



Forgiveness means that I continually am willing to forgive the other person for not being God--for not fulfilling all my needs. I, too, must ask forgiveness for not being able to fulfill other people's needs.... When you forgive people for not being God, then you can celebrate that they are a reflection of God.

~ Henri J. M. Nouwen

Forgiveness is the disciplined, lifelong commitment to offer Godly reactions to ungodly actions.

~ Brad Braxton

Forgiveness is the answer to the child's dream of a miracle by which what is broken is made whole again, what is soiled is again made clean. The dream explains why we need to be forgiven, and why we must forgive.

In the presence of God, nothing stands between God and us--we are forgiven. But we cannot feel God's presence if anything is allowed to stand between ourselves and others.

~Dag Hammarskjold

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 5, 2017

Gathering Music

Jared Fischer

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

Jared Fischer

* Call to Worship

Hannah Magraw

One: We are the body of Christ,

Many: **The hand clapping, toe tapping, heart pumping, mouth
tasting, arms embracing body of Christ.**

One: We are the body of Christ,

Many: **The justice seeking, hymn singing, bread breaking, risk taking
body of Christ.**

One: None of us can say to one another, 'I have no need of you,'

Many: **For only together can we find wholeness.**

One: None of us can say to another, 'I will not care for you.'

Many: **For we are connected like muscle and bone.**

If one suffers, we all suffer. If one rejoices, we all rejoice!

One: Thanks be to God who in Christ has made us one.

Many: **Thanks be to God for our unity in diversity, for our time to
worship as one body.**

* Passing of the Peace

One: Come, 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.**

** All rise in body or spirit ☩ Sing Response ✕ Seating by Ushers*

* Hymn

"Everlasting God"

φ Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord
Wait upon the Lord, We will wait upon the Lord

Our God, You reign forever
Our hope, our Strong Deliverer

You are the everlasting God, The everlasting God
You do not faint, You won't grow weary
You're the defender of the weak
You comfort those in need, You lift us up on wings like eagles (2X)

* Hymn 436

"God of Grace and God of Glory"
(stanzas 1,2,5)

CWM RHONDDA

God of grace and God of glory,
On your people pour your power;
Crown your ancient church's story;
Bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
For the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.

From the evils that surround us
And assail the Savior's ways,
From the fears that long have bound us-
Free our heart for faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
For the living of these days,
For the living of these days.

Save us from weak resignation
To the evils we deplore;
Let the search for your salvation
Be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
Serving you whom we adore,
Serving you whom we adore.

Children's Message

Nancy Ellett Allison

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

Pastoral Prayer

Steven Burleson

Gift of Music

"Deep River"

Traditional

Jared Fischer, piano; Bill Tyler, French horn

* Gospel Lesson

Matthew 5:17- 26

Steven Burleson

(Jesus continued his teaching, saying:) Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgment." But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, "You fool", you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

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 Risk of Forgiveness"

Nancy Ellett Allison

Hymn

“Instrument”

Where there is hatred Lord, let me sow your love,
Where there's injury, let forgiveness be enough.
Are we giving up, fighting the good fight?
Where there is despair, just a flicker in the flame
Could break the veil of night.

*Refrain: Creator God and Son,
O, Holy Spirit, three in One,
I offer you myself, though I'm broken and spent
Let me be Your instrument.*

May I never seek, to be consoled as to console,
May I understand, to be loved is to love, to be loved is to love.

Refrain

Let there be peace, pardoned in the pardoning,
Born again when we die, You have raised us to new life.

Offertory Invitation

Steven Burleson

Offering Music

Jared Fischer

* Offering Response

SCHUMANN

☩ **We give thee but thine own, what e'er the gift may be;
All that we have is thine alone, we give it gratefully.**

Offertory Dedication

Steven Burleson

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(The liturgy includes the UCC Statement of Faith, indicated in italics.)

One: We invite all who celebrate Christ's life and love to join us at this table of fellowship. As we join together in Holy Communion we confess our faith as Christians:

Many: *We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:*

You call the worlds into being, have created us in your own image, and set before us the ways of life and death. You seek to save us from aimlessness and sin.

Yet we confess that there have been times when we have ejected life and with hurtful words or selfish and destructive actions we have lost our way and through insensitivity and prejudice, have denied your image in others.

One: *You judge us and all nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.*

Many: We come to the table of communion, confessing, not that we are righteous, but that we love our Lord Jesus Christ and desire to remember him. Let us admit, not that we are strong, but that we are needy; not that we have any claim on Christ, but that Christ invites us to receive his grace and experience his presence.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

One: We remember on the night of his betrayal, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: "Take, eat: This is my body, broken for you." In like manner, Jesus took the cup, and after giving thanks, gave it to the disciples and said: "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins." Remembering this act of love, we offer our praise and proclaim our faith.

