



## Silent Meditation

In each of our lives Jesus comes as the Bread of Life –  
To be eaten, to be consumed by us.

This is how he loves us.

Then Jesus comes in our human life as the hungry one,  
The other, hoping to be fed with the Bread of our life:

Our hearts by loving, and our hands by serving.

~Mother Teresa

From the first moment of my existence, before I did anything, the seed of my true identity as a human being is present deep within: I came from God; I am an image of him; Love is the ground of my being; I share in his life in a relationship of untold intimacy... I have been awakened to my true identity in God, which every human being shares. This truth has changed me. Who I am is not a goal to achieve but a gift to receive, and I'm learning to wake up each morning and receive it.

~ Jim Palmer

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 6, 2018

Gathering Music

Jared Fischer

Welcome and Announcements ✕

Nancy Ellett Allison

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: **Christ is risen indeed!**

One: May the joy of the Living Christ be with you.

Many: **May the risen Christ be with your spirit.**

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

Opening Voluntary

Jared Fischer

\* Call to Worship

*(An invitation from God;  
adapted from Isaiah 55, The Message)*

Donna Collins

One: “Hey y’all! All who are thirsty, come to the water!

All: **Are you penniless? Come anyway—buy and eat! Come, buy your drinks, buy wine and milk. Buy without money—everything’s free!**

One: Why do you spend your money on junk food, your hard-earned cash on cotton candy?

All: **Listen well: Eat only the best, fill yourself with only the finest.**

One: Pay attention, come close now, listen carefully to my life-giving, life-nourishing words.

All: **I, the Holy One, am making a lasting covenant commitment with you, the same that I made with David: to give you sure, solid, enduring love.**

One: I set him up as a witness to all people, made him a prince and leader of people, and now I’m doing it to you.

All: **You’ll unite people you’ve never heard of and those who’ve never heard of you will come running to you.**

One: All this will happen because of me, your Living God, because The Holy One of Israel has honored you.”

*\* All rise in body or spirit    ϕ Sing Response    ✕ Seating by Ushers*

\* Passing of the Peace

Donna Collins

One: Let us now greet one another as a sign of God's peace, for the peace of God is here to stay.

Many: Thanks be to God.

\* Hymn

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy unchanging love.

Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;  
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above!

"All My Hope"

David Crowder

I've been held by the Savior / I've felt fire from above  
I've been down to the river / I ain't the same, I'm a prodigal returned

*Chorus:* All my hope is in Jesus / Thank God that yesterday's gone  
All my sins are forgiven / I've been washed in the flood

I'm no stranger to the prison / I've worn shackles and chains  
But I've been freed and forgiven / And I'm not going back,  
I'll never be the same / That's why I sing (*Chorus*)

There's a kind of thing that just breaks you down  
Breaks you down to your knees  
God, I've been broken more than a time or two  
Yes, Lord, then you picked me up and showed me  
What it means to be your child (*Chorus*)

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.)*

New Life Story

Jean Raley-Dennis

Pastoral Prayer

Barbara Thomas

Reflection

"Free"

W. Matthews & L. Gungor

**There's a world at war / Caught in suffering  
Silent casualties / Oh, God, grant us peace**

**In these sleepless nights / I can hardly breathe  
Despite brutality / I know that we'll be free  
I know that we'll be free**

***Chorus:* Let the light in keep it shinin' / Let it break into the darkness  
All the love dares us to see / We'll all be free**

**In these desperate times / Love will hold us here  
Love will join our hands / Teach us to have no fear**

**So we lay our hate down / To wash their feet  
When we see our brother / When we see our sister  
When we see each other / Oh, we'll all be free  
Yes, we'll all be free *Chorus***

**We'll be free, free / We'll all be free (2x)  
We are free, free / We'll all be free (2x) *Chorus (2x)***

Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.'

But Peter said, 'By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean.' The voice said to him again, a second time, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared...So Peter went down to the men and said, 'I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?'

They answered, 'Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man...was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say'...

Peter said to them, 'You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?'

Cornelius replied, 'Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me. He said, "Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter... So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say.'

Then Peter began to speak to them: ‘I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all...We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.’

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

Many: Alleluia! Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Sermon

“Peter’s New Life Story”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation

Barbara Thomas

Offering Music

Jared Fischer

\* Response of Thanksgiving

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

- φ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
- Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
- Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
- Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
- Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Offertory Dedication

## 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 rejected 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 our life in communion:

*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.*

*The Communion elements are bread, wafers, gluten free wafers, and grape juice.*

Music during Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.

