



**Jesus went out to a desert place and he prayed....**

### Silent Meditation

*The root of Christian love is not the will to love,  
but the faith that one is loved.*

*The faith that one is loved by God.*

*The faith that one is loved by God although unworthy---or,  
rather, irrespective of one's worth!*

*In the true Christian vision of God's love,  
the idea of worthiness loses its significance....*

*To say that I am made in the image of God is to say that  
love is the reason for my existence, for God is love.*

*Love is my true identity.*

*Selflessness is my true self.*

*Love is my true character.*

*Love is my name.*

*~Thomas Merton*

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 4, 2018

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 information pads so that all worshippers  
might have the opportunity to sign them.)*

\* Passing of the Peace

Nancy Ellett Allison

Opening Voluntary

Jared Fischer

\* Call to Worship

Jim Sherman

One: Let us enter into worship with open hearts and minds.

Many: **The presence of our Creating God fills this place of gathering  
and worship with hope and vitality.**

One: Let us welcome in each sibling, every child of humankind.

Many: **The richness and diversity of life gives us cause to celebrate.**

One: May we who are gathered here be empowered by God's love;

Many: **May we weave new patterns of truth and justice into a web of  
life that is strong, beautiful and everlasting.**

One: May we live with the confidence that our God of grace will  
redeem all our actions;

Many: **May we live with the hope that our God of glory will shine  
through our lives making us a blessing to others.**

Prayer of Invocation (*Unison*)

Jim Sherman

**Persistent, forgiving Mystery of Life, you pour out your blessings on all  
your creatures, sustaining our every breath, renewing our lives in  
every moment. Open our minds and heart to know your ways, so that  
we may more perfectly be your body, filling the world with your grace  
and glory. Amen.**

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

God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power;  
Crown your 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.

From the evils that surround us, and assail the Savior's ways,  
From the fears that long have bound us-  
Free our heart for faith and praise.

Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
For the living of these days, For the living of these days.

Save us from weak resignation, to the evils we deplore;  
Let the search for your salvation be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
Serving you whom we adore, Serving you whom we adore.

"Everlasting God"

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
Wait upon the Lord; We will wait upon the Lord

Our God, You reign forever; Our hope, our Strong Deliverer  
You are the everlasting God/ The everlasting God  
You do not faint/ You won't grow weary

You are the everlasting God; The everlasting God  
You do not faint; You won't grow weary

You're the defender of the weak;/ You comfort those in need  
You lift us up on wings like eagles

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.)*

\* Gospel Lesson

Mark 1:29-39

Terrance Hayes

As soon as Jesus and the disciples left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. Jesus came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." Jesus answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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

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

Pastoral Prayer

Barbara Thomas

Hebrew Scripture

Isaiah 40:21-31

Barbara Thomas

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is the Living God who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? The One who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because God is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Living One, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Living One is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God does not faint or grow weary; God's understanding is unsearchable. God gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

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 "Waiting for Renewal" Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation Barbara Thomas

Offering Music "Skeleton Bones" Music Cooperative

Peel back our ribs again and stand up strong inside our chest.

**Breathe into our spirit, breathe into our spirit.**

Peel back the veil of time and let us see You with our naked eyes.

**We just want to know you, we just want to know you.**

Pre-chorus: Skeleton bones stand at the sound of  
Eternity on the lips of the found;  
And gravestones roll to the rhythm of the sound of you.  
Skeleton bones stand at the sound of

So separate those doors and let the Sun of Resurrection in.

*Chorus: Oh let us adore the Christ of Glory dressed in love.  
Open up your gates before Him, crown Him, stand Him up.*

We want your blood to be flowing through our body and

We want your breath to fill our lungs. **Breathe into our spirit.**

*(Pre-chorus to Chorus)*

\* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

φ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below,  
Praise God above all heavenly hosts,  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

\* Offertory Dedication

Barbara Thomas

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*(The liturgy includes the UCC Statement of Faith, indicated in italics.)*

One: We invite all who celebrate Christ's life and love to join us at this table of fellowship. As we join together in Holy Communion we confess our faith as Christians:

Many: *We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify: You call the worlds into being, have created us in your own image, and set before us the ways of life and death. You seek to save us from aimlessness and sin.*

Yet we confess that there have been times when we have ejected life and with hurtful words or selfish and destructive actions we have lost our way and through insensitivity and prejudice, have denied your image in others.

One: *You judge us and all nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.*

Many: We come to the table of communion, confessing, not that we are righteous, but that we love our Lord Jesus Christ and desire to remember him. Let us admit, not that we are strong, but that we are needy; not that we have any claim on Christ, but that Christ invites us to receive his grace and experience his presence.

*In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.*

One: We remember on the night of his betrayal, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: "Take, eat: This is my body, broken for you." In like manner, Jesus took the cup, and after giving thanks, gave it to the disciples and said: "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins." Remembering this act of love, we offer our praise and proclaim our faith.

Many: **With thanksgiving we celebrate the truth that:**

*You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.*

*You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.*

*You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.*

One: Come now, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Christ died.

Many: Amen.

One: These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

*(Communion is received by intinction. Please take a wafer or bread and dip it into the cup to receive both elements.)*

Music during Communion                      “My Only”                      Music Cooperative

All day long, we are sinking just like stones  
Into the shadow of Your kindness  
In this shade between the wingspan of Your grace is  
The only place where we can bed these burdens down, so I

**Refrain:** *Lift my eyes up to the hills. Who is going to help me now?  
You're my only, you're my only, you're my only hope*

Tangled up in the great ridiculous way You love,  
It is the only way to live  
There's no escape, when your eyes pierce through the fray  
I stare just like a deer into the headlights of Your ways, and I *(Refrain)*

And You come like the sun with pockets full of redemption  
And You come with the sun, with the sun.

