

Holy Covenant

United Church of Christ



Lazarus,
COME FORTH!

Silent Meditation

"Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime."

~ Martin Luther

"Hearts rebuilt from hope resurrect dreams killed by hate."

~ Aberjhani

"Every parting gives a foretaste of death; every coming together again a foretaste of the resurrection."

~ Arthur Schopenhauer

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 29, 2020, 10:55 AM

Gathering Music “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” ST. CHRISTOPHER
arr. Lloyd Larson

Welcome and Announcements ✕ Fred Robinson
One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: **And also with you.**

Sung Introit “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley” LONESOME VALLEY
☩ **Jesus walked this lonesome valley.
He had to walk it by himself.
Oh, nobody else could walk it for him.
He had to walk it by himself.**

* Words of Preparation Cheri Dennis
One: The prophet asks: Can our soul-weary bones live again?
Many: **O God, you know!**
One: We ask: Can we dance again after mourning, loss and grief?
Many: **O God, you know!**
One: The gift is sure and unmistakable:
Many: **God’s breath poured out as new life for weary souls!**
One: Let us celebrate the gift of God’s new life,
Many: **And come to worship God in laughter and dancing!**

* Hymn

“Lord of the Dance”

SIMPLE GIFTS

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

Refrain: Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.

I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me.
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John -
They came with me and the dance went on. (*Refrain*)

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
The holy people said it was a shame.
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
And they left me there on a Cross to die. (*Refrain*)

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Dance, and I still go on. (*Refrain*)

Call to Confession “Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

ARISE

φ Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore.
Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love, and pow'r.

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Fred Robinson

Sung Response “O Lord, Hear My Prayer”

TAIZÉ

φ O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.
When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.

Assurance of Pardon

Fred Robinson

One: Jesus is the resurrection and the life. In Christ there is light, there is life, there is hope. You are forgiven. You are given new life, eternal life that begins now. The Spirit of Life is upon you. Go and share the good news. Amen.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Sung Response “Oh, How Good Is Christ the Lord”
Puerto Rican folk hymn

OH QUE BUENO

ϕ **Oh, how good is Christ the Lord! On the cross he died for me.
He has pardoned all my sin. Glory be to Jesus.
Glory be to Jesus! Glory be to Jesus!
In three days, he rose again. Glory be to Jesus.**

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

Special Music

“Trust Me”
Felicia Robinson, vocalist

Richard Smallwood

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, ‘Mortal, can these bones live?’ I answered, ‘O Lord God, you know.’ Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.’

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.’ I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, ‘Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.” Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.’

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

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

* Hymn 290

“Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart”

MORECAMBE

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as you are,
And make me love you as I ought to love.

Teach me to feel that you are always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

Teach me to love you as your angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The baptism of the heaven descended dove,
My heart an altar, and your love the flame.

* Gospel Lesson John 11: 1-6; 21-26; 33-44 Cheri Dennis

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

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 "Resurrected to Newness of Life" Fred Robinson

Offertory Invitation Cheri Dennis

* 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.

* Benediction Fred Robinson

* Benediction Response "Song of Hope" CANTO DE ESPERANZA
Argentine folk melody

φ May the God of hope go with us every day,
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace; singing, share our joy with all;
Working for a world that's new, faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Postlude "The Old Rugged Cross"
arr. Larry Shackley

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Dear Holy Covenant Community,

After additional consultation with our staff and church leadership, Sunday Worship will be live streamed every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. until further notice. Be on the lookout online, and in your email, for important updates from us as we monitor developments about Covid-19.

Our greatest priority is the safety and well-being of our neighbors and members of our congregation. Our actions impact the world around us so practicing physical distancing is not only necessary but it is an act of kindness and love. To paraphrase a verse from the Talmud, *"Anyone who saves one life it is as if she has saved the whole world."*

Fred Robinson, Interim Pastor
Fredrick@HolyCovenantUCC.org

WELCOME TO HOLY COVENANT

We welcome all who worship with us at Holy Covenant.

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

Elder for March: Lisa Cloninger, lisacmsw@hotmail.com or (704) 516-0322

Deacons for March: Jim Dwiggin, JoAnn Jellison

Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger, Laura Hankins, Kathleen Smith

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

From the writers of the popular UCC online **Daily Devotional**, *Deliver Us* includes a biblical text, reflection, and prayer for each day. Look for this Devotional posted to the **Holy Covenant UCC Facebook page daily**. The existential and everyday threats we face are daunting. With faithful people across the ages, we cry out to God for deliverance ... not only pleading for God to act, but seeking the courage to let God act through us. We can take such a risk ... or we can play it safe. The Lenten season is a time for each of us to explore the ways in which we promote (or prevent) the deliverance we so desperately seek.

