



love of children ~ creation ~ neighbor

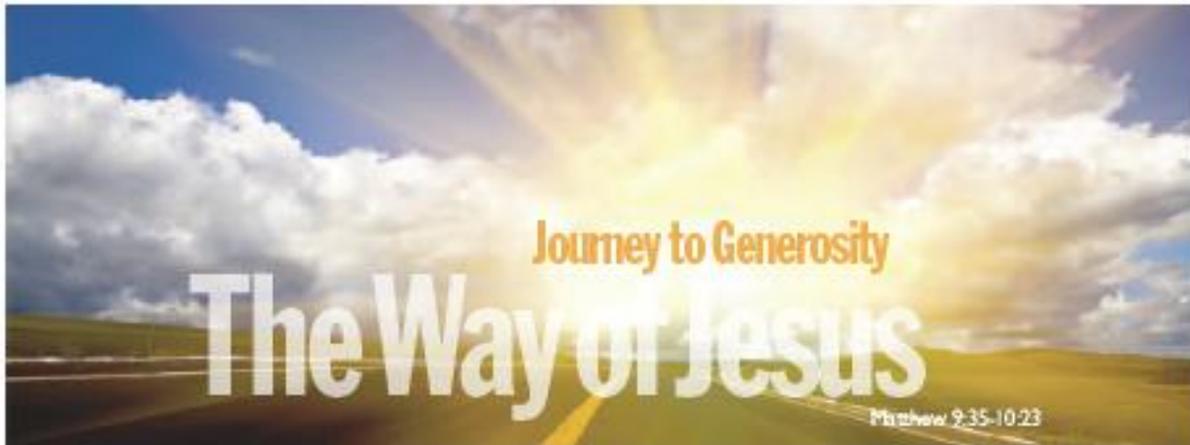
Silent Meditation

We human beings are most fully alive when we love what God loves. And God loves the entire creation.

~ Jake Owensby

The dominion here mandated is with reference to the animals. The dominance is that of a shepherd who cares for, tends, and feeds the animals... the task of "dominion" does not have to do with exploitation and abuse. It has to do with securing the well-being of every other creature and bringing the promise of each to full fruition.... The role of the human person is to see to it that the creation becomes fully the creation willed by God.

~ Walter Brueggemann



ACCEPT THE YOKE OF JESUS

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

According to many of the intelligent and wise in the world, a major life purpose is to accumulate money and other resources as a hedge against insecurity, and to use time and talent for one’s own pleasure. While not denying the need for long-term security (not only for oneself but for all in the community), and while rejoicing in the gifts of life, the steward recognizes that one of the most important acts in life is the deeply symbolic act of placing something in the offering plate. That is a commitment to the welfare of all.

The invitation to accept a new yoke — the yoke of Jesus — is a bidding to reject the old ways of the old realm that were life denying and to instead embrace ways that are life giving. As it pertains to stewardship, the old age is exhausting, and ill-fitting. The more we have, the more we want. And seldom do we have enough. By contrast, life in the community that is centered on Jesus is a journey to a world that creates positive, life-affirming, meaning-bestowing energy that is easy and a good fit for those who will try it as a discipline for ordering their existence.

Investing time, talent, money, and other resources in the values and practices of the Realm both helps to enact qualities of the Realm in the present and thereby helps keep alive for future generations the possibility that things can be different — in a good way — in comparison to the way they are now.

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST
3 Great Loves: Love of Creation

October 8, 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

Cheryl Milam

One: We gather in the presence of the Creator of all life, the Lamb of God, and the Spirit, the breath in all life.

Many: Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with God's presence.

One: We invite our animal family to worship with us,

Many: All our kin living on this planet, from the busiest bee to the tallest giraffe.

One: We remember our animal relatives, who have become extinct,

Many: Dinosaurs, dodos and Texas grey wolves, Oregon bison and the woolly mammoth.

One: We join our brothers and sisters in praising God,

Many: Gliding eagles and watchful cougars, gorillas in the mist and polar bears in the snow.

