



Essential Questions

Who is Jesus?

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. A voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days and nights, and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' Mark 1:9-15

Silent Meditation

How we see Jesus . . . shapes what we think the Christian life is most centrally about.

Jesus was from the peasant class. . . .

He was not an ascetic, but world-affirming, with a zest for life.

There was a sociopolitical passion to him . . .

He was a religious ecstatic, a Jewish mystic, for whom God was an experiential reality. . . .

Jesus was an ambiguous figure—you could experience him and conclude that he was insane, as his family did [Mark 3:21], or that he was simply eccentric or that he was a dangerous threat—

or you could conclude that he was filled with the Spirit of God.

~Marcus Borg

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT**

February 18, 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.)*

Opening Voluntary

Jared Fischer

* Call to Worship

Michael Baldonado

One: Come, all people, come and worship. God has made a covenant with us.

Many: The God of Sea and Sky has set a bow in the heavens as a promise of everlasting covenant with all creatures.

One: Come, all people, come and worship. In the time of Jesus, God tore apart the heavens.

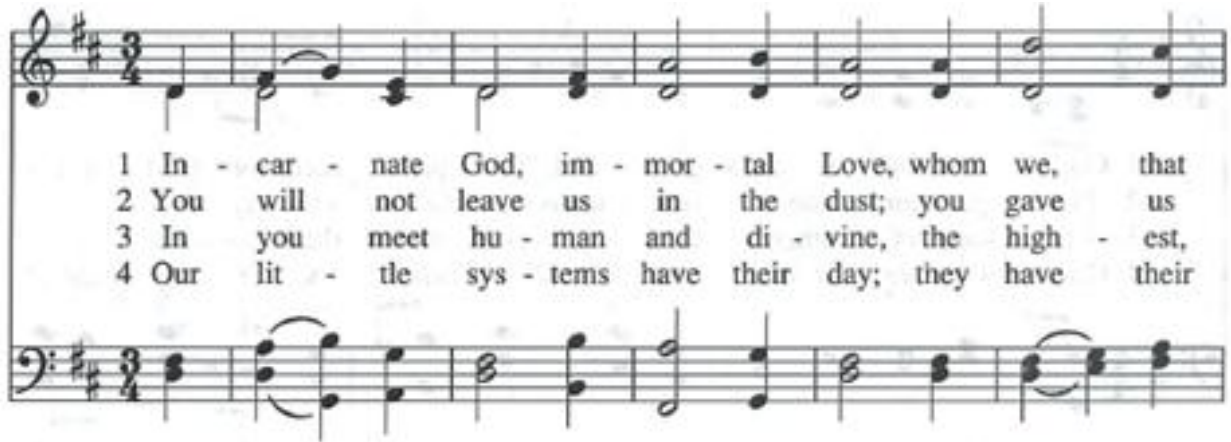
Many: The Spirit of God descended on Jesus as the sign of good news of the coming of God's holy reign.

One: Come, all people, come and worship. In this season of Lent may we remember that we belong to the God of Earth and Wind and Descending Dove.

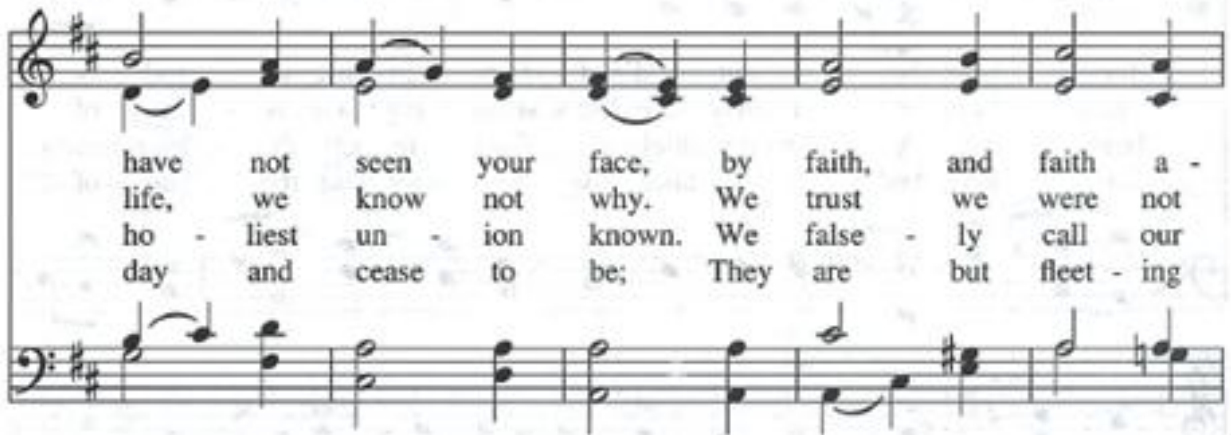
Many: We give thanks for this holy season, this time to return to the One whose welcome is always extended.