Many: With thanksgiving we celebrate the truth that:

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm w

One: Come now, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Christ died.

Many: Amen.

One: These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

(Communion is received by intinction. Please take a wafer or bread and dip it into the cup to receive both elements.)

Music during Communion “Your Love Remains”

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.

*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,

All: We give thanks, Living God, that You have refreshed us at Your table by shining the Light of Christ into our lives. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us into the world in courage and peace. Amen.

*** Benediction**

Nancy Ellett Allison

*** Benediction Response (581)**

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

**ϕ Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust,
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe.**

Postlude

Jared Fischer

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

PLEASE SEE USHERS FOR LARGE PRINT BULLETINS

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.

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### Congregational Feedback

*We are always seeking to strengthen the worship experience at Holy Covenant. Can you help us by sharing your thoughts? Please tear off and add to the offering plate or pass along to our liturgist today, Steven Burleson.*

| Congregational Music            | Really? | Fitting | Perfect |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| "Everlasting God"               |         |         |         |
| "God of Grace and God of Glory" |         |         |         |
| "Instrument"                    |         |         |         |
| "Your Love Remains"             |         |         |         |

| Scripture & Sermon | Really? | Fitting | Perfect |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Children's Message |         |         |         |
| Texts & Sermon     |         |         |         |

**Communion**  
Use of UCC Statement of Faith  
Desired Frequency?

### Over all Worship Experience

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## **NEW MEMBER - INQUIRER'S CLASS LUNCHEON TODAY**

**Elder's Luncheon following worship: Organization & Opportunities for Involvement.** We will welcome new members on February 12. Please contact Debbie Davis, [debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com](mailto:debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com), if you are interested in attending.

## **GUEST HANNAH MITCHELL, FEBRUARY 19 & 26, 9:45 am**

Hannah Mitchell, a local organizer and activist with Green Peace, is leading a workshop on the Sunday mornings of the 19th and 26th of February, in *Organizing and Activist 101 and 102* training with our youth and young adults. It is more important than ever that our youth be involved in grassroots activism to create a more just and equitable world for all of us.

## **FREE DOCUMENTARY SCREENING OF "DEMOCRACY FOR SALE", FEB. 9**

Join Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation, Clean Air Carolina, Greenpeace, and Working Films for this screening to learn more about how money in politics is influencing North Carolina and what you can do to help stop it. CPCC Central Campus, 1206 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte, the Overcash Building (2nd floor).

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS~NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL GATHERING**

All are welcome to join us at 9:45 for some thought-provoking discussion and fellowship, no preparation needed.

## **BOOK CLUB GATHERING, FEB. 13**

For our next meeting, Jon Heaslet will lead our discussion of Gyasi's *Homegoing*, which should provide rich conversation. We meet at SouthPark Christian Church **6650 Park South Drive**. We have tentatively listed *American Dervish* for March. Please bring lists of suggested titles for our future reads.

## **RECRUITING HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS**

We are looking for volunteers for the most exciting team at Holy Covenant, the Hospitality Team. The team plans and provides an important part of the Holy Covenant community life. If you have not found a 'niche' to serve in our church, please try hospitality. Please send Contact Micheal Hall at [lammhall@aol.com](mailto:lammhall@aol.com), or connect with him at church.

**WE COULDN'T PROVIDE OUR WARM WELCOME WITHOUT THE HELP OF:**  
Elder for February: Jeff Edwards-Knight, jeff763@aol.com or 704-651-4838  
Recyclers: Kristin Andes, Tom Magraw  
Greeters: Eileen Howe, Lisa Sherman  
Ushers: Kelly Gimlin, Jill Gregg, Barbara Schneller, Moses Taylor  
Media: Brian Hankins  
Tabulators: Kelly Gimlin, Terry Raley-Dennis

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

**Members**

Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Ginny & Bob Fisher, Marianne Gannon, Diane Garvey, Steve Garvey, Karen Griffin, Helen Lambert, Melissa Noll, Irene Mikkelson, Yami Senturias, Isabelle Reddy Powell, Caroline Utz

**Friends & Family Members**

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Rose Bouchonville (John Maze), Mildred Edenfield (Donna Collins), Bill Funderburk, CD & Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), John Jacobsen (Holly Middleton), Aaron Johnson (Joy Johnson), Ashley Jones (Annette Shoop), Urban Linn (Julie McLelland), Chuck McAllister (Donna Collins), Carrie McLelland (Joe McLelland), Jay Patel (Karen Griffin), Tracy Reed (Dawn Simmons), Jessie & Craig Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Tommy Simpson (Cynthia Simpson), David Stoimenoff & Jim Germann.

**Holy Covenant United Church of Christ**

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

**Mr. Jared Fischer, Music Director**

**Mr. Steven Burleson, Youth & Young Adult Pastor**

**Mr. Gregg Walker, Ministry Intern**

**Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant**

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