



## Silent Meditation

Often persons are excluded from the tables of life, both through denial of shared food and resources and through denial of shared naming and decision making for their community, nation or world.

At God's final banquet, all will be invited and able to feast together. Like the eucharist and like the church that gathers at Christ's table, the round table is a sign of the coming unity of humanity. It achieves its power as a metaphor only as the *already* of welcome, sharing, talk and partnership opposes the *not yet* of our divided and dominated world.

~Letty M. Russell

Christian spirituality means eating together, sharing together, drinking together, talking with each other, receiving each other, experiencing God's presence through each other, and in doing so, proclaiming the gospel as God's alternative vision for everyone.

~Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 1, 2019

Prelude

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)*

Opening Voluntary

Kathleen Smith

\* Call to Worship

Deborah Winston

One: When we are left to our own devices, we become like weak and cracked vessels, unable to sustain love, mercy, and justice.

**Many: But when we come before God, seeking God's healing love, we are given the strength and courage to serve others.**

One: Jesus said, "Love one another, even as I have loved you."

**Many: Love is more powerful than fear; it is mightier than hatred.**

One: Living God, come to us this day, healing our weakness and mistrust.

**Many: Give us spirits ready to receive your forgiveness and mercy.**

One: Remind us, Holy One, that we are called to be your disciples.

**Many: As we worship this morning, heal our hearts and spirits and prepare us for loving service.**

\* Passing of the Peace

Deborah Winston

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

**Many: Thanks be to God!**

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

\* Hymn

“This Is the Day”

THIS IS THE DAY

This is the day, (*Echo*) This is the day,  
That our God has made, That our God has made.  
I will rejoice, I will rejoice  
And be glad in it, And be glad in it!

*Chorus:* This is the day, that our God has made.  
I will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day; this is the day that our God has made!

This is the day, (*Echo*) This is the day,  
Jesus lives again, Jesus lives again.  
I will rejoice, I will rejoice  
And be glad in it, And be glad in it!

*Chorus:* This is the day Jesus lives again,  
I will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day; this is the day Jesus lives again!

This is the day, (*Echo*) This is the day,  
That the Spirit moved, That the Spirit Moved  
I will rejoice, I will rejoice  
And be glad in it, And be glad in it!

*Chorus:* This is the day, that the Spirit moved.  
I will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day; this is the day that the Spirit moved!

**“O for a Thousand Tongues”**

**O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise  
The glories ever echoing the triumphs of God’s grace.  
My gracious Savior and my God assist me to proclaim  
To spread through all the earth abroad the honors of Thy name.**

*Refrain:*   **So come on and sing out, let this anthem grow loud;  
God is One Great Love.**

**Jesus, the name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease,  
'tis music in the sinner’s ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.  
Christ breaks the power of cancelled sin and sets the prisoner free,  
His love can ease our suffering, His love availed for me. *(Refrain)***

**Christ speaks and listening to his voice, new life the dead receive,  
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice, the humble poor believe.  
Glory to God, and praise and love be ever, ever given, By saints  
below and saints above The Church in earth and heaven.**

*Refrain:*   **So come on and sing out, let this anthem grow loud;  
God is One Great Love. God is One Great Love.  
Let all hearts with one voice shout  
“Hosanna to Christ in the highest, in the highest!”**

**Children’s Message**

**Fred Robinson**

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

Epistle Lesson

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Jeannette Salley

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' So we can say with confidence,

'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?' Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever...Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

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

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

Special Music

"Breathing the Breath"

by Matt Redman

**We have nothing to give, that didn't first come from Your hands  
We have nothing to offer You which You did not provide.  
Every good, perfect gift comes from Your kind and gracious heart,  
And all we do is give back to You what always has been Yours.**

*Chorus:*

**We are breathing the breath that You gave us to breath;  
To worship You, to worship You.  
And we're singing these songs With the very same breath,  
to worship You, to worship You.**

**Who has given to You, that it should be paid back to them?  
Who has given to You, as if You needed anything?  
From You, and to You, and through You, come all things, O God  
And all we do is give back to You what always has been Yours.**

*Meditation:*

**We are breathing the breath, that You gave us to breathe.**

## \* Gospel Reading Luke 14: 1, 7-14 Nancy Ellett Allison

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, “Give this person your place”, and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’

He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’

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 “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner!” Fred Robinson

Offertory Invitation Nancy Ellett Allison

Offering Music Kathleen Smith

## \* Doxology OLD HUNDREDTH

☩ **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

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

\* One: We invite all who celebrate Christ's life and love to join us at this table of fellowship.

