



For the healing of the nations, God, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
to a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.

*Lead us forward into freedom, from despair your world release,
that, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.*

All that kills abundant living, let it from the world be banned;
pride of status, race, or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span.
*You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind,
that by our response and service earth its destiny may find.*

(from the hymn "For the Healing of the Nations")

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

May 29, 2016

“The world of the past is gone.”

Prelude & Chiming of the Bell

Jared Fischer

Welcome and Announcements ✠

Stephen F. Garvey

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.)*

Faith in Song

“Your Love Remains”

Jared Fischer

Through the darkness, through the fire,
through my fleeting heart’s desire
Your love remains, Your love remains.

Though I wonder far away, squander all Your freedom gave,
Your love remains, Your love remains.

O my, my soul, it cries,
Your swift hand, swiftly replies
To rescue me, you rescue me.

In green pastured hills you lead, then by waters still, your keep,
Your rod and staff, they comfort me.

When my enemies surround, still your table there abounds,
My cup is filled, my cup is filled.

* All rise in body or spirit ☉ Sing Response ✠ Hymnals located below pews
(Congregation may remain seated for Hymns, accept for Closing Hymn)

Though I walk Death's dark valley,
There Your strong hands uphold me,
I fear no evil, You are with me.

Surely goodness, surely mercy, surely kindness all my days
Will follow me, will follow me.

In Your house I'll ever dwell and everywhere, and ever still,
Your love remains, Your love remains.

O my soul, Your praises cries,
O my soul, Your praise it cries,
My soul it cries, My soul it cries out.

Children's Offering & Message

Stephen F. Garvey

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

THE LESSONS WE LEARN FROM THE LOSSES OF GOD

Memorial Day began as an occasion on which to honor the fallen on both sides of the horrific Civil War. With time's passage, it later became a solemn opportunity to honor all those who had fallen in battle in all of the wars our nation has fought. It is a day on which to be both proud and somber. A sense of loss underlies the day's history. Loss wears many guises and touches us all. Scripture depicts a God who also experienced loss. Today we will look at those experiences for what they can teach us.

God's First Loss

A Vision and a Hope Destroyed

Genesis 6:5-8a...A glimpse into the heart of God: disappointment, sorrow, grief, and regret

The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, “I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

Hymn #278 – stanzas 1&3

1. Cre-a-tor God, cre-at-ing still, by will and word and deed,
Cre-ate a new hu-man-i-ty to meet the pres-ent need.
3. Sus-tain-er God, sus-tain-ing still, with strength for ev-ery day,
Em-power us now to do your will. Cor-rect us when we stray.

A prayer for the grieving

God's Second Loss

The Loss of Freedom and the Vision of Emancipation

Exodus 3:7-10...the anguish of oppression and the dream of freedom...

Then the Lord said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

Hymn #572 – stanzas 1&3

1. When Is-rael was in E-gypt's land,
Let my peo-ple go,
Op-pressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my peo-ple go.
Go down, Mo-ses, way down in E-gypt's land,
Tell old Pha-raoh to let my peo-ple go.

3. No more in bond-age shall they toil,
Let my peo-ple go,
Nor spill their blood on E-gypt's soil,
Let my peo-ple go.
Go down, Mo-ses, way down in E-gypt's land,
Tell old Pha-raoh to let my peo-ple go.

A prayer for those yearning to be free

God's Third Loss

Freedom Found and Power Soon Abused: God's Intolerance

Hosea 4:1-3...God's loss of trust in ethical decision-making, divine intolerance and the divine moral vision

Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel; for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or loyalty, and no knowledge of God in the land. Swearing, lying, and murder, and stealing and adultery break out; bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing.

Hosea 11:7-9...God's anger is just but it is not the last word...anger as hope disguised

My people are bent on turning away from me. To the Most High they call, but he does not raise them up at all. How can I give you up, Ephraim? ...My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and no mortal, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath.

Hymn #583...stanzas 1-3

Like a mother who has borne us,
held us close in her delight,
Fed us freely from her body,
God has called us into life.

Though as children we have wandered,
placed our trust in power and might,
Left behind our brothers and sisters,
God still calls us into life.

A prayer for the ethical use of freedom

A PAUSE FOR REMEMBERING

Honoring Those Present
Taps
Silence

David A. Smith

A Time of Prayer

An Invitation to the Morning Offering Offertory Invitation

Offertory "Come As You Are"

Come out of sadness from wherever you've been
Come broken hearted, let rescue begin
Come find your mercy, oh sinner come kneel
Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal

*Refrain: So lay down your burdens, lay down your shame
All who are broken, lift up your face
Oh wanderer come home, you're not too far
So lay down your hurt, lay down your heart, come as you are.*

There's hope for the hopeless and all those who've strayed
Come sit at the table, come taste the grace
There's rest for the weary, rest that endures
Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't cure *Refrain*

Come as you are, come as you are
Fall in Love's arms, come as you are
There's joy for the morning, oh my soul be still
Earth has no sorrow that heaven can't heal

* Offertory Dedication

God's Fourth Loss

Loss of spiritual direction and the hope for a Messiah

Isaiah 61:1-3a...the pain of loss evolves into something greater

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

A prayer for those who feel lost

God's Fifth Loss

The death of Jesus...the power of hostility towards change

Mark 16:1-8 ...Jesus' resurrection...the divine response is one of love and openness to the future...new possibilities lie waiting in the shadow of grief