\* Hymn

“Let All Things Now Living”

THE ASH GROVE

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving,  
To God the creator, triumphantly raise.  
Who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,  
Who still guides us on to the end of our days.

God's banners are o'er us, God's light goes before us,  
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night.  
Till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished  
As forward we travel from light into light.

\* Benediction

Nancy Ellett Allison

\* Benediction Response “Sent Forth by God's Blessing” THE ASH GROVE

φ Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
The people of God from this dwelling take leave.

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.

### 53RD ANNUAL GATHERING, THE SOC-UCC JUNE 21- 23

Canterbury School, Greensboro. HCUCC can send a delegate to be our voting voice! Contact the church office *this week* if you are interested.

### BLANKET SUNDAY ~ “Blanket the World with Love”

Church World Service provides blankets for vulnerable families in the U.S. and around the world who are experiencing disasters, fleeing with their children, in refugee camps and at risk. Come visit the blanket table in the gathering room. Blankets can be purchased for \$10.00 in honor of your Mom or someone close to you for Mother's Day. Cards are available that are colored by HCUCC children! Available May 6 & 13 in the gathering room.

### HCUCC BOOK CLUB, MAY 9

The HCUCC book club meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 10:30 at SouthPark Christian Church, 6650 Park South Drive, Charlotte. Please join us for thoughtful, lively discussions. The Little Paris Bookstore by Nina George (Karen Long)

**RAFTING RETREAT, AUG 10-12, Sign up today in the gathering room!**

**CHARLOTTE KNIGHTS BALL GAME, Last day to sign up is today!**

### SUPPORT FOR CARE GIVERS, MAY 20

“I'm Fine”: A caregivers group, meets on May 20<sup>th</sup> at 9 am at the church. All who are caring for or concerned about a family member or someone close is invited to join us for sharing of stories, information, support and resources. For more information contact Alix Felsing or Rev. Barbara.

## **"GOING DEEPER SPIRITUALLY" MEETS MAY 24TH 7PM**

This new group meets on the 4th Thursday monthly, 7-8:30PM. Our next gathering, hosted by Barb Schneller, focuses on songs that speak to your spirit. RSVP by May 21; Barbara Schneller, [bschneller@wcupa.edu](mailto:bschneller@wcupa.edu), 610-574-4577 or Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, [kahuanne@gmail.com](mailto:kahuanne@gmail.com), 808-282-4631

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The Sojourners viewing/discussion plans for the month of May:

May 13 - Anne Lamott's *Hallelujah Anyway*, Chapter 9

Class begins at 9:45, usually in the Conference Room, and all are welcome -- no preparation necessary.

## **MAY 6: MISSIONS & JUSTICE TEAM MEETS FOLLOWING WORSHIP**

### **MAY 12: 2018 AIDS WALK**

Join fellow Holy Covenant walkers and hundreds in the Charlotte community for the 2018 Aids Walk on Saturday, May 12. WELLS FARGO ATRIUM & PLAZA 301 S. Tryon Street, Registration 9 am, **Walk starts at 11 am**. Contribute to this fundraiser or add your name as walking with the **Holy Covenant team** Questions? Please contact our HCUCC AIDS WALK team leader Debbie Davis at [debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com](mailto:debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com). All funds raised will benefit RAIN and their work with those living with AIDs or at risk.

## **JUNE 23: SALISBURY PRIDE**

## **AUGUST 18-19: CHARLOTTE PRIDE FESTIVAL**

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

Elder for May: Robert Shepherd, [RShepVidEd@att.net](mailto:RShepVidEd@att.net) or 704-618-1322

Deacons for May: Debbie Davis, Gregg Walker

Greeters: Laura Hankins, Eileen Howe

Ushers: JP Griffin, Kelly Gimlin, Jill Gregg, Barb Schneller

Acolyte: Riley Moder

Media: Brian Hankins, Suzanne Lamorey, Lisa Cloninger

Tabulators: Kelly Gimlin, Alice Phelan

Refreshments: Nishi Griffin, Lane Lasater

Recyclers: Kristin Andes, Tom Magraw

## **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

### **Members**

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

### **Friends & Family Members**

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Diane Brown (Renee Brown & Kelly Gimlin), Baby Girl Cregan (Barb Schneller), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Bill Funderburk, Caroline Herdle (Beth Sharp), Cindy Herman (Donna Collins), Kim Hobbs (Melissa Noll), Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), George & Judy Jongeling (Darline Warren), Barbara Lees (Donna Collins), Beth Poyer Meyer, Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Norma Thomas (Barbara Thomas), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp)

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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

**Rev. Barbara Thomas, Interim Minister for Church & Family Life**

**Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music**

**Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant**

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