



## Silent Meditation

"How lucky are we? We create ourselves."

-Lulu

"A house is much more than a home. It's family. And every family needs a mother (parent) who is affirming, caring, loyal, and inspiring."

-Pray Tell

"Notice what it's all about. Being able to fit into the straight, white world and embody the American dream. We don't have access to that dream, and it's not because of ability, trust me. I mean... isn't that what you're trying to do?

Dance your way into that world? The world of acceptability? "

-Blanca

## WELCOME GUEST PREACHER REV. MELISSA McQUEEN-SIMMONS

Rev. Melissa N. McQueen-Simmons is a native of Greensboro, North Carolina and a first-generation college graduate. She is a mother to a charismatic toddler, Camdyn McQueen-Simmons, and the spouse to the beautiful and graceful Vondalyn McQueen-Simmons. This family joined Holy Covenant UCC in 2018. Melissa is a sister, an aunt, a friend, and Iraqi-Veteran. Melissa was born into Generation X, the demographic cohort between Baby Boomers and Millennials. She earned her Master of Divinity (M.Div.) with an emphasis in Pastoral Care at Howard University.

Melissa is ordained in the United Church of Christ and is installed as pastor and teacher to Many Voices: A Black Church Movement for Gay and Transgender Justice. She is passionate about relationship-building within the community. Melissa is the Spiritual Director for Wholy Ground Spiritual Center. Melissa leads the LGBTQ committee for the Charlotte Clergy Coalition for Justice.

She practices various healing techniques and believes in African religious traditions, religious pluralism, liberation theology, black liberation theology, womanist theology and mindfulness living.

Her ultimate goal is to work with the oppressed and advocate for restorative justice in both church and community with the intention to enforce God's inclusive love for all of creation.

We are thankful for her time with us today in leading worship!



Hymn

“Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand”

UNCHANGING HAND

Time is filled with swift transition. Naught of earth unmoved can stand.  
Build your hopes on things eternal. Hold to God's unchanging hand.

***Refrain:***

***Hold to God's hand, God's unchanging hand. (2x)***

***Build your hopes on things eternal. Hold to God's unchanging hand.***

Trust in God who will not leave you. Whatsoever years may bring.  
If by earthly friends for sake, still more closely to God cling.

Covet not this world's vain riches that so rapidly decay.  
Seek to gain the heavenly treasures. They will never pass away.

When your journey is completed, if to God you have been true,  
Fair and bright the home in Glory your enraptured soul will view.

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Prayer Response

“Heal Our Nation”

**Heal our nation. (3x) Pour out your Spirit on this land.**

Lord, we long for you to move in power.  
There’s a hunger deep within our hearts  
To see healing in our nation, send your Spirit to revive us.

Lord, we hear your Spirit coming closer,  
A might wave to break upon our land;  
Bringing justice and forgiveness,  
God, we cry to you, “Revive us!”

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

Hebrew Scripture

Proverbs 24: 3-7

Meg Houlihan

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. Wise warriors are mightier than strong ones, and those who have knowledge than those who have strength; for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory. Wisdom is too high for fools; in the gate they do not open their mouths.

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

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

Special Music

“Singing for Our Lives”

Holly Near

*Kathi Smith, Lisa Cloninger, vocalist*

*We are a gentle, angry people, and we are singing, singing for our lives.*

*We are a justice-seeking people, and we are singing, singing for our lives.*

*We are young and old together, and we are singing, singing for our lives.*

*We are a land of many colors, and we are singing, singing, for our lives.*

*We are gay and straight together, and we are singing, singing for our lives.*

*We are a gentle, loving people, and we are singing, singing for our lives.*

\* Sermonic Text

Mark 3: 13-27

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons. So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Then he went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind.” And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.” And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man’s person’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

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 “The Category is... House Realness”

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

Hymn

“Praise the Source of All Creation”

Austrian Hymn

Praise the Source of all creation, giving life throughout the Earth,  
Blessing every love relation, filling all with sacred worth.  
Celebrate all forms and colors, varied beauty everywhere,  
Streams of goodness overflowing, wondrous gifts for all to share.

Many genders, many races, all reflect Divinity;  
Many gifts and many graces help us be all we can be.  
Partners on this path of freedom, taking down each stifling wall,  
We will open doors of welcome, bringing hope and joy to all.

Long have many been excluded, judged and scorned by custom’s norms;  
Everyone will be included as we work to bring reforms.  
Let us end abuse and violence, bringing justice everywhere,  
Joining Holy Wisdom’s mission, helping all be free and fair.