One: We summon the kin we have come to love,

Many: The stray cat and the backyard dog, the goat, the pony, and each guinea pig.

One: All our animal family in all the world,

**Many: Raise your voices to the skies in a family festival of praise.
Sing, family, sing!**

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

* Passing of the Peace

Cheryl Milam

One: We are renewed by the love of God, the love of our sisters and brothers in Christ and the love of our pets. 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.

* Hymn

“To You, O God, All Creatures Sing” LASST UNS ERFREUEN

To you, O God, all creatures sing; Let all the vaults of heav'n now ring.
Sing your praises, Alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam; Thou silver moon with softer gleam.
Sing your praises, sing your praises, Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong; Ye clouds that sail in heav'n along.
Sing your praises, Alleluia!

Thou rising morn in praise rejoice; Ye lights of evening find a voice.
Sing your praises, sing your praises, Alleluia!

O crystal waters flowing clear; Make music for thy Lord to hear.
Sing your praises, Alleluia!

Let all things their creator bless And worship God in humbleness.
Sing your praises, Alleluia!

Praise, praise Creator God and Son; And praise the Spirit three in one.
Sing your praises, sing your praises, Alleluia!

*Refrain: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.*

Each little flow'r that opens, each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors and made their tiny wings. *(Refrain)*

The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,
The sunset and the morning that brightens up the sky. *(Refrain)*

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden: He made them ev'ry one. *(Refrain)*

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.)

Hebrew Wisdom

Psalm 104

Travis Wheat

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honor and majesty...

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens. People go out to their work and to their labor until the evening. O Living God, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. May the glory of God endure forever; may God rejoice in all!

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

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

Journey of Generosity

Travis Wheat

Gift of Music

“A Place at the Table”
Judah L. Jones

Shirley E. Murray

For everyone born, a place at the table.
For everyone born, clean water and bread,
A shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
For everyone born, a star overhead.

*Chorus: And God will delight when we are creators of justice
And joy, compassion & peace.
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice,
Justice and joy.*

For woman and man, a place at the table,
To work, to speak out, to witness and share.
With wisdom and grace, dividing the power.
For woman and man, a system that's fair.

For young and for old, a place at the table,
A voice to be heard, a part in the song.
The hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled.
For young and for old, the right to belong.

For all creatures here, a place at the table,
To live without fear, and simply to be.
In forest or stream, in jungle or ocean,
For all creatures here, the right to be free.

Prayers of the People

Nancy Ellett Allison

Hymn of Response

"Vapor"

by M. and L. Gungor

Oh the vapor of it all, it's a chasing of the wind
The substance of the form, so pale and thin
Let the veil of earth be stretched again

Holy / All behold the holy
Trees clap their hands for you / Oceans, they dance for you

Heaven breathes through humankind
We can feel the intertwine
The beauty of it all
The mystery / The swelling of a voice / A rising sea

Holy / All behold the holy
Trees clap their hands for you / Oceans, they dance for you
You are holy / Infinite and holy

A billion suns rise for you / Clouds paint the skies for you
Mountains stand tall for you / Valleys bow down to you
Everything rising to / Sing all our songs to you (*Interlude*)

Holy / The impossible and holy
Kings become fools for you / Kingdoms to ruins for you
Vapor finds ground in you / Music finds sound in you
Everything rising (x5) (*Interlude*)

Come like dawn / Like grace / Like sunlight
Bring this world to life
Come like rain / Like breath / Like springtime
Bring this world to life

Hebrew Wisdom Lesson Job 38:1-11, 39: 1-4, 26-30

Cheri Dennis

Then the Living God answered Job out of the whirlwind: ‘Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

‘Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?—when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, and said, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped”?’

Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you observe the calving of the deer? Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth, when they crouch to give birth to their offspring, and are delivered of their young? Their young ones become strong, they grow up in the open; they go forth, and do not return to them.

‘Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads its wings towards the south? Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high? It lives on the rock and makes its home in the fastness of the rocky crag. From there it spies the prey; its eyes see it from far away. Its young ones suck up blood; and where the slain are, there it is.’