MANY CHURCH MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS ARE BEING SCHEDULED VIRTUALLY. YOUR COORDINATOR WILL ADVISE OF THESE CHANGES.

****ZOOM - is an audio/video platform available for any mobile device, tablet, laptop or PC. There is no need to pay for this service to attend meetings. (We recommend first time to join in a little early)**

TRANSGENDER

DAY OF

VISIBILITY

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COALITION, UCC

Join the wider ONA family in our Zoom chapel this TODAY Sunday, March 29, for a special service observing Transgender Day of Visibility. The service is at 7 pm Eastern. [Click Here](#) for details and information on connecting to the Zoom Chapel.

MIDWEEK LENTEN STUDIES MOVE TO ZOOM**

WEDNESDAYS AT 12:15 pm

Join us via Zoom for "Exploring the Ten Commandments: A Lenten Devotional." Contrary to what many believe, the Ten Commandments are not merely prohibitions against specific acts, they are an imaginative, expansive and creative treatise of godly living. When read properly, they teach us how to lead lives that are pleasing to God, blessed by God, and empowered by God. They do this, in part, by helping us get the three most important relationships in life right. Our relationship to God, our relationship to others, and our relationship to ourselves. In fact, when Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment, Christ responded that we should love God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind, and our neighbors as ourselves ([Matthew 22:37, 39](#)).

That captures the three above-mentioned relationships - God, our neighbors and ourselves. Some people miss the fact that Jesus is including self-love, for how can you do what the "b" clause of verse 39 demands - "love thy neighbor as thyself" - if you don't first love yourself? These three relationships sum up what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called the "three dimensions of a complete life." And isn't that what Lent is ultimately about? As we prepare ourselves for the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, we best honor Christ's sacrifice by getting these three relationships right.

<https://zoom.us/j/9725573286> click the meeting link anytime after 12pm Wednesdays

SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sojourners Class will resume this Sunday, March 29th at 10am, via Zoom. Please note that the time is 10 am. We'll resume our study of the Gospel of Mark with a look at Chapters 9 & 10. If you have questions about using Zoom and/or would like a copy of the lesson emailed to you, please contact Cheri Dennis, cherid@holycovenantucc.org.

RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

If any Holy Covenant families or friends are interested in receiving supplemental materials and activities for children, please contact Laura Allison at Education@holycovenantucc.org.



HCUC W.I.S.E. TEAM OFFERS RESOURCES AWARENESS CRUCIAL ARTICLE

While taking care of your physical health during the novel coronavirus outbreak is of paramount importance, so is taking care of your mental health.

<http://independenttribune.com/news/local/mental-health-awareness>

DR. SALLY DUFFY - ARTICLE "HAPPINESS" HAPPINESS: What it is, and what it is not.

A podcast about anxiety related to the coronavirus;
<https://www.apa.org/research/action/speaking-of-psychology/coronavirus>

How to get your social needs met in a time of social distancing
<https://www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/research-information/social-distancing>

Holy Covenant continues to actively serve others. Here are ways we can continue with meeting needs in our community:



URBAN MINISTRY CENTER

"Housing is healthcare"

We welcome your support, especially with a few specific needs that will provide immediate help to those we serve. Our [Amazon Wishlist](#) has been updated to include tents, sleeping bags, and shower wipes to support people who may be sleeping outside.



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMMUNITIES

This local organization provides permanent housing to our neighbors in need. They are grateful for your support, and contributions, as they continue to do our very best to provide an excellent experience for our residents and other customers.

[Click here to learn more about how you can help](#)



Operating in Charlotte for 5+ years as an afterschool program for immigrant and refugee children where kids get help with homework, have fun, and enjoy a healthy dinner. They are supporting families with care packages of food, toys, books, hand sanitizer, and more. [Donate online](#), or drop off goods at their center at 3925 Willard Farrow Drive, 28215.

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to:
prayers@holycovenantucc.org.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Rick & Cheryl Milam, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Dawn Robinson, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Yvette Stewart Ross, Mamie Stokes, Shakti Subramanian

Friends & Family Members

The Family of Morley Barrett (Dawn Simmons)
David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will & Addie May Hong (Jim Hong), Charlie Jongeling (Darline Warren), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Carolyn Marshall (Linda Clark), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Mike Reynard & Linda Matkins (Robert Shepherd), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Renee & Aiden Rohn (Debbie Davis), Gene Sullivan (Jason Sullivan), Dorothy Underwood (Keith & Cheri Dennis), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Fred Robinson, Interim Pastor

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Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Interim Associate Pastor

cherid@holycovenantucc.org

Mr. Jon Weddell, Accompanist

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Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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