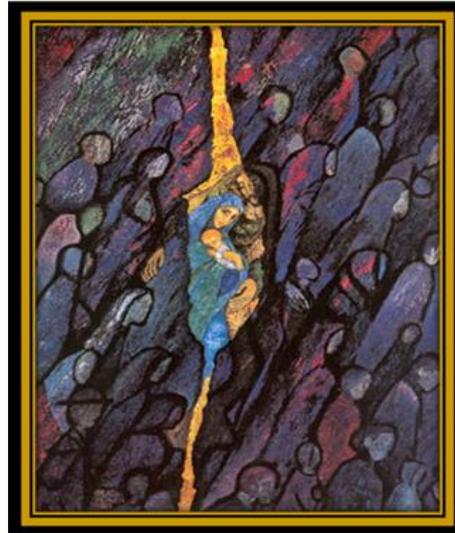


HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

Mary is who we are. She is a person of faith who does not always understand but who seeks to put her trust in God.

She is one who is blessed not because she sins less or has keener insights into the things of God. She is instead blessed, as we are, because she is called by God to participate in the work of God. . .

To call Mary blessed is to recognize the blessedness of ordinary people who are called to participate in that which is extraordinary.

~Beverly Roberts Gaventa & Cynthia L. Rigby

We have become so accustomed to the idea of divine love and of God’s coming at Christmas that we no longer feel the shiver of fear that God’s coming should arouse in us. We are indifferent to the message, taking only the pleasant and agreeable out of it and forgetting the serious aspect, that the God of the world draws near to the people of our little earth and lays claim to us. The coming of God is truly not only glad tidings, but first of all frightening news for everyone who has a conscience.

~Dietrich Bonhoeffer

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ALL IS WELL ~ FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 23, 2018

10:55 AM

Gathering Music

David A. Smith

Welcome and Announcements ✕

Nancy Ellett Allison

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

All: **And also with you.**

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

Choral Introit

“Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing”
Felicia Robinson, vocals, David Smith, piano

NETTLE

* Call to Worship

Darin Spencer

One: Will you come into our world, Living One?
Will you come with hope?

Many: **We have too many good intentions, not enough hopes realized; too many questions, too few prayers.**

One: Will you come into our world, Living One?
Will you come with peace?

Many: **We have too much brokenness, not enough wholeness; too much frantic activity, not enough calm.**

One: Will you come into our world, Living One?
Will you come with love?

Many: **We have too much loneliness, not enough friendship; too many rules, not enough good news.**

One: God's mercy is for those who revere the Living One from generation to generation. God lifts up those who are broken and lonely;

Many: **God fills us with hope and peace, with joy and love. God's good news breaks into our lives each day.**

One: Rejoice, for God is doing a new thing!

Many: **We rejoice with the angels, worshiping the Living God!**

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

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
As you sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth;
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Shepherds in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant light:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of Nations,
Guided by Christ's natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly, your prayers attending,
Christ beside you shall appear.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Lighting the Advent Candle

Deborah and Larry Winston

One: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

Many: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.

One: The lights that we have kindled each week light the way to the coming Christ.

Many: The candles of Hope, Peace, and Joy glow steadily. Today, we light the candle of Love.

One: The coming Christ is forever faithful. The never-ending affection Christ has for us is a gift unequalled.

Many: Praising the God who cares so deeply for all creation, we light this candle. Together, we will demonstrate and share the love of Christ. *(Candles are lit.)*

Advent Carol

Lyrics and music by David A. Smith

φ 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 Offering & Message

Nancy Ellett Allison

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

Special Music

"This Is My Wish"
Judah L. Jones

by Tim & Angela Lauer

This is my wish, my wish for the world,
That peace would find it's way to every boy and girl.
This is the time, the time for harmony;
Let love be the song that everybody sings.

Fill the air with joyful noise; ring the bells and raise your voice.
Let there be peace on earth; let there be peace on earth.
Lift your light and let it shine - shine, shine, shine!
Let every voice be heard; let there be peace on earth.

I hear the sweetest sound, the sound of hope to come.
Together we can bring good will to everyone.
Let it start with you; let it start with me.
Let every nation arise and sing this melody.

Prayers of the People

Fred Robinson

* Hymn

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

“My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the one who waits.
You fixed your sight on the servant’s plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me.
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. *(Refrain)*

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
These are tables spread, ev’ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. *(Refrain)*

Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:

...