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 “Large Creatures, Small Creatures” Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation Cheri Dennis

Offering Music

* Offering Response

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
- * Hymn 32 “God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale” ROEDER
(*stanzas 1 - 3*)
- * Benediction Nancy Ellett Allison
- * Benediction Response 581 WORLD PEACE PRAYER
- ϕ 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 Jared Fischer

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 MEMBERS/ INQUIRERS

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: **October 8, Post Worship Luncheon** hosted by Elders and Deacons Organization & Opportunities for Involvement; **October 15, Welcome Sunday**. Childcare is available for all age children.

JOURNEY OF GENEROSITY

As we look forward to making 2018 a year in which we can continue our ministry at Holy Covenant through worshipping God, supporting one another, and being a place where all people are welcome, we ask you to join the journey of generosity through your support of our 2018 Spending Plan. There are many exciting things happening at Holy Covenant which need funding, as do the less glamorous items like paying the mortgage and the electric bill. Our goal this year is to have a total of \$192,000.00 pledged to the General Fund and \$50,000 pledged to the Building Fund by October 22. Please consider all the work Holy Covenant does and pledge your support for the upcoming year. We are presently at 15% of goal for our General (Operating) Fund and 46% of goal for our Building Fund. <http://holycovenantucc.org/make-your-2018-pledge-online/>

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Rev. Susan Bennett Stiles and Martha Bomely will be leading a brief time of singing for our children each Sunday from noon - 12:15. The goal is to help children enjoy singing songs of faith - not to become a full-fledged choir. We hope your child can stay for that brief amount of time and learn some songs together. Questions? Call Susan at 989-860-5876.

SOJOURNERS CLASS~

NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL GATHERING

The Sojourners continue discussion of *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy*. On the last Sunday of each month we will view another video in the series *How Jesus Became God* during our regular Sunday School time, 9:45-10:45. All are welcome and no preparation is necessary. Also, the Sojourners are bringing items to create "**Welcome Home**" packages for Urban Ministries Center to present to the folks they are helping to leave homelessness. See Gussie Spencer for a list of items that are needed--everything from soap to sheets!

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.

- Support the UNCC students with gently used professional clothing for interviews! Food items (especially international fare) and clothing can be dropped in the basket in the gathering room. Jimal Niner Student Pantry expanded their outreach to UNCC students seeking employment
- Not one, but one hundred sandwiches at a time! The HCUCS Sandwich Ministry gathers Saturday, Oct. 21, Holy Covenant UCC & Wednesday, Oct 25, South Park Christian Church. Join us, won't you?!

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. All interested in walking with the church group, please contact Tina Dickens, taichitina@gmail.com. For more information visit **Church World Service**.

NC MISSION OPPORTUNITY, OCTOBER 22-27

Link In Creative Ministries (LINC) and is a mission ministry to Lumberton, NC to repair homes that were damaged in the flood of 2016. There are still 6 cots available for others to register and stay. The cost is \$100 per person which includes meals and insurance. Contact Rev. Larry Bolick, 704-636-2354 or 828-612-8146, or Bolick.larry@yahoo.com.

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

Elder for October: Faye Humphrey, fghumphrey@aol.com or 704-618-2750

Deacons for October: Martha Bomely, Sally Duffy

Recyclers: Diane Rogers

Greeters: Laura Hankins, Judi Lord

Ushers: Kevin Decker, Kevin Edwards Knight, Tom Magraw

Media: Brian Hankins, Debbie Davis, Olivia Carney

Tabulators: Kathi Smith, Sally McLester

Refreshments: Holly Middleton, Dawn Schmitz

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Anita Taylor in the death of her husband, Moses Taylor.

David & Kay Smith and family in the death of David's mother, Betsy Ann Smith

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

Friends & Family Members

Mark Mashburn and family in the death of his wife (Robert Shepherd)

Gina Null and family in the death of her mother (Robert Shepherd)

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), Beth Poyer Meyer, JoAnn Murphey (Laura Murphey), Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie & Craig Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto & family (Aida Marcial), Doris Storie (Garrett Barlow), 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

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