



Silent Meditation

Although man's moral pilgrimage may never reach a destination point on earth, his never ceasing strivings may bring him ever closer to the city of righteousness. And though the kingdom of God, may not remain a universal reality in history, in the present it may exist in such isolated forms as in judgment, in personal devotion, and in some group life. Above all we must be reminded anew that God is at work in the universe. As we struggle to defeat the forces of evil, the God of the universe struggles with us. Evil dies on the seashore, not merely because of man's endless struggle against it, but because of God's power to defeat it."

~Martin Luther King, Jr., Struggle to Love, 1961

oCommunity; the aftermath of non-violence is redemption and reconciliation. This is a method that seeks to transform and redeem and win the friendship of the opponent and make it possible for men to live together as brothers in a community, and not continually live with bitterness and friction."

*~Martin Luther King, Jr.,
"Justice without Violence," Brandeis University, 1957*

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ~ BELOVED COMMUNITY SUNDAY
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

January 14, 2018

Gathering Music

Kathi 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.)*

* Passing of the Peace

Nancy Ellett Allison

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.**

Opening Voluntary

Kathi Smith

* Call to Worship

Cheri Dennis

One: We gather to worship God, who has in love, created each of us.

Many: **Who created us with diverse gifts, abilities, skin colors,
orientations, and passions.**

One: We gather to worship God, who through Jesus has inspired each
of us to embrace life.

Many: **Who invites us to seek justice, to share power, to live in
loving community.**

One: We gather to worship God whose grace and power sustain us.

All: **To God be all glory, honor and praise.**

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

Prayer of Invocation

Cheri Dennis

We come to you God, out of the busyness and preoccupations of our lives. We come weary and disheartened by the ways of our world. We ask this day that you open our hearts to feel you in a new way. Open our minds to receive your word of power and knowledge. Open our souls to be made new in dedication to your love. Open our eyes to see your face in all who we meet. Open our ears to hear your voice speaking to us and calling us to respond.

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

Cheri Dennis

Our God offers a fresh start, new opportunities, new hopes, new dreams, renewed vision. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

* Hymn 610

“My Eyes Have Seen the Glory”

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

My eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
Who is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
And has loosed the fateful lightning of a terrible swift sword;
God's truth is marching on.

Refrain:

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! God's truth is marching on.

God has been there in the watch fires of a hundred circling camps,
Where they built a sacred altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read the righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
God's day is marching on.

(Refrain)

God has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
And is sifting out the hearts of all before the judgment seat;
O be swift, my soul, to answer and be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

(Refrain)

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in whose bosom that transfigures you and me:
As Christ died to make us holy, let us die to make all free;
While God is marching on.

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.)

Hebrew Scripture

1 Samuel 3:1-10

William Judd

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Living God under Eli. The word of the Living God was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of God, where the ark of God was. Then the Living One called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. God called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the Living God, and the word of God had not yet been revealed to him. The Holy One called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that God was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, Holy One, for your servant is listening."' So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now God came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

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

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

Gift of Music

“I Am Willing”

by Holly Near

David A. Smith, piano, Lisa Cloninger & Kathi Smith, vocals

(Congregation, join in on Chorus)

Chorus: I am open and I am willing
To be hopeless would seem so strange
It dishonors those who go before us
So lift me up to the light of change

Verse 1: There is hurting in my family
There is sorrow in my town
There is panic in the nation
There is wailing the whole world round

Verse 2: May the children see more clearly
May the elders be more wise
May the winds of change caress us
Even though it burns our eyes

Verse 3: Give me a mighty oak to hold my confusion
Give me a desert to hold my fears
Give me a sunset to hold my wonder
Give me an ocean to hold my tears

Contemporary Reading

“Readings from 1957”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The aftermath of non-violence is the creation of a beloved community, the aftermath of non-violence is redemption and reconciliation. This is a method that seeks to transform and redeem and win the friendship of the opponent, and make it possible for men to live together as brothers in community and not continuously live with bitterness and friction...”

“Love is creative and redemptive. Love builds up and unites. Hate tears down and destroys. The aftermath of the “fight fire with fire” method... is bitterness and chaos. The aftermath of the love method, is reconciliation and the creation of the beloved community. Physical force can repress, restrain, coerce, destroy, but it cannot create and organize anything permanent. Only love can do that. Yes love—which means understanding creative, redemptive goodwill even for one’s enemies—is the solution to the race problem”.

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

“God’s Dream”

Barbara Thomas

* Hymn 553

“There is a Balm in Gilead”

BALM IN GILEAD

Refrain:

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to make the wound-ed whole,
there is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to heal the sin-sick soul.

- 1 Some-times I feel dis-cour-aged, and think my work's in vain,
But then the Ho-ly Spir-it re-vives my soul a-gain.

(Refrain)

2. Don't ev-er feel dis-cour-aged, for Jesus is your friend,
who, if you ask for knowl-edge, will never fail to lend.

(Refrain)

3. If you cannot preach like Pe-ter, if you can-not pray like Paul,
you can tell the love of Je-sus, who died to save us all.

(Refrain)

Offertory Invitation

Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Music

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

φ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above all heavenly hosts,
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

* Offertory Dedication

Nancy Ellett Allison

READINGS TO CELEBRATE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Hymn

“We Shall Overcome”

**We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome one day,
O deep in my heart, I do believe, We shall overcome one day.**

Reading: Letter from the Birmingham Jail

Jeff Rivenbark

“...just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco-Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town... Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities... Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. .. Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all of their scintillating beauty.”

Sung Response: We will trust in God...

Reading: I have a Dream

Laura Hankins

“I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.” I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today...”

Sung Response: We are not afraid...