Equal marriage, healing, freeing, nurtures body, mind and soul,  
Reaffirming every being, all created good and whole.  
Come, rejoice and sing together, celebrating life and love;  
Praise the great Creative Spirit, living in us and above.

Benediction

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

Benediction Response

“Now”

Rory Cooney

Now is the moment, now is the time.  
This very day there is salvation.

Postlude

“Sparrow”

arr. E. Broughton



***Charlotte PRIDE 2019  
Holy Covenant UCC's Participants and Float in the parade.***



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

### THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

#### UPDATE ON CHURCH CONTINUING VIRTUAL WORSHIP

May 22, 2020

Dear Holy Covenant Family,

Since suspending in-gathering worship services on March 15 to prevent the spread of COVID-19, a few things have transpired. On April 23, Gov. Roy Cooper announced a three-phased approach to gradually lift Coronavirus restrictions. Today at 5 pm, Phase 2 starts and while it still limits gatherings of more than 10 persons, a federal judge recently ruled that churches in North Carolina can meet under fewer restrictions. We pray for houses of faith that choose this route, as some have, but we've decided to *lovingly* exercise caution and continue worshipping virtually.

As eager as we are to get back into the sanctuary where we can see each other and worship together, COVID-19 remains a serious threat and we need to do everything possible to slow its spread. The love of God is best expressed through the love of neighbor and physical distancing during these unprecedented times is the best expression of that love.

Our decision about when to reopen may not coincide with the interests of our government but it will be based on the leading of the Spirit and on what's best for our community. In the words of the songwriter Hezekiah Walker, "We love you and we need you to survive." We will continue to prayerfully monitor developments and keep you informed.

Fred Robinson  
Interim Pastor

Join us live Sundays in worship at 10:55am

<http://holycovenantucc.org/virtual-hc/>

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

Lisa Cloninger, Keith Dennis, Brian Hankins, Laura Hankins,  
Henry Hankins, Felicia Robinson, Kathleen Smith

## TRANSITION TEAM

Thank you to all who have submitted the Heritage Questionnaire, a first step in our Settled Pastor Transition process! We want input from all who worship at Holy Covenant UCC. Please help us with your responses.



During the Heritage phase, we seek to remember, honor, and learn from our history as a congregation. *You are essential to this process!*

For those who haven't yet, please take time to share your personal experiences and perspectives using this brief online Heritage Questionnaire. We need your input! Anyone who would prefer a paper form may contact Dawn Schmitz at [dmschmitz@gmail.com](mailto:dmschmitz@gmail.com) and provide your mailing address.

Access to the Heritage Questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/cUj9fntZp5GfJ3nMA>

## HAPPY PRIDE!

June is PRIDE month and there are many ways to celebrate and support the work of LGBTQ communities and organizations. One of those ways is to donate to Time Out Youth, a local organization which offers support, advocacy, and opportunities for personal development and social interaction to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) youth ages 11-20. Several of our members have been involved in the work of TOY over the years. Tuesday, June 30, 2020, is TOY **#GiveOUTDay!** They are raising critical funds for their Safety Net Housing Program, to ensure safe, affordable housing for some of the most vulnerable youth. Please consider a donation to TOY. See the website at [www.timeoutyouth.org](http://www.timeoutyouth.org), or connect with [Time Out Youth](#) on Facebook.



## THE MICHAEL G. BROOKS SCHOLARSHIP 2020-2021

The purpose of the Michael G. Brooks Scholarship Fund is to encourage Youth in both their educational growth as well as their service to God.

Scholarship funds of \$2000 will be considered annually for all applicants.

When all decisions have been finalized, the church office will need the following information: Name of Institution or Organization, address, phone number and e-mail of financial office, and student assigned identification number provided by your higher education facility.

Obtain an application from the church office or [Download the Application here](#)  
Applicants will be notified by July 31, 2020.

## **GOT TIME? CAN YOU SEW? VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Thank you to those who are crafting masks! HCUCC has all the supplies and 2 machines at the ready for making masks for our local community members. If you have time, and are able to cut materials, or can sew from a provided pattern, please contact Dawn in the church office, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org) or 704-599-9810, for scheduled time. *We're all set up for good social distancing!* Let's help our neighbors stay safe as well, shall we? We are grateful for those who are sewing masks from home!



## **READERS AND MUSICIANS WANTED!**

If you'd like to share your talents remotely, Brian Hankins' has created a great tutorial to help us along! <https://vimeo.com/416712217>

For the best experience, get the Vimeo app:

Android - [https://bit.ly/vimeo\\_android](https://bit.ly/vimeo_android) iOS - [https://bit.ly/vimeo\\_ios](https://bit.ly/vimeo_ios)

Interested readers should contact Laura Hankins, [laura@hankins-clt.us](mailto:laura@hankins-clt.us); interested musicians should contact Kathi Smith, [kathleenie53@msn.com](mailto:kathleenie53@msn.com).

