are dis-played,
wher-e’er I turn my eye;
If I sur-vey the ground I tread,
or gaze up-on the sky!

3. On earth there’s not a plant or flower
but makes your glo-ry known.
The clouds a-rise and spread their showers
by or-der from your throne.
All life is but a gift from you
and ev-er in your care;
Wher-ev-er peo-ple gath-er, you,
O God, are pres-ent there.

“Your Grace Is Enough”

Great is your faithfulness, oh God;
You wrestle with the sinner's heart,
You lead us by still waters and to mercy,
And nothing will keep us apart.
So remember your people, remember your children
Remember your promise, oh God

Chorus: Your grace is enough, your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me

Great is your love and justice, God
You use the weak to lead the strong
You lead us in the song of your salvation
And all your people sing along
So remember your people, remember your children
Remember your promise, oh God *(Chorus)*

Children's Message & Offering

Nancy Ellett Allison

(Following the Children's Message, preschoolers go to extended care and those in kindergarten through fifth grade to Children's Church.)

* Gospel Lesson

Matthew 16:24-28

Tom Magraw

Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? 'For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Anthem

“Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree”
Holy Covenant Chancel Choir

arr. S. Andrews

The tree of life my soul hath seen / Laden with fruit, and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be / Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel: / By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see / In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought, / And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all: but now I see / 'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, / Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be / Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, / It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in hast to be / With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Prayers of the People

Nancy Ellett Allison

Epistle Lesson

Romans 12: 9-21

Cheri Dennis

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

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; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Sermon

“Loveliness”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation

Cheri Dennis

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

φ Praise God who gives all blessings birth;
Praise God all creatures on the earth;
Praise God, who makes, sustains, sets free;
One holy God in persons three. Amen.

* Offertory Dedication

Cheri Dennis

Service of Farewell for Lynn Chavarria

One: God of our beginnings and endings, we celebrate all we have shared with Lynn and ask your blessing as she continues on her journey. Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born and baptized. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with Lynn Chavarria who is returning to Austin.

As you walk into the promise of your new future, through the good times and the bad, we pray that you may never lose sight of the shelter of God’s loving arms.

Lynn: I know that God has called me forward and is with me always.

Prayer of Blessing

ALL: O God, we give thanks for remembered times when we together, have shared the life of faith. We thank you for the moments we have shared with Lynn in worship, in learning, in service. We pray that she will be aware of your Spirit’s guidance as she moves to new places of service. We lift our prayers with gratitude, in the name of Jesus the Savior. Amen.

1. O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my wea-ry soul in you;
I give you back the life I owe,
that in your O-cean depths its flow
may swell with ar-dor true.

2. O Light that fol-lows all my way,
to you I yield my flick-ering flame;
Re-new my spir-it's fee-ble ray,
that from your bril-liant sun-lit day
it may new bright-ness claim.

3. O Joy that seeks me through my pain,
to you I can-not close my heart;
I trace the rain-bow through the rain,
and know the prom-ise is not vain
that you will ne'er de-part.

4. O Cross that rais-es up my hear,
from you I dare not seek to flee;
Life's glo-ries with-er and are dead,
but from the ground there blos-soms red,
life that shall end-less be.

* Benediction

Nancy Ellett Allison

Postlude

Jared Fischer

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

WELCOME TO HOLY COVENANT

We welcome all who worship with us at Holy Covenant. Guests and members, we invite you to sign our friendship pads so that we may have a record of your worshipping with us and be in touch with you during the week. Members, please indicate any changes in your contact information. We invite our visitors and members to linger following worship and join us in light refreshments and conversation.

WELCOME TO MINISTRY INTERN CHERI DENNIS

We are delighted to welcome **Union Presbyterian Seminary student Cheri Dennis** as our 2017-18 Ministry Intern. Cheri and Keith Dennis joined Holy Covenant this February. Active in congregational leadership and volunteer ministry since her teenage years, Cheri has been a Lay Minister (Elder), Worship Leader, Stephen Minister, Sunday School teacher, and Confirmation teacher. She sang in the choir, played handbells, piano, and guitar. She has worked with Habitat for Humanity, Mecklenburg Ministries and as a leader for short term mission trips most often to Guatemala.

