



love of children ~ creation ~ neighbor
Silent Meditation

God's forgiveness of us is essential because without it we are dangerous. Unless we recognize our own need to be forgiven, forgiveness has a violent underside. Immersed in our own sense of controlled self-righteousness, protected from shame through denial, we hotly oppose forgiveness for those we do not want to forgive. - Margaret G. Alter

No one seems to be able to agree on everything. ~ Joe Magraw

There is, deep within, one voice, at once very strong and very gentle, that can calm the storm. It says something extremely simple like, 'It's okay. I love you anyway.' It seems to come from beneath all the other voices, and though it is a quiet voice, it speaks with compelling authority. This is the Voice of Mercy.

~ Elaine Prevallet

Forgiveness is the answer to the child's dream of a miracle by which what is broken is made whole again, what is soiled is again made clean. The dream explains why we need to be forgiven, and why we must forgive. In the presence of God, nothing stands between God and us--we are forgiven. But we cannot feel God's presence if anything is allowed to stand between ourselves and others.

~Dag Hammarskjold

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST
3 Great Loves: Love of Children

September 17, 2017

10:55 AM

Gathering Music

Kathi Smith

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

“Anthem for Wind and Water”

by Jim Stewart

Kathi Smith, piano

* Call to Worship *(from Psalm 103)*

Moses Taylor

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Many: All that is within me, bless God’s holy name!

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Many: Forget not all the benefits of the Living God!

One: Who forgives all your sins and heals your diseases.

**Many: Who redeems your life from destruction and crowns you with
mercy and loving-kindness.**

One: Who satisfies you with good as long as you live, and renews your
youth like an eagle’s.

Many: The Holy One is full of compassion, slow to anger, rich in love.

One: God does not deal with us as our sins deserve.

Many: For God knows how we are made.

One: God remembers that we are dust.

Many: Bless the Lord throughout all creation!

All: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

* Passing of the Peace

Moses Taylor

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*

* Hymns

“Every New Morning”

BUNNESAN

Every new morning, God gives freely
Hearts that are thankful, strength for the task,
People who love us, joy in our service,
All we have need of, if we but ask.

God will be with us, in all our thinking,
In all our speaking, in all we do;
And as we praise God, by all our actions,
God will be with us, seeing us through.

God in the morning, God in the noontide,
God in the evening, all through the day;
God is within us, and all around us,
God goes before us, all of the way.

“Let All Creation Sing Alleluia” GOD, THE CREATOR
(*Caller sings light print, congregation sings bold*)

Refrain: Let all creation *Let all cre-a-tion*
 Sing alleluia! *Sing al-le-lu-ia!*
 In one heart and voice let all crea-tures re-joice in God!

1. To you, O God, all crea-tures sing,
 To you O God all crea-tures sing,
Let all the vaults of heav’n now ring!
 Let all the vaults of heav’n now ring!
O burn-ing sun with gold-en beam,
 O burn-ing sun with gold-en beam,
And sil-ver moon with sof-ter gleam!
 And sil-ver moon with sof-ter gleam! (refrain)

2. O rushing wind and breezes soft,
 O clouds that ride the winds a-loft,

3. O flowing water, pure and clear,
 Make music for your Lord to hear.
 Fire so mas-ter-ful and bright,
 Pro-vi-ding us with warmth and light! *(refrain)*

4. O ev’ry-one of tender heart,
 For-giv-ing others, take your part.

5. Let all things their Cre-a-tor bless
 And worship God in hum-ble-ness.
 Praise Cre-a-tor, praise the Son,
 Praise the Spirit, Three-in-One! *(refrain)*

Children's Message

Nancy Ellett Allison

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

Gift in Song

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

words by FS Pierpoint, music arr. by John Rutter

Bridget Green, flute; David McGuirt, guitar; Lisa Cloninger, Kathi Smith, vocals

For the beauty of the earth
For the beauty of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies

*Refrain: Source of all, to you we raise
This our joyful song of praise*

For the beauty of the hour
Of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flower
Sun and moon and stars of light *(Refrain)*

For the joy of human love
Brother, sister, parent, child
Friends on earth and friends above
For all gentle thoughts and mild *(Refrain)*

For each perfect gift of yours
To our world so freely given
Graces human and divine
Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n *(Refrain)*

A Bidding Prayer

Nancy Ellett Allison

All: (God of mercy) Hear our prayers.

The Peace Prayer of St. Francis

**All: Lord make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;**

**Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.**

**O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be
consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to
be loved, as to love.**

**For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are
pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**

Amen.

*** Gospel Reading**

Matthew 18:21-35 Anne Findlay Chamberlain

Then Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made.

So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt.

