



Silent Meditation

“I see grace as one of the great, often untapped, powers of the universe that God has asked us to set loose.”

~Philip Yancey

“You are a part of me that I do not yet know.”

~Valarie Kaur

“Imagine – Create – Breath – Push – Rest – Repeat”

~Unknown

Here in this place, the new light is streaming,
Shadows of doubt are vanished away:
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
Gather us in, our spirits inflame.
Call to us now and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

Here we receive new life in the waters,
Here we receive the bread of new birth:
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
Call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink, the wine of compassion,
Give us to eat the bread that is you:
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining,
Not in some heaven light-years away,
Here in this place the new light is shining,
Now is God present, and now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever,
Gather us in and make us your own,
Gather us in, all peoples together -
Fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

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 Zechariah 9:9-12

Fred Robinson

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
 Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
 triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
 on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
 and the warhorse from Jerusalem;
and the battle-bow shall be cut off,
 and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
 and from the River to the ends of the earth.

As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
 I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope;
 today I declare that I will restore to you double.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church
Many: Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Scripture in Song

“Blest Are They”
Matthew 5:3-12

David Haas

All: Blest are they, the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.
 Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Refrain: Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

All: Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.
 Blest are they who hunger and thirst, they shall have their fill. *R*

Treble: Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.
 Blest are they, the pure of heart, they shall see God. *R*

Bass: Blest are they who seek peace, they are the children of God.
 Blest are they who suffer in faith, the glory of God is theirs. *R*

Lisa: Blest are you who suffer hate, all because of me.
 Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see. *R*

* Gospel Lesson

Matthew 11:28-30

Cheri Dennis

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

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

“Rhythms of Grace”

Cheri Dennis

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Words of Invitation

Fred Robinson

Community of saints, beloved of God, we are invited to gather at the table of love, to feast on the dreams of God, to be renewed by the bread and wine, and to remember Christ's sacrifice.

The table calls us as we are, from wherever we are, to be in solidarity with Christ, who lives and loves on the margins.

So let us come to the table, expectant, eager, and open to sharing in the rich blessings of heaven born from unexpected places, and people, and experiences.

In this meal, shared from home to home, may we remember the life, death, and resurrection of the One who still takes on flesh among us today.

Prayer of Consecration

Loving God, we thank you for this meal, a meal that nourishes us, body and soul. May it sustain us on our journey and enable us to freely live into the persons you called us to be. Where any social norm or imbalance of power limit our ability to thrive, may we be a witness for Christ and pursue justice for all your people. Amen.

Words of Institution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We have been fed. Each of our spirits have been united by the bread and the cup. May each of us feel the spirit of the Lord resting on us, renewing us, strengthening us, and giving us peace. Amen.

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

Cheri Dennis

Benediction Response

“Now”

Rory Cooney

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

Postlude

“Hungry Feast”

arr. M. Sedio

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, Meg Houlihan, David McGuirt, Kathleen Smith

TRANSITION TEAM

Thank you to all who have submitted the Heritage Questionnaire, a first step in our Settled Pastor Transition process! We so appreciated the input from so many who worship at Holy Covenant UCC.



In the next phase, we will reflect on our mission and vision. We will provide another questionnaire asking for your input on that 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 and provide your mailing address.

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

EDITING NOTES:

Please accept our apologies for the broken link in last weeks newsletter celebrating our 2020 Graduates. The link has been re-established here [Celebrating the Class of 2020](#).



CELEBRATING THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY - Clarity and continued celebration:

Amendment One was a legislatively referred constitutional amendment in North Carolina that (until overruled in federal court) amended the Constitution of North Carolina to prohibit the state from recognizing or performing same-sex marriages or civil unions. The amendment did not prohibit domestic partnership agreements, but defined male-female marriage as "the only domestic legal union" considered valid or recognized in the state. On May 8, 2012, North Carolina voters approved the amendment, 61% to 39%, with a voter turnout of 35%. It was found unconstitutional in federal court in October 2014. It was on June 26, 2015, that the Supreme Court ruled by a vote of 5-4 that the Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage.



JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE - VIRTUAL CINEMA MOVIE DEBUT JULY 5

Using interviews and rare archival footage, JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE chronicles Lewis' 60-plus years of social activism and legislative action on civil rights, voting rights, gun control, health-care reform and immigration. Using present-day interviews with



Lewis, now 80 years old, Director Dawn Porter explores his childhood experiences, his inspiring family and his fateful meeting with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1957. In addition to her interviews with Lewis and his family, Porter's primarily cinéma verité film also includes interviews with political leaders, Congressional colleagues, and other people who figure prominently in his life. [Click here](#) for more information, movie trailer and to purchase tickets to John Lewis: Good Trouble - Virtual Cinema. The tickets are \$12 with \$5 of each purchase going to the UCC's Justice Ministry.

RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY'S MASK PROJECT

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 or 704-599-9810, for scheduled time. We count a total of 134 masks including pledges, so we're on the way to meet our goal of 250! Thank you for all who have commitments to this project!



SLEEP CHALLENGES IN THE CURRENT PANDEMIC

Thursday, July 9 at 7:30 PM via Zoom

Join the WISE Team hosted by Sally Duffy in a discussion of the negative impact on sleep in the current pandemic. Sally will discuss the basics of sleep, normal sleep, the current problems of the pandemic impacting sleep, and sleep hygiene.



Sign up ahead of time for ease of access:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85481289737?pwd=UmVjQXNVMUIRVEIYWFI1bINXVXBydz09>

Please register with Tom Magraw for this event, tmagraw@aol.com

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 iOS - https://bit.ly/vimeo_ios

Interested readers should contact Laura

Hankins, laura@hankins-clt.us; interested musicians should

contact Kathi Smith, kathleenie53@msn.com.

Send your Communion or Passing of the Peace (sign) images to Lisa Cloninger for including in our slide shows.

lisacmsw@hotmail.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.

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 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.



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/

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**

Gary & Linda Clark, in the death of Linda's sister, Carolyn Marshall
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, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Yvette Stewart Ross, Mamie
Stokes

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), Mike
Reynard & Linda Matkins (Robert Shepherd), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Eileen
Perry & family (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
office@holycovenantucc.org

3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510
www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810