## **MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM EXCITING STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS**

All are invited to join this weekly Zoom Bible Study class on Wednesdays at 12:15 pm. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81830620353>

Lead by Pastor Fred Robinson, [Fredrick@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:Fredrick@holycovenantucc.org).

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS – VIA ZOOM NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL**

The Sojourners Class continues conversations of the book, *The Will of God* by Leslie Weatherhead. Please join us Sunday mornings at 9:45 for what will prove to be a vibrant discussion. Please note that this book was published in 1945 so the language (particularly male/female roles) and examples reflect that time. The book is available on Amazon in paperback and Kindle. If you have questions, please contact Cheri Dennis, [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org) or 704-519-6016.

Here's the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84161657040?pwd=NGVHUmd0RW1uaFprTkRCZjFQRjBZQT09>

## **RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN**

If any Holy Covenant families or friends are interested in receiving supplemental materials and activities for children, please contact Laura Allison at [Education@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:Education@holycovenantucc.org).



## **CONVERSATIONS AROUND RACE**

### **[UCC Condemning Racism Statement 06 2020](#)**

#### **WHITE PRIVILEGE - LET'S TALK**

A resource for Transformational Dialogue, and a curriculum from the UCC that's designed to invite church members to engage in safe, meaningful, substantive, and bold conversations on race. <http://privilege.uccpages.org/>

*White Privilege: Let's Talk / A Resource for Transformational Dialogue* can also be downloaded (free) as a pdf document from [UCC Resources](#).

#### **FROM THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE OFFICE**

The Southern Conference is trying to make sure everyone stays informed. Please share with your friends to make sure they are on the SOC e-News list by [replying with their name, e-mail address, church and role](#). ALL are welcome to receive Southern Conference News.

#### **HOLY COVENANT WAYS TO GIVE**

We are thankful for your financial gifts and encourage all to continue your giving as able so we can continue to support our ministries in the community and pay our monthly expenses including payroll, mortgage, utilities, insurance and church maintenance. We are also working hard to maintain our building and grounds during this time of virtual worship so that we will enjoy an extravagant welcome when we all return to our place of worship. Know that your financial gifts are being spent to continue the vibrant ministries we have committed to and we appreciate your commitment to the mission and transformational work of Holy Covenant.

Mailed checks should be sent securely to:

**Holy Covenant UCC**  
**PO Box 481285**  
**Charlotte, NC 28269**

Thank you all for trying our new My Church App! Download it here!

<http://customchurchapps.com/my-church-app/>

Find the GIVE button at the bottom of the home page that will allow you to make a one time, or recurring contribution of any amount, and designate where your funds are to be used.

Or - Make your offering online through our website: [holycovenantucc.org/give/](http://holycovenantucc.org/give/)

New giving options! When you make your offering on the church website, the transaction via Wallet/Subsplash will allow you the option to cover the fee. We still accept donations via PayPal, however they do not offer that option to pay the transaction fee at this time.

You may also use your bank's On-Line Banking/Bill Payment service to establish the payment and the set-up is typically a one-time event and takes just a few minutes. Your monthly bank payment may be started and stopped at any time with no processing charges at most financial institutions and provides an efficient way to plan and send your funds to Holy Covenant.

With Gratitude for the Many Ways You Support Our Ministries at Holy Covenant UCC!  
Your 2020 Budget and Finance Team

### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

#### **Members**

Kim Buch, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Jill & Danny Gregg, Tom & Kathy Habel, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Rick & Cheryl Milam, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Dawn Robinson, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Yvette Stewart Ross, Mamie Stokes, Shakti Subramanian, Deb Winston

#### **Friends & Family Members**

David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will & Addie May Hong (Jim Hong), William Lorenz (Tom & Dianne Bayes), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Carolyn Marshall (Linda Clark), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Mike Reynard & Linda Matkins (Robert Shepherd), Eileen Perry (Ed & Beth Sharp), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Renee & Aiden Rohn (Debbie Davis), Gene Sullivan (Jason Sullivan), Dorothy Underwood (Keith & Cheri Dennis), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

#### **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Fred Robinson, Interim Pastor**

fredrick@holycovenantucc.org

**Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Interim Associate Pastor**

cherid@holycovenantucc.org

**Mr. Jon Weddell, M. Div., Minister of Music**

jdw08629@gmail.com

**Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant**

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