

Ballad of Birmingham ~ Dudley Randall

“Mother dear, may I go downtown
Instead of out to play,
And march the streets of Birmingham
In a Freedom March today?”

“No, baby, no, you may not go,
For the dogs are fierce and wild,
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails
Aren't good for a little child.”

“But, mother, I won't be alone.
Other children will go with me,
And march the streets of Birmingham
To make our country free.”

No, baby, no, you may not go,
For I fear those guns will fire.
But you may go to church instead
And sing in the children's choir.”

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,
And bathed rose petal sweet,
And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,
And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child
Was in the sacred place,
But that smile was the last smile
To come upon her face.

For when she heard the explosion,
Her eyes grew wet and wild.
She raced through the streets of Birmingham
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,
Then lifted out a shoe.
“O, here's the shoe my baby wore,
But, baby, where are you?”



HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
THE SIXTH SUNDAY IN EPIPHANY ~ BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February 17, 2019

Gathering Music

Kathleen 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.)*

Expression of Faith

“If I Could”

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

Regina Bell, vocalist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvZPXt3MgrY>

* Words of Preparation

Donna Collins

One: The resurrection was first discovered by the friends of Jesus who stood in grief outside his tomb.

Many: Resurrection turned despair into life.

One: It was discovered again by a group of Jesus’ disciples who had known the loss of all they had known.

Many: Resurrection turned fear into hope.

One: It was discovered again by black South Africans when apartheid was dismantled.

Many: Resurrection turned injustice into liberation.

One: It was discovered again by the people of East Timor who fought for independence.

Many: Resurrection turned oppression into freedom.

One: It’s been discovered again whenever someone has found the space to love after being hurt, has found the courage to begin again when it seems life has ended.

Many: And that gives us faith to believe resurrection will happen in Palestine and Israel.

...

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

One: We have faith to believe resurrection will happen in Iraq, Syria and Venezuela.

Many: We have faith to believe resurrection will happen in refugee camps in Turkey and Bangladesh and in detention centers in Texas and New Mexico.

One: We have faith to believe resurrection will happen in the systems that crumple and oppress.

Many: We have faith to believe resurrection will happen in the lives we know are shattered and the hearts we know are broken.

One: May the resurrection come.

Many: May the resurrection come!

* Passing of the Peace

Donna Collins

One: 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.

* Hymn 433

"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"

PROMISE

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery?
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

"Beautiful Things"
by M. and L. Gungor

All this pain, I wonder if I'll ever find my way
I wonder if my life could really change at all.

All this earth, could all that is lost ever be found
Could a garden come up from this ground at all?

*Chorus: You make beautiful things,
You make beautiful things out of the dust;
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us.*

All around, hope is springing up from this old ground
Out of chaos, life is being found in You. *Chorus*

Bridge: You make me new; You are making me new (2x)

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.)

Black History "Children of the Movement" Jordon Robinson, Eloise Stone

Contemporary Reading "The Ballad of Birmingham"

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

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

Prayers of the People

Fred Robinson

Spiritual

"Go Down Moses"
Felicia Robinson, vocalist

TRADITIONAL

But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?' Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as God has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?'

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

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 Comma”

Nancy Ellett Allison

Offertory Invitation

Fred Robinson

Offertory Music

"Ain't No Grave"
by David Crowder

Music Cooperative

O, my Lord, it's a winding road
It's all bent from a heavy load.
I feel the weight beneath the ground.
Ain't no grave gonna hold me down.

O, my Lord, I can barely sing
Waiting for You and Your reckoning.
Angels humming, can you hear the sound
Ain't no grave gonna hold me down.

Chorus: I will rise! I will rise! (2x)
Trouble comes for everyone;
Death has no respect for love.
Roll that stone I won't be found;
Ain't no grave gonna hold me down.

O, my Lord, I can barely sing
Waiting on You and Your reckoning.
Angels humming, can you hear the sound
Ain't no grave gonna hold me down. *(Chorus)*

Feel the weight beneath the ground
Ain't no grave gonna hold me down! *(Chorus)*

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

φ Our God is making all things new,
A promise that we know is true.
Through eyes of faith we long to see
A love-transformed community. Amen.

