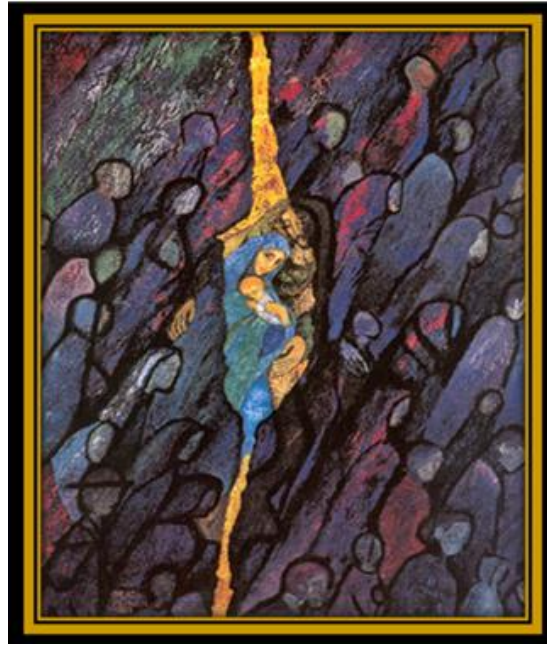


HOLY COVENANT

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Advent Proclaims All is Well

“O Saviour, Tear Open the Heavens” © Beate Heinen

The people who walked in darkness, have seen a great light. Isaiah 9:2

Silent Meditation

There must be always
remaining in every life,
some place for the singing of angels.

Some place for that
which in itself
is breathless and beautiful.
Old burdens become lighter
deep and ancient wounds
lose much of their old hurting.
Despite all the crassness of life,
all the hardness and harsh discords,
life is saved by the singing of angels.

~Howard Thurman

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ALL IS WELL: LESSONS AND CAROLS OF THE INCARNATION
THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 16, 2018

Gathering Music David Gilliland

Chiming Handbell Ensemble

Welcome and Announcements ✕ Nancy Ellett Allison

One: May the peace of the Christ Child be with you all.

Many: And also with you.

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

Opening Voluntary “Now the Green Blade Riseth” Handbell Ensemble

* Call to Worship Cheryl Milam

One: O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant,

Many: O come, all ye faithful, weary, and worn.

One: Come from a world of darkness into the light of Christ.

Many: O come, all ye faithful!

One: Come from a deadly world into the gift of new life.

Many: O come, all ye faithful!

One: Come sing your praise with choirs of angels.

**Many: O come, all ye faithful! Come and adore the Light of the
World!**

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

* Hymn

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful joyful and triumphant,
Oh come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the King of angels;

Refrain: O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Highest, Most Holy, Light of Light Eternal
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Very God, begotten not created: *(Refrain)*

Sing choirs of angels sing in exultation
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God, all glory in the highest: *(Refrain)*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of our God is now in flesh appearing: *(Refrain)*

Lighting the Advent Candle

Mike, Sarah, Ben & Alex Sladek

One: We lit our advent candles of hope and peace to remind us of our vision for the world.

Many: We light them again, committing to cherish hope and work to establish peace in the world.

One: We light this candle of joy today to remind us that Christ came, and is coming, so that all people might have a full and abundant life.

Many: We offer our thanks for the hope Christ gives us, for the peace the Spirit bestows, and for the joy poured into our hearts. *(Lighting of the candles.)*

Advent Carol

Lyrics and music by David A. Smith

Prepare me with open arms for the child;
Prepare me with open heart, soft and mild.
Prepare me to feel the joy that he brings. Prepare me, Emanuel.
This is the time for us to find; Room at last in the inn.
Candles we light to shine in the night; Christ, you come once again.