BACK TO SCHOOL CELEBRATION, SEPTEMBER 10

Students & Teachers: Bring your backpack, your giant totes, whatever you use to haul your school supplies and we will do a "Blessing of the Backpacks" in worship.

PIZZA FOR ALL FOLLOWING WORSHIP! SEPTEMBER 10

Following worship, we will celebrate with a pizza party for all. Bring a dessert to share if you are able. All are welcome for lunch!

PARENTS OF YOUTH & CHILDREN we would like to meet with you in the Conference Room and make plans together for ongoing Christian education. We welcome your thoughts and ideas!

EARTH CARE MINISTRY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 10

All are welcome. Join us at 10 AM in the Sojourners classroom.

ALL CHURCH WORK DAY, SEPTEMBER 16, SAVE THE DATE!

DVD ALAILABLE FROM EARTH CARE TEAM

National Geographic debuted a documentary *From the Ashes* in late June, 2017. The central question; what is the true cost of coal in today's economy and environment? *From the Ashes* attempts to present both sides of the often-contentious debate between jobs and the environment. The Earth Care Ministry at Holy Covenant UCC previewed the film before it premiered and the DVD is now available for in-home viewing. Anyone interested in viewing this very timely and informative social commentary, contact Diane Rogers, diane@cpmcraftsman.com or 207-615-4075.

12x12 SERVE. STAND UP. SHARE.

Take action with Missions & Justice! We need to be heard; we need to act! M&J wants to know how the people of Holy Covenant are responding to the many issues facing our people and our society today. Write your mission, drop it in the basket in the Gathering Room and M&J will track them as the year goes along.

- TODAY is the last day for collecting school supplies for local children at David Cox Elementary. Many thanks to all who have contributed!
- Support the Back Pack Ministry with food items which benefit young children at David Cox Elementary school. Look for the grocery cart in the Gathering Room.
- Plan to join us at **Charlotte PRIDE today!**

SOJOURNERS CLASS~NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL GATHERING

Join us Sundays at 9:45 as we discuss John Shelby Spong's *Biblical Literacy: A Gentile Heresy*. All are welcome and no preparation is necessary.

Today's Cover Art: *Calligraphy of Romans 12:12 by Gemma Scharnowski.*

Candid photographs and/or video recording share our work and witness and invite others into the fellowship of our congregation. Some pictures/video may be published in church print publications, on our website or on our official social media sites. If you do not wish to have your image published, please contact the church office by phone or email.

WE COULDN'T PROVIDE OUR WARM WELCOME WITHOUT THE HELP OF:

Elder for August:

Jeff Edwards-Knight, jeff763@aol.com or 704-651-4838

Deacons for August: Micheal Hall, Karen Long

Recyclers: Suzanne Lamorey

Greeters: Laura Hankins, Judi Lord

Ushers: Eileen Howe, Sue Pascucci

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger

Tabulators: Terry Raley Dennis

Refreshments: Joy Decker

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Donna Collins, Ginny & Bob Fisher, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Melissa Noll, Yami Senturias, Ed & Beth Sharp, Tommy Tomlinson & Alix Felsing, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Caroline Utz, Kathleen Wagner

Friends & Family Members

The family of Virgil Ryals (Tommy Tomlinson & Alix Felsing)

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Kathy Gibson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Peace Hale (Ben Hale), Bill Funderburk, Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), Ashley Jones (Annette Shoop), Barbara Lees (Donna Collins), David McLelland (Joe McLelland), Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie & Craig Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Chris, Julie & Mya Stone (Dawn Simmons), Virginia Tomlinson (Tommy Tomlinson & Alix Felsing), Wayne & Libby Walters (Barry Holcomb), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp)

Holy Covenant United Church of Christ

Rev. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., Pastor

Ms. Cheri Dennis, Ministry Intern

Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510

www.holycovenantucc.org office@holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810