When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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

“Human Storms”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation

Anne Findlay Chamberlain

Offering Music

“The Gentle Arms of Eden”

by D Carter & T Grammer

David McGuirt, guitar; Lisa Cloninger, vocals

On a sleepy endless ocean when the world lay in a dream
There was rhythm in the splash and roll, but not a voice to sing
So the moon fell on the breakers and the morning warmed the waves
Till a single cell did jump and hum for joy as though to say

*Chorus: This is my home, this is my only home
This is the only sacred ground that I have ever known
And should I stray in the dark night alone
Rock me goddess in the gentle arms of eden*

Then the day shone bright and rounder till the one turned into two
And the two into ten thousand things, and old things into new
And on some virgin beach head one lonesome critter crawled
And he looked about and shouted out in his most astonished drawl
(Chorus)

Then all the sky was buzzin' and the ground was carpet green
And the wary children of the woods went dancin' in between
And the people sang rejoicing when the fields were glad with grain
This song of celebration from their cities on the plain
(Chorus)

Now there's smoke across the harbor, and there's factories on the shore
And the world is ill with greed and will and enterprise of war
But I will lay my burdens in the cradle of your grace
And the shining beaches of your love and the sea of your embrace
(Chorus)

* Offering Response

OLD HUNDREDTH

☩ 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

Anne Findlay Chamberlain

* Hymn 427

“God Made from One Blood”

ST. DENIO

* Benediction Response 581

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

☩ Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust,
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe.

Postlude

Kathi Smith

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.

NEW MEMBER/INQUIRER CLASSES

If you would like to get more involved, learn more about our congregation and the United Church of Christ, and join our church, we encourage you to attend our Inquirer's Classes:

September 17, 9:30 AM: Who We Are, What We Believe

September 24, Luncheon: Organization & Opportunities for Involvement

October 1, 9:30 AM: History of UCC & Holy Covenant

We will welcome new members on October 8.

Childcare is available for all age children during this time and we invite you to join us! Please contact Debbie Davis, debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com, if you are interested in attending or have any questions.

THANKS TO ALL WHO CAME FOR THE ALL CHURCH WORK DAY!

We are grateful to all our volunteers who keep the church moving forward. Thank you to all who came for the work day. Thank you to ALL who support Holy Covenant in your time and talents year round!

HC'S CREATION JUSTICE TEAM INVITES YOU TO SIGN UP FOR "UCC POLLINATOR"

Learn about direct opportunities to help save our environment by signing up for the newsletter at www.ucc.org/pollinator_sign_up.

SOJOURNERS CLASS~NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL GATHERING

The Sojourners will discuss Chapters 7, 8 & 9 of *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy* by John Shelby Spong. On the last Sunday of each month we'll continue viewing the video series "How Jesus Became God" during our regular Sunday School time, 9:45-10:45. All are welcome and no preparation is necessary.

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.

- BRING FOOD for **BACK PACKS FOR CHILDREN** every first Sunday!
- Volunteer at your local school: CMS- www.cms.k12.nc.us or Cabarrus- www.cabarrus.k12.nc.us. Under "Quick Links" or "Useful Links" find "Volunteer" a webpage that may offer examples of volunteer activities, a phone number and email address for the person who can answer their questions, and get you started.
- Support Holy Covenant's benevolence fund, that helps members in need of assistance during times of crisis. Notate your check "Sunshine Fund"

THE BOOK CLUB MOVES TO SECOND WEDNESDAYS

The book club has changed its meeting date to **the second Wednesday** of the month. Join us at 10:30 AM at SouthPark Church for the following discussions:

October 11-*The Leavers* by Lisa Ko discussion leader Betty Little

November 15- *A Full Life* by Jimmy Carter discussion leader Barbara Schneller

December 13-*A Short History of a Small Place* by T.R. Pearson discussion leader Sharon Landis

CROP HUNGER WALK, OCTOBER 14

All walkers are invited to join the **largest hunger walk** in the USA. The walk on Saturday, October 14 at 9:00 a.m. is 3.6 miles which is how far many people have to walk to get food and clean water for their family. 25% of all donations will stay in Mecklenburg Co. and be divided between 3 agencies. Church World Service is providing assistance to residents affected by the recent hurricanes. All interested in walking with the

church group, please contact Tina Dickens at church or email taichitina@gmail.com. For more information visit CWSGlobal.org.

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

Elder for September: Jeff Hughes, jeffhugh@msn.com or 704-577-3068

Deacons for September: Joe Behr-Stenzel

Recyclers: Linn Finger, Kim Buch

Greeters: Eileen Howe, Aida Marcial

Ushers: Barry Holcomb, Suzanne Lamorey, Susan Pascucci

Media: Brian Hankins, Debbie Davis, Keith Dennis

Tabulators: Lori Cipot, Terry Raley Dennis

Refreshments: Julie McLelland, Joe McLelland

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Joe & Julie McLelland, in the death of Julie's father, Urban Lynn.

David Cable and family, in the death of David's husband, Keith Whitlock.

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

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Bill Funderburk, Kathy Gibson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Peace Hale (Ben Hale), Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), Ashley Jones (Annette Shoop), Nancy Knapp (Suzanne Hopkins), David McLelland (Joe McLelland), Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie & Craig Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Doris Storie (Garrett Barlow), Virginia Tomlinson (Tommy Tomlinson & Alix Felsing), Cindy Wagner (Donna Collins), Wayne & Libby Walters (Barry Holcomb), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp), Elizabeth Wilson (Donna Collins)

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