Children's Message & Offering
Children's Choir "He Came Down"

Nancy Ellett Allison
CAMEROON CAROL

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

Offertory Invitation

Fred Robinson

Offertory Music "Ave Maria"
Laura Valles, soprano, David Gilliland, piano

Bach-Gounod

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

φ **To God all glorious heavenly Light, to Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise our joyful songs of thankful praise.
Amen.**

Offertory Dedication

Fred Robinson

ALL IS WELL: LESSONS AND CAROLS OF THE INCARNATION

Lesson I
The Mystery of the Incarnation

Nancy Ellett Allison
John 1:1-14

Chancel Choir "The Word Was God" by Rosephanye Powell
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

Lesson II
The Prophet Foretells the Coming of the Savior

Gregg Walker
Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Music Cooperative "Emmanuel" by Michael W. Smith
*Emmanuel. Wonderful, Counsellor, Lord of Life, Lord of All.
He is the Prince of Peace, Might God, Holy One, Emmanuel.*

Lesson III
The Peace that Christ will Bring

Jeff Edwards-Knight
Isaiah 11: 1-9

Women's Choir "Lo, How a Rose/The Rose" Craig Hella Johnson
Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming, from tender stem hath sprung. Some say love, it is a river that drowns the tender reed; Of Jesse's lineage coming as men of old have sung. Some say love, it is a razor, that leaves your soul to bleed; It came a Flowret bright, Some say love, it is a hunger, and endless aching need; Amid the cold of winter I say love, it is a flower, and you, it's only seed. When half-spent was the night.

It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance; It's the dream afraid of waking, that never takes the chance; It's the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give; And the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live.

This Flow'r, whose fragrance tender, with sweetness fills the air. When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long; Dispels with glorious splendor, the darkness everywhere. And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong; True Man, yet very God, Just remember in the winter far beneath the bitter snow; From sin and death He saves us. Lies the seed that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose. And lightens ev'ry load.

Lesson IV
The Angel Gabriel Blesses Mary

Hannah Magraw
Luke 1:26-35, 38

Recitative Magnificat

Lisa Cloninger

* Hymn 119 "My Soul Gives Glory to My God" MORNING SONG
My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise. God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me: Yes, holy is God's name. All people will declare me blessed, and blessing they shall claim.

Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress, remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

Lesson V
The Journey to Bethlehem

Meg Houlihan
Luke 2:1-4

* Hymn

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to Christ, the King, and peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Lesson VI

The Birth of Jesus

Dickie Lamm

Luke 2:5-7

Chancel Choir

“Advent Peace Canon”

arr. R.E. Schram

Text by Charles Wesley, Music Johann Pachelbel

Bridget Green, flute

Dona nobis pacem. Come though long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art. Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart. Come thou long expected Jesus, come to us and bring us peace.

Lesson VII

The Shepherds go to the Manger

Renee Brown

Luke 2:8-16

* Hymn

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plain
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strain

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly songs?
(Refrain)

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
(Refrain)

See Him in a manger laid, Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, with us sing our Savior's birth.

Lesson VIII

The Magi are Led by the Star to Jesus

Fred Robinson
Matthew 2:1-12

Men's Choir “There It Is” words/music by David A. Smith
*When we started on this trip, we were so, so excited
We had watched for this star - we had waited for this day.
And the day now is here, when the one who's been foretold
Has come to be among us, let's be on our way.*

*(Chorus) There it is, it shines so brightly
 There it is, it leads the way.
 Were we wise to make this journey?
 Lead us, we pray.*

*In the night, the way is clear and the path is set before us.
In the coolness of the evening, we can move with greater speed.
It's the Wise One who knows you need dark to know the light.
Let us carry on our journey, God's word we heed. (Chorus)*

*We can feel it in the air, we are coming ever closer.
Soon we'll see the one we're seeking, soon we'll kneel before the child.
Yes, we'll place gifts before him, little one, Emmanuel.
God's love made real among us, born meek and mild. (Chorus)*

Meditation

“Songs of Salvation”

Nancy Ellett Allison

“All is Well”

Words/music by M.W. Smith & W. Kilpatrick, arr. by Judah L. Jones
Children’s Choir, Chancel Choir, Music Cooperative
David Gilliland, piano, Amy Coons, viola

All is well, all is well. Children on earth rejoice! For tonight, love came down filling the world with God’s light! Sing Alle! Sing Alleluia!