\* Many: *☩ As we gather at your table, BEACH SPRING  
as we listen to your word,  
help us know, O God, your presence;  
let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
Nourish us with sacred story  
till we claim it as our own;  
teach us through this holy banquet  
how to make Love's victory known.*

One: Merciful God, as sisters and brothers in faith, we recall anew these words and acts of Jesus Christ. 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 many for the forgiveness of sins."

Many: *☩ Give us, Christ, your great compassion  
to forgive as you forgave;  
may we still behold your image  
in the world you died to save.  
Turn our worship into witness  
in this sacrament of life;  
send us forth to love and serve you,  
bringing peace where there is strife.*

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

*Communion is received by intinction. Please take bread or a gluten free wafer and dip it into the cup to receive both elements.  
The Communion elements are bread and grape juice.*

Music during Communion

**All:   ϕ *Gracious Spirit, help us summon  
other guests to share that feast  
where triumphant Love will welcome  
those who had been last and least.  
There no more will envy blind us,  
nor will pride our peace destroy,  
as we join with saints and angels  
to repeat the sounding joy.***

\* Benediction

Fred Robinson

\* Benediction Response

NEW DIMENSIONS

**ϕ *God of rainbow, fiery pillar,  
leading where the eagles soar,  
We your people, ours the journey,  
now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.***

Postlude

Kathleen Smith

#### OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

### **PLEASE SIGN OUR ATTENDANCE REGISTER**

**WELCOME** to all who worship today at Holy Covenant! Guests and members, please sign an attendance register and then pass it back to its starting point, taking note of who is worshipping near you and greet them.

### **COVENANT GROUP MEET-UP IN GATHERING ROOM SEPTEMBER 8**

Following worship, meet our Covenant Group leaders and find one close to your home! We'd love to increase our connections with one another through times to eat, laugh and pray together in small groups over a meal together.

### **THE IMPACT OF RACE AND POVERTY IN CHARLOTTE, SEPTEMBER 22 CHURCH POTLUCK IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP**

Bring a potluck dish to share and join us as we explore issues of poverty and race in the Queen City. Rev. Helms Jarrell, co-founder of QC Family Tree, will lead us in worship. Our panelists will discuss ways we can change this devastating narrative and make Charlotte work for all its citizens. Dr. Rodney Sadler will moderate the panelists; Don Thomas (from Leading on Opportunity), Janeen Bryant (from CREED-NC) and Kass Ottley (Community Activist).

### **CAN YOU HELP SHELTER A CONGOLESE REFUGEE FAMILY?**

If you can assist with helping this family, please make a donation to HCUCS with the notation for Sunshine Fund.

### **MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED SECURE OUR NEW ROOF!**

### **SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Thanks to all who participate and bring such richness to our class. All are welcome to join us at 9:45 in the Conference Room and no preparation is necessary.

### **REFRESHMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP - KEEP IT SIMPLE!**

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 September: Suzanne Lamorey, [suzlam@yahoo.com](mailto:suzlam@yahoo.com) or 704-654-7267  
Deacons for September: Martha Bomely, Holly Middleton  
Greeters: Eileen Howe, Deb Winston  
Ushers: JP Griffin, Kelly Gimlin, Jill Gregg, Laurence Winston  
Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger  
Tabulators: Kelly Gimlin, JoAnn Jellison  
Refreshments: Beth Sharp  
Recyclers: Kristin Andes, Tom Magraw

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

**Members**

Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Mamie Stokes

**Friends & Family Members**

The family of Kaj O'Leary (Melissa Noll)  
Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Mary Ruth Edenfield Beatty (Donna Collins), Ann Ebright (Julie Klever), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Will & Addie May Hong (Jim Hong), Marilyn Lafferty (Kim Tyler), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Amy Madden (Robert Shepherd), Ron Mann (Robert Shepherd), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Joe Robinson (Bill & Kim Tyler), Jack Ross (Anne Findlay-Chamberlain), Ken & Evelyn Sell (Robert Shepherd), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Irene Sharpe (Robert Shepherd), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), John Teague (Donna Collins), Dorothy Underwood (Keith & Cheri Dennis), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Gary West (John Rapp), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

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