



Silent Meditation

It is customary to blame secular science and anti-religious philosophy for the eclipse of religion in modern society. It would be more honest to blame religion for its own defeats. Religion declined, not because it was refuted, but because it became irrelevant, dull, oppressive, insipid.

~ Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

I stand in religious solidarity with Muslims because they, like me, a Christian, are people of the book...And as Pope Francis stated last week, we worship the same God. Wheaton College cannot scare me into walking away from the truth (that) all humans — Muslims, the vulnerable, the oppressed of any ilk — are all my sisters and brothers, and I am called by Jesus to walk with them.

~ Larycia Hawkins

The one who is deprived of gentleness is deprived of good.

~*The Prophet Muhammad*

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

March 17, 2019

Gathering Music

Kathleen Smith

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

Kathleen Smith

* Invocation *(in unison)*

**Eternal God, we come into your presence with all the burdens
and blessings of our lives. May we be open to your word in song,
prayer, and Scripture. Lighten our burdens with hope.
Deepen our blessings as we share with one another.
Unite us into one body in Christ's name,
that we may be a light of hope in a world of fear. Amen.**

* Passing of the Peace

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

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

* Hymn 20

"God of Abraham and Sarah"

CONSTANTINE

**1. God of Abraham and Sarah, God of Moses, Miriam's Guide;
God of David and the prophets, God in Jesus glorified:**

**Up from the dust you raise a people, breathe in the breath of life, of soul;
Down through the years the people praise you till alleluias make the whole!**

...

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

Children's Offering & Message

Nancy Ellett Allison

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

Hebrew Scripture Lesson Genesis 15:1-6, 17-18

Robert Shepherd

The word of the Living God came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of God came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." God brought Abram outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then the Living One said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And Abram believed God; and God reckoned it to him as righteousness. When the sun had gone down and it was dark... the Holy One made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

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

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

Video Clip

"Same God?"

<http://samegodfilm.com/>

Call to Prayer

"Return to God"

by Marty Haugen

(Soloist sings, congregation sings)

Refrain

Re - turn to God with all your heart, the

Source of grace and mer - cy; come seek the ten - der

faith - ful - ness of God.

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Fred Robinson

Sheltering God,

**We have forgotten your covenant of love and faithfulness
made to Abram and all his heirs.**

**We must speak of how we have not made you
the center of our lives.**

**We look for shelter in the false security of the world,
not in your promises.**

**Our fears are driven by our emotions and decisions,
not by our trust in you.**

**Have mercy on us, our Light and our Hope,
and touch us with your forgiving grace.**

**Fill our hearts with your presence,
so we might recognize the One who has come to gather us up
and lead us into your Love, as together we pray, Our God in whom
is heaven, hallowed be your name...(*Lord's Prayer, using sins/sinner*)**

Assurance of Pardon

Fred Robinson

One: At the center of Scripture is the God of mercy who does not give us up to the temptations and ways of the world, but shelters us with love, with hope, with grace. We are a forgiven people. Our songs of joy are lifted to the One who forgives us and saves us.

Many: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Special Music

“I Can’t Wait”
Music Cooperative

by Kane, Welch & Kaplin

Someday we'll roll away the stone, that we have carried for so long
And all our burdens will be gone, and I can't wait.

We will find our way to, an understanding of all views
And no prayers shall be refused, I can't wait.

It seems we have gone too far, and now we don't know where we are
I believe we'll find a guiding star, I can't wait

If faith is the final place, where all fears have been erased
And the locks have fallen from the gates, I can't wait

Someday we'll roll away the stone, that we have carried for so long
And all our burdens will be gone, and I can't wait.

We will find our way to, an understanding of all views
And no prayers shall be refused, I can't wait.

Leaning, Leaning, safe and secure from all alarm
Leaning, Leaning, I'm leaning on the everlasting arms.

* Gospel Lesson Luke 13:31-35 Fred Robinson
At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the 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.**

Sermon	“In the Name of...?”	Nancy Ellett Allison
Offertory Invitation		Fred Robinson
Offertory Music		Kathleen Smith
* Doxology		OLD HUNDREDTH
	<p>ϕ Our God is making all things new, A promise that we know is true. Through eyes of faith we long to see A love-transformed community. Amen.</p>	
* Offertory Dedication		Fred Robinson
* Benediction		Nancy Ellett Allison
Postlude		Kathleen 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.

Season of Lent

Lenten Meditations “Stacking Up the Stones” are posted daily on Facebook! Join the “Holy Covenant UCC” Facebook page to get each day's meditation during Lent. facebook.com/groups/61370940062/

A limited number of printed copies are available today in the Gathering Room.