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

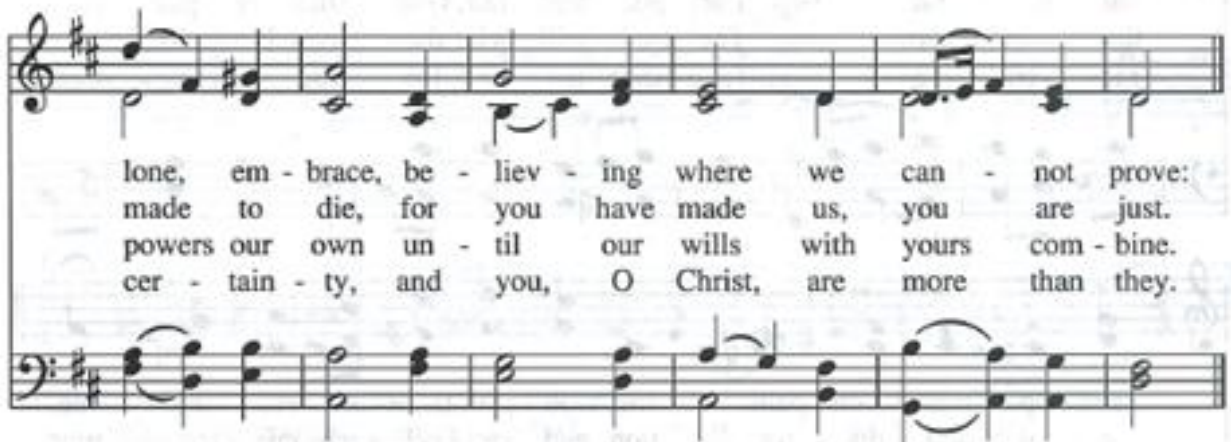
“Incarnate God, Immortal Love”
(stanzas 1,3,5,6)



1 In - car - nate God, im - mor - tal Love, whom we, that
2 You will not leave us in the dust; you gave us
3 In you meet hu - man and di - vine, the high - est,
4 Our lit - tle sys - tems have their day; they have their



have not seen your face, by faith, and faith a -
life, we know not why. We trust we were not
ho - liest un - ion known. We false - ly call our
day and cease to be; They are but fleet - ing



lone, em - brace, be - liev - ing where we can - not prove;
made to die, for you have made us, you are just.
powers our own un - til our wills with yours com - bine.
cer - tain - ty, and you, O Christ, are more than they.

5 We have but faith; we can-not know, 6 Let knowl-edge grow from more to more,
for knowl-edge is of things proved true; but more of rev-erence in us dwell;
And yet we trust it comes from you, That mind and soul, ac-cord-ing well,
a sign of prom-ise; let it grow. may make one music as be-fore.

“Us for Them”

by M. and L. Gungor

**When the lines are drawn, when you’re in or out,
When it’s us or them, and we shame the doubt,
It is all a lie, all we ever really need is love,
There’s no need to shed more blood
Look upon the cross / Look upon the cross.**

***Chorus 1: See the face of Christ; see the mercy in His eyes,
Every valley shall be lifted high.
Now, our enemies are blessed, the heavy laden rest,
For His judgment is love, His judgment is love.***

**There is no more guilt, there is no more shame,
All our darkest sin, all our deepest pain.
Blessed are the poor, all the lonely, broken, lost, and torn;
See a kingdom comes to us.
A war that’s fought with love / Our only war is love.**

***Chorus 2: Prepare the way of the Lord, wielding mercy like a sword,
Every mountaintop will be made low.
Know, He holds the earth like dust,
And His judgment comes to us,
And His judgment is love, His judgment is love.***

**We will not fight their wars, we will not fall in line,
Cause if it’s us or them, it’s us for them.
We reject the either or, they can’t define us anymore,
Cause if it’s us or them, it’s us for them. *Instrumental, Chorus 2***

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.)

Psalm

Psalm 25: 1-7

Jeff Rivenbark

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.
Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

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

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

Call to Prayer

“Return to God”

Marty Haugen

φ Return to God with all your heart,
The Source of grace and mercy;
Come seek the tender faithfulness of God.

Prayer of Confession

Isley Whitfield

One: Jesus was born into a world filled with poverty, violence, and fear. He lived among people who struggled to follow him. Jesus was no stranger to sin. Our sin comes as no surprise to him. His love and mercy should come as no surprise to us. Therefore, let us make our confession before God and one another in silent prayer.

Silent Confession

Many: O God, hear our prayer: More than any change for which we yearn, we need a change in heart and mind. Inspire in us the mind that is in Christ, who humbles himself and is obedient, who will be faithful to Your will even unto death. Inspire in us hearts so generous that we can become makers of peace. If we are too hesitant to follow Christ, exorcise our fear, and let us become bearers of courage. Help us to follow him as faithfully as he has followed You, O Living One.

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: God forgives, God restores, God creates in us new hearts and minds.

Many: Thanks be to God!

Gift of Music

“Calvary’s Love”

by Phil McHugh

Micah Baldonado, piano; Yasmin Senturias, soprano

Calvary’s love will sail forever bright and shining strong and free,
Like an ark of peace and safety on the sea of human need.
Through the hour of all the ages those tired of sailing on their own,
Finally rest inside the shadow cast by Calvary’s love across their souls.