All is well, all is well. Angels above rejoice! For tonight, darkness fell, into the dawn of love’s light. Sing Alle, Sing Alleluia!

All is well, all is well. Let there be peace on earth. Christ is come. Go and tell that he is in the manger. Sing Alle! Sing Alleluia!

All is well, all is well. Lift up your voice, lift voices and sing. Born is now Emmanuel, born is our Lord and Savior. Sing Alle, Alleluia! All is well!

* Christmas Acclamation

Nancy Ellett Allison

One: All is well, for all this - the Word, the Light, the Life; the pouring out, the lowering, the descent; All this - the gift of God!

Many: All is well, for all this - order, beauty, creation, reflect the divine utterance; All this - evokes eternal praise.

One: By the Word we are spoken into being.

Many: Through the Word we are created in the image of the Beloved.

One: For we are created lovely, good and beautiful,

Many: Fearfully and wonderfully made are we.

All: This is the truth we share, the joy we sing, the love we live, the glory of every day the Word is made flesh once again.

* Benediction

Nancy Ellett Allison

...

* Benediction Response "Go tell it On the Mountain"

(Refrain) Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is Born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold
throughout the heavens, there shone a holy light. *(Refrain)*

The shepherds feared and trembled when Lo! above the earth rang out
the angel chorus, that hailed our Savior's birth. *(Refrain)*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us
salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *(Refrain)*

Postlude

David Gilliland

**Our Gratitude to the Musicians of Holy Covenant
Chancel Choir**

Sopranos

Lisa Cloninger

Donna Collins

Cheri Dennis

Faye Humphrey

Judah L. Jones

Diane Neese

Kathleen Smith

Laura Valles

Altos

Kristin Andes

Joy Decker

Tina Dickens

Bridget Green

Meg Houlihan

Karen Long

Sally McLester

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

Sarah Sladek

Sally Young

Tenors

Joe Frye

Michael Hall

Jim Hong

Ed Hord

Phil Kaveler

Bass

Jim Humphrey

John Rapp

Robert Shepherd

David Smith

Darin Spencer

Mike Yonkovig

Music Cooperative

David Smith

Brian Hankins

Alex Shoop

Ben Decker

Mike Yonkovig

Laura Valles

Shea Watts

Handbell Choir

Joy Decker

Cheri Dennis

Jim Hong

Judah L. Jones

Phil Kaveler

Sally McLester

Diane Neese

Dawn Simmons

Children's Choir

Maya Griffin

Myra Griffin

Harper Little

Gavin Peterson

Molly Peterson

Alex Sladek

Ben Sladek

Instrumentalists:

Bridget Green-flute, Amy Coons-violin, David Gilliland-piano

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. Please indicate any changes in your contact information.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7PM

Christmas Eve Chili supper 5:30-6:30

(Sign up in the Gathering Room to bring a pot of chili, toppings, cookies, or help with clean up)

A HOLIDAY LOVE OFFERING FOR HCUCC STAFF AND CLERGY

During this joyful time of year, we ask those of you who are able to consider contributing to a Holiday Love Offering for our HCUCC clergy and staff. The offering will be divided across all of our dedicated staff members. Please direct your gifts **to Cheryl Milam by December 20th** which will allow time to organize and distribute gifts on December 23. Thank you for considering our church staff as you plan out your holiday giving plans. Love Offerings will be collected by Cheryl Milam by mail (16446 Grassy Creek Dr. Huntersville NC 28078) or Jeff Edwards-Knight.

YEAR-END GIVING

Holy Covenant's fiscal year ends on Monday, December 31 so any contributions for 2018 or prepayments for 2019 must be received at the church, or postmarked on or before 12/31/2018 if being mailed. Questions about year-end contributions, stock gifts or electronic giving may be directed to Dawn Simmons at office@holycovenantucc.org. We are grateful for the generosity of all at Holy Covenant.

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

Rev. Fredrick D. Robinson, Associate Pastor

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510

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