Offertory Music

“Mary Did You Know?”
guest vocalist, Tyler Smith

Music Cooperative

* 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

* Hymn 110

“Now Bless the God of Israel”

FOREST GREEN

- 1. Now bless the God of Is-ra-el,
who comes in love and power,
who rais-es from the roy-al house
de-liv-ernce in this hour.
Through ho-ly prophets God has sworn
to free us from a-larm,
to save us from the heav-y hand
of all who wish us harm.**
- 2. Re-mem-ber-ing the cov-e-nant,
God res-cues us from fear,
that we might serve in hol-i-ness
and peace from year to year;
And you, my child, shall go be-fore
to preach, to proph-e-sy,
that all may know the ten-der love,
the grace of God most high.**
- 3. In ten-der mer-cy, God will send
the day-spring from on high,
our ris-ing sun, the light of life
for those who sit and sigh.
God comes to guide our way to peace,
that death shall reign no more.
Sing prais-es to the Ho-ly One!
O wor-ship and a-dore!**

* Benediction

Nancy Ellett Allison

* Benediction Response 106

ELLACOMBE

φ **My heart sings out with joyful praise to God who raises me,
For God has come in power to save, to set all people free.
Remembering those who wait to see salvation's dawning day,
Our Savior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears away.**

Postlude

David A. Smith

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.

Advent Proclaims All is Well

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7PM

Christmas Eve Chili supper 5:30-6:30

Hospitality needs your assistance! Can you stay following worship and help set up tables and chairs? We still need more cooks to bring a pot of chili, salad greens, toppings, cookies, or help with clean up following the meal. Many hands make light work! Sign up in the gathering room. The church will be opened Monday at 4:30 pm for those able to help.

ADVENT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES AT HCUCC

CHRISTMAS FUND

Donate to the Holy Covenant Christmas Fund to support our members with financial needs during the holidays. Funds will be managed through the Sunshine Fund process. Need help over the holidays? Contact Lisa Cloninger-lisacmsw@hotmail.com to request funds.

HOLY COVENANT TO HOST ROOM IN THE INN, JANUARY 13

HCUCC will again host our yet to be housed neighbors to keep them warm, give them a place to shower, and feed them hot meals. Can you help with this ministry? A casserole? A Dessert? Or just be present for conversation? Check the signup sheets in the Gathering Room...there are many ways you can help to welcome our neighbors in need. Contact Suzanne Lamorey at suzlam@yahoo.com with any questions.

CONSISTORY RETREAT

Our Consistory will be gathering the weekend of January 11 & 12 to begin discussing ways to best serve Holy Covenant. If you have any ideas, projects or concerns you would like to share with the leadership team, please feel free to contact one of them. Officers for the New Year are: Cheryl Milam, President; Gregg Walker, Vice-President, Lisa Sherman, Secretary, and Kathi Smith, Treasurer. Other members of Consistory include: Jeff Edwards Knight, Martha Bomely, James Hong, Suzanne Lamorey, Robert Shepherd, Diane Rogers, Joy Decker, Tom Magraw, JoAnn Jellison, Holly Middleton, and Ed Vickery.

FINANCIAL REMINDER

Thank you, one and all, for the many gifts you bring to Holy Covenant through the year. For financial contributions to be counted in 2018 as tax deductions, please ensure all offering checks are either post marked no later than December 31, 2018 or received in the office by Monday, December 31, 2018. Any receipts for reimbursements or gifts in kind should be received in the office by December 27th, to ensure timely processing.

SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sojourners class, led by Suzanne Lamorey, is studying immigration using videos and *The Beast* by Oscar Martinez. If you would like to order a book send an email to suzlam@yahoo.com. Copies are also at the public libraries, so you can check one out. Join us at 9:45 each Sunday in the Conference Room!

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED MON-WED, DEC 24-26, AND TUES, JAN 1

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

Elder for December: Kathi Smith, kathleenie53@msn.com or 704-614-7674

Deacons for December: Sally Duffy, Diane Rogers

Greeters: Donna Collins, Lisa Sherman

Ushers: Joy Decker, Suzanne Lamorey, Tom Magraw

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger

Tabulators: JoAnn Jellison, Karen Long

Refreshments: Joy Decker, Kevin Decker

Recyclers: Suzanne Lamorey

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Jill Gregg, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Melissa Noll, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Ed Sharp, Caroline Utz

Friends & Family Members

Jesiah, Devon & Parker (Marine Luckhoo); Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Caryn Capps, Shane Christian (Beth Sharp), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Barbara Hunt (Donna Collins), Fran Matkins (Robert Shepherd), David Owens (Donna Collins), Walter Raley (Jean Raley Dennis), Joe Robinson (Bill & Kim Tyler), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), John Teague (Donna Collins), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Gary West (John Rapp), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

OUR MINISTRY STAFF

Rev. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., Pastor, pastor@holycovenantucc.org

Rev. Fredrick D. Robinson, Associate Pastor,
fredrick@holycovenantucc.org

Shea Watts, Director of Music Ministries, music@holycovenantucc.org

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Exec. Admin. Asst., office@holycovenantucc.org

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510
www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810