* Offertory Dedication

Fred Robinson

The Baptism & Reception of New Members

Questions of the Candidates

Response of the Congregation

One: Will the members of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ please rise and join in the mutual promise and welcome?

*** Many: We welcome each of you and celebrate your journey of faith. We promise to search with you for truth in Scripture, word and witness; to walk with you in life's joys and sorrows; to support you when life is shaken; to laugh with you when life lifts your spirit; to share silence, song and sacrament; and to grow in Christian love and mutual appreciation. We will rely on God's sustaining presence as we journey forward together.**

Greeting of Christian Love

Hosts: *On behalf of the entire congregation, it is our pleasure to welcome you as full members of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love and welcome.*

Song of Celebration

HALLELUJAH

φ Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah, Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah;
Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah. Hallelujah, hallelujah!

* Benediction

Nancy Ellett Allison

Postlude

Kathleen 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.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome new members Mel & Christine Andersen, Kevin & Meghan Niblett and Samantha Hill Sears. Thanks to JP & Nishi Griffin, Suzanne Lamorey, Bill & Kim Tyler, for guiding our new members.

PHOTO DIRECTORY COMING SOON!

Holy Covenant is partnering with Lifetouch Family Photography to create a pictorial directory for the church. The photo for the directory will be at no charge to our members. Lifetouch has opportunities for members to select various packages if you would like to purchase pictures for yourselves. Photo packages are available for group family photos as well as photos with your pets. Terry Raley-Dennis will be available for the next three Sundays to schedule your family's appointment for the photo-shoots. **Photo shoots are Thursday Feb 28th through Saturday March 2nd.** Look for Terry at a table in the gathering room to schedule your appointment and to confirm your contact information.

TIME OUT YOUTH, FAMILY STYLE DINNER, MARCH 8

Please consider helping with this next meal planned for Friday, March 8. All are welcomed! Contact Bob Saylor, bchs3201@aol.com if you can participate.

MIGRANT BUS MINISTRY

Warm clothes, snacks, toiletries and diapers are being collected to give to migrants as they pass through Charlotte on the Greyhound bus route on their journey to pursuit asylum. A collection box is available in the Conference Room. See Suzanne Lamorey with questions or to participate in this welcoming.

STUDENT PANTRIES

Schools are back into session. Contributions to the Backpack Ministry for elementary students and siblings and the UNCC Student pantry are welcomed. Gently worn professional clothing is also welcomed by the UNCC pantry. Look for the collection basket in the Gathering Room.

HCUCC YOGA4ALL, WEDNESDAYS at 7:30 pm, Join us February 20

REFRESHMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP - KEEP IT SIMPLE!

To help keep us organized, we use an electronic signup for volunteers called SignUpGenius. You can use the link below to sign up, and you can still sign up on paper if you prefer. <https://tinyurl.com/hcuccsnacks2019>

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

Elder for February: Tom Magraw, tmagraw@aol.com or 704-614-5405

Deacons for February: JoAnn Jellison, Lisa Sherman

Greeters: Sue Pascucci, Lisa Sherman

Ushers: Tom Magraw, Suzanne Lamorey, Jim Hong

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger, Renee Brown

Tabulators: JoAnn Jellison, Terry Raley Dennis

Refreshments: South Charlotte Covenant Group

Recyclers: Suzanne Lamorey

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Phyllis Johnson, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Ed Sharp, Caroline Utz

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Caryn Capps, Shane Christian (Beth Sharp), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), Tammie & Charles Edenfield (Donna Collins), Ron Mann (Robert Shepherd), Becki Minich (Eileen Howe), Tony Morand (Lloyd & Gussie Spencer), David Owens (Donna Collins), Joe Robinson (Bill & Kim Tyler), Latassha Roberts, Ken & Evelyn Sell (Robert Shepherd), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), John Teague (Donna Collins), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Gary West (John Rapp), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

“Never put a period where God has placed a comma.”

~Gracie Allen



OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., Pastor
Rev. Fred Robinson, Associate Pastor
Mr. Shea Watts, Director of Music Ministries
Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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