Calvary’s love, Calvary’s love priceless gift Christ makes us worthy of,
The deepest sin can’t rise above Calvary’s love.

Calvary’s love can heal the spirit life has crushed and cast aside
And redeem till heavens promise fill with joy once empty eyes,

So desire to tell His story of a love that love enough to die,
Burns away all other passions and filled by Calvary’s love become a fire.

Calvary’s love has never faltered all its wonders still remain,
Soul still take eternal passage, sins atoned and heaven gained.

* Gospel Lesson

Mark 1:9-15

Barbara Thomas

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’ And the Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

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

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

A Litany of Commitment

Nancy Ellett Allison

One: Let us remember Jesus: Who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor and dwelt among us;

Many: Who was content to be the child of a poor family;

One: Who lived a common life, earning his living with his own hands and declining no humble tasks;

Many: Whom the common people heard gladly, for he understood their ways.

One: Let us remember Jesus: Who was mighty indeed, healing the sick and afflicted, using for others the powers he would not invoke for himself;

Many: Who was Teacher and Lord to his disciples, yet was among them as Companion and Servant.

One: Let us remember Jesus: Who loved people, yet retired from them to pray, rose a great while before day, watched through the night, journeyed in the wilderness, went up into a mountain, sought solace in a garden;

Many: Who prayed for his tempted disciples, and for the forgiveness of all who rejected him, and for the perfecting of those who received him;

One: Who observed good customs, but defied conventions that did not serve the purposes of God. Who hated sin because he knew the cost of pride and selfishness, of cruelty and impurity—the cost to humanity and to God.

Many: May this mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus.

One: Let us remember Jesus: Who, when he was reviled, did not retaliate, and when he suffered did not threaten; who emptied himself and carried obedience to the point of death, even death on the cross.

Many: May this mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus.

One: Let us pray for Christ to dwell within our hearts.

Many: O Christ, our only Savior, dwell in us that we may go forth with the light of your hope in our eyes, and with your faith and love in our hearts. Amen.

Offertory Invitation

Barbara Thomas

Offertory

“Sanctify”

by M. Smith and Stu G.

Here I am in that old place again / Down on my face again
Crying out I want you to hear my plea / Come down and rescue me
How long will it take? / How long will I have to wait?

Chorus: And all I want is all you have
Come to me, rescue me, fall on me with your love
And all you want is all I have
Come to me, rescue me, fall on me with your love

Sanctify I want to be set apart / Right to the very heart
Prophecy to the four winds / And breathe life to this very place
How long will it take? / How long will I have to wait?

Lifted up, I've climbed with the strength I have
Right to this mountain top
Looking out the cloud's getting bigger now
It's time to get ready now

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

☩ 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

A SERVICE OF FAREWELL & DEPARTURE

Service of Farewell for Jeff Rivenbark

One: Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. 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 Jeff Rivenbark who is returning "home."

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 Jeff in worship, in learning, in service. We pray that he will be aware of your Spirit's guidance as he moves to new places of service. We lift our prayers with gratitude, in the name of Jesus the Savior. Amen.

* Hymn 211 "Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days" ST. FLAVIAN

1. Lord Je-sus, who through for-ty days for us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins, and close by you to stay.
2. As you with Sa-tan did con-tend, and did the vic-tory win,
O give us strength to per-se-vere, in you to con-quer sin.
3. And through these days of pen-i-tence, and through this Passiontide,
Yes, ev-er-more, in life and death, O Christ, with us a-bide.
4. A-bide with us, till when this life of suf-fering shall past,
An Eas-ter of un-end-ing joy we may at-tain at last.

* 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.

CONSISTORY MEETING FEBRUARY 18, ALL ARE WELCOME

***Thanks to all who supported the Souper Bowl of Caring!
We were able to send \$381.40 to Loaves and Fishes.***



LENT 2018: ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Sunday, February 25 *What Matters Most?* Mark 12:28-34

Sunday, March 4 *Am I Accepted?* John 8:1-11

LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

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

We will explore wilderness stories in scripture and how those stories inform our wilderness experiences. Group led by Barbara Thomas and Sally Duffy.

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

This sessions will provide an opportunity to expand our understanding of prayer, experience many ways to pray, and reflect on those experiences.

LEARNING FROM ST. FRANCIS, WEDNESDAY'S, 1 PM @ Holy Covenant

Facilitated by Nancy Allison and taught by Julie McElmurry, author of "Living & Serving in the Way of St. Francis," we will focus on the teachings of St. Francis. Each participant will receive a copy of the book.

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>

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: Eileen Howe, Aida Marcial

Ushers: Jim Hong, Suzanne Lamorey, Susan Pascucci

Acolyte: Elena Houlihan

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger, Keith Dennis

Tabulators: Joy Decker, JoAnn Jellison, Terry Raley Dennis

Refreshments: Evelyn Fischer, Julie McLelland, Isley Whitfield

Recyclers: Linn Finger

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Bill Funderburk, Kristy Howe (Eileen Howe), Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), Beth Poyer Meyer, Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Larry Weidner (Dawn Simmons) Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp), Jason Wingard (Cynthia Simpson)

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

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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