BLESSING WHAT IS, TUESDAYS THROUGH APRIL 16

Anne Findlay-Chamberlain will lead “Blessing What Is: Sacred Pauses in Our Spiritual Journey to Easter”; acknowledging where we are, and speaking words of blessing into that space. Gathering at Anne’s home, 7 PM- 8:30 PM RSVP office@holycovenantucc.org

PRACTICING MIDRASH, WEDNESDAYS THROUGH APRIL 17

Nancy Allison will lead this midweek focus on ways to engage and study the Bible using Tim Moore’s book, “Practicing Midrash.” From noon to 1PM at Holy Covenant, we will join together for reflection, discussion and contemplation. RSVP office@holycovenantucc.org

TROUBLE I’VE SEEN BOOK STUDY, SUNDAYS THROUGH APRIL 14

Fred Robinson will lead our Adult discussion class on Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM. This book is subtitled “Changing the way the Church Views Racism” and will be a valuable discussion in leading us forward.

MIGRANT BUS MINISTRY

Winter coats, snacks, toiletries and diapers are being collected to give to migrants as they pass through Charlotte on the Greyhound bus route on their journey to pursuit asylum. A collection box is available in the Gathering Room. See Suzanne Lamorey with questions or to participate in this welcoming.

PHOTO SESSION MAKEUP DAY, APRIL 8, 2:30-9 PM

The makeup day for photographs for our church directory is Monday, April 8th. Sessions will begin at 2:30 PM and will end at 7:30 PM. Contact Terry to get you and your family scheduled, tldennis2@hotmail.com or 704-785-7150. If you have seen some Facebook posts from Jean Raley-Dennis or David Smith you can see the quality of the pictures that were captured during the various photo sessions! An alternative to have your photo in the church directory is by sending your photo to Dawn, office@holycovenantucc.org, in a JPEG or PDF format, (landscape please). It will be included in the directory.

HCUCC YOGA4ALL, WEDNESDAYS at 7:30 pm

Classes are geared toward inclusivity of all levels of experience and abilities....Beginners and those who are yoga-curious are encouraged to attend. If you have questions, contact David Smith, davidsmith02b@gmail.com or 704-533-2142.

SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sojourners will discuss *Trouble I've Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism* by Drew G. I. Hart. Pastor Fred will lead this book study during the Sundays in Lent. Everyone is welcome to join us at 9:45 in the Conference Room.

REFRESHMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP - KEEP IT SIMPLE!

To help keep us organized, we use an electronic signup for volunteers called SignUpGenius. You can use the link below to sign up, and you can still sign up on paper if you prefer. <https://tinyurl.com/hcuccsnacks2019>

CHOIR REHEARSAL FOLLOWING WORSHIP

There is still time to join choir for the Lent and Easter Season! Join us for rehearsal, directly following worship. We need YOUR voice to help us

celebrate God's great love expressed through beautiful music. If you plan to sing please complete this survey <http://tinyurl.com/2019EasterChoir> or email Bridget at Bridgetn.green714@gmail.com. All are welcome!

CALLING ALL HANDBELL RINGERS!

We will start rehearsing two easy pieces for Lent and Easter on Sunday, March 24 after choir practice, 2pm. Please contact Joy Decker at joy@joydecker.com if you are interested.

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

Elder for March: Kathleen Smith, kathleenie53@msn.com or 704-614-7674

Deacons for March: Jim Hong, Ed Vickery

Greeters: Anne Hayes, Vondalyn McQueen-Simmons

Ushers: Tom Magraw, Suzanne Lamorey, Jim Hong

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger, Keith Dennis

Tabulators: Terry Raley-Dennis, JoAnn Jellison

Refreshments: Meg Houlihan

Recyclers: Suzanne Lamorey

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Phyllis Johnson, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Caroline Utz

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Shane Christian (Beth Sharp), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Tammie & Charles Edenfield (Donna Collins), David Griffin (JP Griffin), Will & Addie Mae Hong (Jim Hong), Ron Mann (Robert Shepherd), Becki Minich & Heather O'Donnell (Eileen Howe), Tony Morand (Lloyd & Gussie Spencer), David Owens (Donna Collins), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Joe Robinson (Bill & Kim Tyler), Ken & Evelyn Sell (Robert Shepherd), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Chris Shepherd (Robert Shepherd), 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 TEAM

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

Rev. Fred Robinson, Associate Pastor fredrick@holycovenantucc.org

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

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant 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