Reading: From April 4 1968

Joe Behr-Stenzel

“...the world is all messed up. The nation is sick, trouble is in the land, confusion all around...But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough can you see the stars. And I see God working in this period of the twentieth century...Something is happening in our world. The masses of people are rising up. And wherever they are assembled today, whether they are in Johannesburg, South Africa; Nairobi, Kenya; Accra, Ghana; New York City; Atlanta, Georgia; Jackson, Mississippi; or Memphis, Tennessee, the cry is always the same: "We want to be free....Men for years now have been talking about war and peace. But now no longer can they just talk about it. It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence in this world; it's nonviolence or nonexistence...if something isn't done and done in a hurry to bring the colored peoples of the world out of their long years of poverty; their long years of hurt and neglect, the whole world is doomed...”

Sung Response: We'll walk hand in hand....

Reading: The Mountaintop

Nancy Ellett Allison

“Well, I don't know what will happen now; we've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter to me now, because I've been to the mountaintop... Like anybody, I would like to live a long life-longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over and I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land. And so I'm happy tonight; I'm not worried about anything; I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Sung Response: We shall overcome....

* Hymn 593

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

LIFT EVERY VOICE

* Closing Litany

Barbara Thomas

One: Lord, we give You thanks for the prophets who have spoken up and risked their lives for You and your people.

Many: **God, stir in us the call to speak out and to act when we see injustice, and to walk with those who are oppressed and marginalized.**

One: God grant us courage and strength to do Your work. Help us to dream your dreams and walk your path of love.

All: **We are the body of Christ; the voice of God in our world. May we stand in faith together for justice, forgiveness, and love. In the name of Christ, we give honor and Praise. Amen**

* 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

Kathi 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.

ROOM IN THE INN - TODAY!

Thanks to all who have signed up! To complete our needs for the second neighbor hosting, we are in need of 1 more driver to return neighbors to UMC Monday morning and 1 more to help with cleanup crew on Monday, to be complete by 9am. Contact Suzanne Lamorey TODAY, suzlam@yahoo.com if you are able to assist.

JOIN OUR NEW MEMBER - INQUIRER'S CLASSES THIS JANUARY

If you would like to learn more about our congregation, we would encourage you to attend our Inquirer's Classes on Sundays.

9:30 AM January 21: Who We Are & What We Believe,

9:30 AM January 28, History of UCC & Holy Covenant

12:30 PM February 4: Organization & Opportunities for Involvement.

We will welcome new members on February 11. Please contact Debbie Davis, debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com, if you are interested in attending these classes.

CELEBRATE FOUNDER'S SUNDAY - JANUARY 21

The First Reformed Church of Charlotte met for its first Sunday of worship on January 16, 1916. Join us in celebrating our 102nd year of ministry together!

COVENANT GROUPS BRAINSTORM LUNCHEON, JANUARY 21

Join us for our Covenant Group Gathering and lunch on January 21 following worship. If you are, or have been, a group facilitator (or would

like to become one!) please attend. Let Rev. Barbara know that you plan to be there: BarbaraT@holycovenantucc.org.

CONSISTORY RETREAT

Our Consistory will gather the weekend of January 26 & 27 to begin discussing ways to best serve Holy Covenant. If you have any concerns you would like to share with the leadership team, please feel free to contact one of them. Consistory members include: Jeff Edwards Knight, Cheryl Milam, Michael Baldonado, Faye Humphrey, Debbie Davis (Lynn Chavarria's term), Joe Behr-Stenzel, Sally Duffy, Kathleen Smith, Martha Bomely, and James Hong, Robert Shepherd, Suzanne Lamorey, Diane Rogers & Gregg Walker.

CONSISTORY ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

We will ordain our new elders and deacons of the Class of 2020 and install our officers during worship on January 28, 2018.

ANNUAL GIVING STATEMENTS have been mailed through the US Postal Service for your use in 2017 taxes preparation. If you have any questions regarding your statement, please contact Dawn in our church office. Your generosity in sharing your gifts in support of our ministries are helping to transform our community and beyond. Thank you!

5 WEEKS TO A BETTER RELATIONSHIP

Sundays 9:45 - 10:45, **Jan. 14 to Feb. 11**. For couples and singles that want to improve their relationship. Prepare yourself for Valentine's Day in 2018! For more information, contact Kevin Decker, Certified Relationship Coach, Marriage Educator, and Speaker. 704-579-1693 or kevin@kevindecker.com. Child care is available.

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

Elder for January:

Michael Baldonado, michaelbaldonado@hotmail.com or 502-541-5957

Deacons for January: Debbie Davis, Joe Behr-Stenzel

Greeters: Donna Collins, Lisa Sherman

Ushers: Tom Magraw, Kevin Edwards-Knight, Joy Decker, Kevin Decker

Media: Brian Hankins, Suzanne Lamorey, Renee Brown

Tabulators: Terry Raley Dennis, Sally McLester

Refreshments: Barb Schneller

Recyclers: Diane Rogers

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Susan Bennett Stiles, Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Donna Collins, Linn Finger, Eileen Howe, Sharon Landis, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Melissa Noll, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Yami Senturias, Ed Sharp, Caroline Utz

Friends & Family Members

Revs. Bill Englebreath and Judah Jones in the death of Bill's step-mother. Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Marj Carmine (Donna Collins), Bill Funderburk, Chuck McAllister (Donna Collins), Beth Poyer Meyer, Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Doris Storie (Garrett Barlow), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp), Elizabeth Wilson (Donna Collins), Larry & LuAnn Weidner and their granddaughter Anna (Dawn Simmons)

Holy Covenant United Church of Christ

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

Rev. Barbara Thomas, Interim Minister for Church & Family Life

Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Ministry Intern

Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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