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Reflection

"My Jesus, I Love Thee"

GORDON

Jared Fischer, piano; Robbie Furr, vocals

A prayer for new beginnings

LOSS COMES FULL CIRCLE: THE VISION OF A SECOND CREATION

Loss never had the last word

A journey uniquely our own

Revelation 21:1-4...creation, loss, and recreation...the message of God's universe

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

* Closing Hymn #591

1. This is my song, O God of all the na-tions,
a song of peace for lands a-far and mine.
This is my home, the coun-try where my heart is;
here are my hopes, my dreams, my ho-ly shrine;
But oth-er hearts in oth-er lands are beat-ing
with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

2. My coun-try's skies are blu-er than the o-cean,
and sun-light beams on clo-ver-leaf and pine;
But oth-er lands have sun-light, too, and clo-ver,
and skies are ev-ery-where as blue as mine.
O hear my song, O God of all the na-tions,
a song of peace for their land and for mine.

* Benediction

Postlude

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. We are an Open and Affirming, progressive Christian church welcoming all. Please join us in the Gathering Room after worship for fellowship and refreshments.

NANCY ON SABBATICAL, APRIL - JUNE

Steve Garvey will serve as the Acting Pastor and our Pastors Emeriti, **Linn Finger** and **Jim Humphrey** will be providing pastoral care. Our excellent staff, Dawn Simmons, Jared Fischer and Steven Burleson will all remain in place!

**The office will be closed Monday, MAY 30,
in observance of Memorial Day, in remembrance of
the fallen and their sacrifices.**

REPORT ON PLEDGED GIVING

Your budget team wants to thank you for your generosity in supporting our ministries and work of the church through sharing your time, talents and finances. With four full months completed in our budget year (33%), we want to provide the following pledged giving update: April YTD General Fund pledged giving is \$47,135, or 26%, of the total year pledged, and the Building Fund pledged giving is \$16,675, or 31%, of total year Building Fund pledges. Your financial gifts are vital to the work of the church and we appreciate your catching up on pledged giving as you are able.

DISCOVER PROGRAM, FREE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH

Through the generosity of a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Catawba College is offering at no cost to the participants a week long retreat experience. DISCOVER...a free week long experience at Black Lake Retreat Center where youth can learn about God and the Bible, grow in their

faith, engage in serving others, take field trips to the N.C. Zoo, Charlotte Whitewater Center, new technology and more. Youth who have completed grades 6, 7, 8...July 31 to August 6. Those who have completed grades 9-12 and first year of college...June 19 to 25. The deadline is quickly approaching. Contact Ken Clapp, Chaplain & SVP Catawba College, 704-637-4446 or kclapp@catawba.edu for details.

CELEBRATE OUR YOUTH! JUNE 5

Please plan to be a part of our Sunday June 5 Youth-led worship service! Following worship, our Youth, and Hospitality team, will host a picnic lunch, including ice cream for dessert, to celebrate our Youth and the start of summer. Please bring a lawn chair and a big appetite for our outdoor picnic lunch.

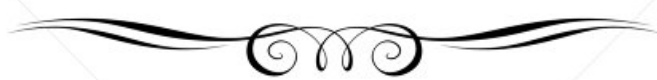
BOOK CLUB, JUNE 13

The Book Club will be meeting on Monday, June 13, at 1:30 pm at the Sharon campus to discuss Annie Dillard's Pulitzer Prize winning title, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. Diane Burleson will be leading our discussion of this work. Our next meeting is tentatively set for July 18, at 1:30 pm at the Sharon campus. We are considering Matthew Desmond's *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*.



ALL CHURCH COOK BOOK

In honor of our Centennial, your Hospitality Team will be coordinating a printed version of a cook book, compiled of the favorite recipes from Holy Covenant and Pilgrim Congregational UCC members! Please submit any tried and true favorite recipe, of any food category, by **July 15**. Send your recipe to Judi Lord, jklord@gmail.com or Linda Carver, 2547A Stockbridge Drive, Charlotte NC 28210. This is a fundraiser for benefit of outreach missions. Details are in progress and more, including date and cost, will be announced in the near future.



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

Elders of the Month: May: Faye Humphrey, June: Yvette Ross

Greeters: Gail Bumgardner, Sue Rettberg, Lisa Sherman

Media: Brian Hankins, Joe Craig

Ushers: Youth

Tabulators: Debbie Davis, Terry Raley-Dennis

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Paul Bomely, Gail Bushman, Leanne Bushman, Caroline Fischer,
Ginny & Bob Fisher, Marianne Gannon, Karen Griffin, Chuck Johnson,
Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Deb & Yvette Ross,
Dave Stoimenoff & Jim Germann, Mamie Stokes, Jean Washburn

Friends & Family Members

Charlotte Carbone, Matthew Christian, (Beth Sharp),
Bill Funderburk (Donna Collins), Frances Helms (Lynn Helms),
Mike Hinson (Kathi Smith), CD & Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer),
John Jacobsen (Holly Middleton), Aaron Johnson (Joy Johnson),
Barbara Lees (Donna Collins), Pat & JoAnn Murphey (Laura Murphey),
Candy Propes (Sue Rettberg), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial)

***Celebrating a Century of Transforming Faith
First Reformed 1916 ~ Holy Covenant 2016***

Holy Covenant United Church of Christ

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

Mr. Jared Fischer, Music Director

Mr. Steven Burleson, Youth Pastor

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