**All: We give thanks, Living God, that You have refreshed us at Your table by shining the Light of Christ into our lives. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us into the world in courage and peace. Amen.**

**\* 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**

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Rev. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., Pastor  
Rev. Barbara Thomas, Interim Minister for Church & Family Life  
Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Ministry Intern  
Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music  
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## 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.

### SOUPER BOWL OF CARING - TODAY!

As followers of Christ we are all against hunger. Join our **Souper Bowl of Caring** team today and put a W in the box to alleviate hunger in our area. The youth will be roaming around the Gathering Space after worship with soup pots. Empty your pockets of loose change, get the change out of your car consoles, drop in silent change (you know - bills!), or write a check. All proceeds collected at Holy Covenant will be sent to Loaves and Fishes.



**ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 7:00 PM**

Light Supper before worship 5:30 - 6:30 PM. Bring a desert to share.

**LENTEN OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE**

“Charlotte’s Web” for all - Be a reading buddy with Hidden Valley Elementary third graders in February and March. Contact Dawn in the church office for volunteer forms, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org).

**LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH**

Please sign up with your email address at the bottom if you are interested in attending one of these five week offerings or sign up on the sheets provided in the gathering room after church.

**WILDERNESS STORIES, SUNDAYS, 4 PM @ home of Sally Duffy**

**RE-IMAGINING PRAYER, TUESDAYS, 7 PM @ home of Anne Findlay-Chamberlain**

**LEARNING FROM ST. FRANCIS, WEDNESDAYS, 1 PM @ Holy Covenant**

**Register for a Lenten Growth Series**

Name

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Email

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Class Choice

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## **GUEST PREACHER, REV. JULIE PEEPLES, FEBRUARY 11**

Julie has been the Senior Minister of Congregational UCC since 1991, a leader in the denomination and her community. CUCC has now welcomed its second immigrant into sanctuary at their church. Among many other honors, Julie has received Equality NC's Equality Champion Award, the Guilford Green Foundation's Distinguished Leadership Award, and the UCC's Antoinette Brown Award in 2009. Her husband, Paul Davis, serves with her at CUCC.

## **REFRESHMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP**

Thank you to all who provide snacks after worship, part of providing our extravagant welcome! To help keep us organized, we are now using an electronic signup for volunteers called **SignUpGenius**.

<https://tinyurl.com/hcuccsnacks>

## **THE TABULATION TEAM NEEDS YOUR HELP**

This team is responsible for counting the church collection money after church each week; a half hour commitment once per month. Contact Terry Raley-Dennis, 704-785-7150 or [tldennis2@hotmail.com](mailto:tldennis2@hotmail.com), if you are willing to help.

## **YOGA4ALL AT HOLY COVENANT, WEDNESDAYS 7:30PM**

Classes are geared toward inclusivity of all levels of experience and abilities. Questions? Contact David at [davidsmith02b@gmail.com](mailto:davidsmith02b@gmail.com)

## **SANDWICH MINISTRY FEBRUARY 10**

Volunteers are needed for the next sandwich build at HCUCC, February 10, at 10:00 am. Contact Julie McLelland, [jmclelland@ci.charlotte.nc.unc.edu](mailto:jmclelland@ci.charlotte.nc.unc.edu).

## **ROOM IN THE INN, FEBRUARY 11**

Thanks to all who have signed up! To complete our needs for this neighbor hosting, we're in need of we're in need of volunteers to help with Sunday set up and cleanup crew for Monday. Contact Suzanne Lamorey [SuzLam@yahoo.com](mailto:SuzLam@yahoo.com), if you are able to assist.

## **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMMUNITIES' 7th Annual**

### **"A Place to Live Again" Fundraising Luncheon**

Wednesday March 7, 2018 12:00-1:00 p.m. NASCAR Hall of Fame, Crown Ballroom. Come to the luncheon and be inspired to end homelessness. Contact table captain Melissa Noll, [Melissa.Noll@aol.com](mailto:Melissa.Noll@aol.com).

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

**Elder for February:**

Suzanne Lamorey, SuzLam@yahoo.com or 704-654-7267

**Deacons for February:** Jim Hong, Cheryl Milam

**Greeters:** Laura Hankins, Susan Pascucci

**Ushers:** Kelly Gimlin, Jill Gregg, Barbara Schneller

**Acolyte:** Riley Moder

**Media:** Brian Hankins, Debbie Davis, Renee Brown

**Tabulators:** Terry Raley Dennis

**Refreshments:** Phil Kaveler

**Recyclers:** Kristin Andes, Tom Magraw

## **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

### **Members**

**Tommy Tomlinson in the death of his mother, Helen Virginian Tomlinson**

Susan Bennett Stiles, Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Donna Collins, Linn Finger, Eileen Howe, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Melissa Noll, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Yami Senturias, Ed Sharp, Caroline Utz

### **Friends & Family Members**

**Ginny Fisher in the death of her husband, Robert "Bob" Fisher**

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Linda Burby, Marj Carmine (Donna Collins), Bill Funderburk, Christy Howe (Eileen Howe), Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), Chuck McAllister (Donna Collins), Beth Poyer Meyer, Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp), Elizabeth Wilson (Donna Collins), Larry Weidner (Dawn Simmons)