



Silent Meditation

Pentecost invites us into a new way of engaging with difference—not just with different languages, but with all the ways we are marked as different from one another.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit speaks through the differences, without converting them into sameness...

Through the Spirit, difference is made holy.

~ Isaac S. Villegas

The Holy Spirit is called the Giver of Gifts, but the Spirit's cherishing action is only really felt by those who acknowledge their own deep poverty--who realize that we have literally nothing of our own but are totally dependent on God and on that natural world in which God has placed us and which is the sacramental vehicle of God's action. When we grasp this, we are ready to receive God's gifts.

~ Evelyn Underhill

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
PENTECOST SUNDAY**

May 20, 2018

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

(from Joel 2: 28-29)

Lisa Cloninger

(learning American Sign Language)

One: I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, says the Living God.

Many: Locked doors are opened. Peace is proclaimed. Sins are forgiven. The fearful speak boldly.

One: Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

Many: Sending your rains of love into a world of fearful racism and immigrant anxiety.

One: Your old shall dream dreams, and your young shall see visions.

Many: Sending your Spirit to breathe life where there is doubt, to breathe courage where justice is lacking.

One: In those days, I will pour out my Spirit.

Many: And we shall reform how we live: tending the earth with care and love.

One: In those days, I will pour out my Spirit.

All: And we shall be the people of God.

* Passing of the Peace

One: Let us now greet one another as a sign of God's peace, for the peace of God is here to stay.

Many: Thanks be to God.

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

1. Let ev-ery Chris-tian pray, this day and ev-ery day,
come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come!
Was not the church we love com-mis-sioned from a-bove?
Come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come!

2. The Spir-it brought to birth the church of Christ on earth
to seek and save the lost:
God nev-er has with-drawn, since that tre-men-dous dawn,
the gifts of Pen-te-cost.

3. On-ly the Spir-it’s power can fit us for this hour:
come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come!
U-nite, in-struct, in-spire and fill us with your fire:
come, Ho-ly Spir-it, come!

“O How I Need You”

by S. Garrard, L. Jordan, D. Leonard, P. Mabury, Mother Theresa

**Lord I find You in the seeking, Lord I find You in the doubt
And to know You is to love You, and to know so little else.**

***Refrain:* I need You, O how I need You!
O how I need You, O how I need You!**

**Lord I find You in the morning, Lord I seek You everyday,
Let my life be for Your glory, woven in Your threads of grace. (*Refrain*)**

**Light, glorious light, I will go where You shine
Break the dawn, crack the skies, make the way bright before me
In Your light I will find all I need, all I need is You. (*Refrain*)**

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

The Acts of the Apostles

Acts 2:1-21 *(paraphrase)*

Michael Hall

When the day of Pentecost, the feast of the Giving of the Law had arrived, the eleven disciples, the women and others who had also followed Jesus from the beginning were all together in the upper room where they had broken bread and shared the cup with him on the night of Passover before crucifixion and where he had met them on the night of the day he arose from the dead.

And suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the rush of a mighty, driving wind filling all the house where they were sitting. And the light of God which shines in the darkness, which shines preeminently in the face of Jesus rested upon the head of each one of them, as if it were a flame, a tongue of fire, like that which burned in a bush on Sinai and consumed it not.

And they were, every one of them --- filled with the Holy Spirit.....the Spirit which brooded over the primeval chaos at Creation's Dawn....The Spirit which fell upon the prophets, enabling them to hear the word of the Lord, and to preach it...The Spirit which descended upon Jesus at his baptism...

Each one then declared the message given to that one uniquely and everyone, from near and far, could understand all that was said. So, it was fulfilled as it had been foretold by the prophet Joel: That their children would prophesy. That the young would see visions and that the elders would dream. Because- The Spirit of the Living God was poured out on all...

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

Many: Alleluia! Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

1. Come, O Spir-it, dwell a-mong us,
Come with Pen-te-cos-tal power;
Give the church a strong-er vi-sion,
Help us face each cru-cial hour.
Built up-on a firm foun-d -tion,
Je-sus Christ, the Cor-ner-stone,
Still the church is called to mission
That God's love shall be made known.

2. We would raise our al-le-lu-ias
For the grace of for-mer years;
For to-mor-row's un-known path-way,
Hear, O God, our hum-ble prayers.
In the church's pil-grim jour-ney
You have led us all the way,
Still in pres-ence move be-fore us,
Fire by night and cloud by day.

3. Come, O Spir-it, dwell a-mong us;
Give us words of fire and flame.
Help our strug-gling voic-es praise you,
Glo-ri-fy your ho-ly name.
Good Cre-a-tor, Sav-ior, Spir-it,
Three in One: what mys-ter-y!
We would sing our loud ho-san-nas
Now and through e-ter-ni-ty.

Prayer at Pentecost

Barbara Thomas

One: Creator God, who came to us as Jesus the Christ and who fills us with the Holy Spirit, breathe in us anew this day, fall afresh on our weary spirits.

All: φ **Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us. Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us.**

One: Living God, as we celebrate the birthing of the church on this Pentecost Sunday, we remember the faithful ministry of our forebears who toiled to establish our congregation as a beacon of hope in this community. We give thanks for today's living saints who have shaped our present and enlivened our future, continuing to generously offer their gifts in your service. Breathe your Spirit in us as we seek to keep the legacy of faith alive in this new day and age.

All: φ **Spirit of the Living God...**

One: Loving God, as we renew our commitment to minister in the name of Christ, we give thanks for your life-sustaining presence that revives our calling to be the hands and feet of mission. Empower us as a congregation to speak boldly and to act courageously on the journeys of ministry that lie before us, affirming our heritage and proclaiming our hope. Breathe your Spirit in us as we strive to bring the gospel alive in this new day and age.

All: φ **Spirit of the Living God...**

One: God of all, join our hearts as one, even as our voices pray in many languages....

The Lord's Prayer *Please join in the Lord's Prayer using any English version, or using any other language.*

Epistle Lesson

Romans 8:22-27

Barbara Thomas

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

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

Many: Alleluia! Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Sermon

“Welcoming Diversity”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Strengthen the Church & No one here to guide you

Now you're on your own.

Only me beside you.

Still you're not alone.

No one is alone, truly.

No one is alone.

Sometime people leave you

Halfway through the wood.

Others may deceive you.

You decide what's good.

You decide alone,

But on one is alone.

People make mistakes,

Fathers, Mothers,

People make mistakes.

Ev'rybody makes

One another's terrible mistakes.

Witches can be right,

Giants can be good,

You decide what's right,

You decide what's good.

Just remember

Someone is on your side
Someone else is not
While you're seeing your side
Maybe you forgot;
They are not alone.
No one is alone.
Hard to see the light now
Just don't let it go
Things will come out right now.
We can make it so.
Someone is on your side,
No one is alone.

Offertory Invitation

Barbara Thomas

Offering Music

“Skeleton Bones”
(edited by Jared Fischer)

J. M. McMillan

Peel back our ribs again and stand up strong inside our chest.
Breathe into our spirit, breathe into our spirit.
Peel back the veil of time and let us see You with our naked eyes.
We just want to know you, we just want to know you.

Pre-chorus: **Skeleton bones stand at the sound of
Eternity on the lips of the found;
And gravestones roll to the rhythm of the sound of you.
Skeleton bones stand at the sound of
Eternity on the lips of the found;
So separate those doors and let the Sun of Resurrection in.**

Chorus: **Oh let us adore the Christ of Glory dressed in love.
Open up your gates before Him, crown Him, stand Him up.**

We want your blood to be flowing through our body and
We want your breath to fill our lungs. **Breathe into our spirit.**
(Pre-chorus to Chorus)

* Response of Thanksgiving

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

- φ Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Offertory Dedication

Barbara Thomas

* Hymn

“Free”

W. Matthews & L. Gungor

There's a world at war / Caught in suffering
Silent casualties / Oh, God, grant us peace

In these sleepless nights / I can hardly breathe
Despite brutality / I know that we'll be free
I know that we'll be free

Chorus: Let the light in keep it shinin' / Let it break into the darkness
All the love dares us to see / We'll all be free

In these desperate times / Love will hold us here
Love will join our hands / Teach us to have no fear

So we lay our hate down / To wash their feet
When we see our brother / When we see our sister
When we see each other / Oh, we'll all be free
Yes, we'll all be free *Chorus (2x)*

We'll be free, free / We'll all be free (4x)
We are free, free / We'll all be free (2x) *Chorus (2x)*

* 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. 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.

DO YOU HAVE A GRADUATE IN YOUR FAMILY?

Please notify the church office of students associated with Holy Covenant who will be graduating from high school or college this spring. We would like a picture and brief bio for each student for publication in the bulletin on Graduation Sunday. office@holycovenantucc.org

THE STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

This offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. We help plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life of our youth and young adults.

"GOING DEEPER SPIRITUALLY" MAY 24TH, 7PM

Join us in gathering on the 4th Thursday of each month, 7-8:30 PM, at Barb Schneller's home. Bring a favorite song that speaks to your spirit. RSVP by Monday, May 21. Barbara Schneller, bschneller@wcupa.edu, 610-574-4577 or Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, kahuanne@gmail.com, 808-282-4631.

JUNE 10, ALL CHURCH PICNIC; BOUNCE HOUSE AND GIANT JENGA!

Join us following worship for a Pork BBQ picnic. Hospitality will provide buns & beverages, Jim Dwiggin is providing the "Q". Sign up in the gathering room with your side dish or desert to share. Fun for all!

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS! YMCA's SUMMER "Y READERS" PROGRAM

This program targets K-3rd grade children who are reading below grade level and need some personal attention to increase their reading and writing skills, with the goal to be proficient in reading by end of 3rd grade. **Hidden Valley, Huntingtowne Farms, Huntersville Elementary, Iron Station, Reid Park Academy, Albemarle Road, Hickory Grove, Highland Renaissance, Nations Ford, and Park View Schools.** Contact Lisa Sherman at jsherman007@carolina.rr.com or 704-737-8263

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

Elder for May: Robert Shepherd, RShepVidEd@att.net or 704-618-1322

Deacons for May: Debbie Davis, Gregg Walker

Greeters: Anne Hayes, Lisa Sherman

Ushers: Tom Magraw, Suzanne Lamorey, Jim Hong

Acolyte: Elena Houlihan

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger

Tabulators: Joy Decker, JoAnn Jellison

Refreshments: Anne Hayes, Aida Marcial

Recyclers: Linn Finger

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Susan Bennett Stiles, Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Linn Finger, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Melissa Noll, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Ed Sharp, Caroline & Don Utz

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Diane Brown (Renee Brown & Kelly Gimlin), Baby Girl Cregan (Barb Schneller), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Bill Funderburk, Caroline Herdle (Beth Sharp), Alice Huskins (Jared Fischer), George & Judy Jongeling (Darline Warren), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Beckye Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Janet Lees Watson (Donna Collins), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp)

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

Rev. Barbara Thomas, Minister for Church & Family Life

Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510

www.holycovenantucc.org office@holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810