

Silent Meditation

"God pardons like a mother, who kisses the offense into everlasting forgiveness."

- Henry Ward Beecher

"We have to stop thinking of criminals as 'them' and admit to ourselves,

'There but for the grace of God go I.'"

- Michelle Alexander

"I do not at all understand the mystery of grace - only that it meets us where we are

but does not leave us where it found us."

- Anne Lamott

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable,
because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you."

- C.S. Lewis

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2020, 10:55 AM

Gathering Music “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need” RESIGNATION
 “Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound” NEW BRITAIN
 arr. Mark Hayes

Welcome and Announcements Fred Robinson
and Offertory Invitation

One: The Easter joy of the living Christ be with you all!
Many: **And also with you.**

Introit “And Can It Be” SAGINA
And can it be that I should gain an interest in my Savior’s love?
Died he for me, who caused his pain?
For me, who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be that you my God should die for me?

* Words of Preparation Cheri Dennis
One: Do you need a guide?
Many: **The Lord is our shepherd.**
One: Do you need a doorway to new life?
Many: **The Lord is our gate.**
One: Do you need rest?
Many: **The Lord restores our souls.**
One: Do you need forgiveness?
Many: **The Lord’s goodness and mercy follows us.**
One: Do you need care?
Many: **The Lord is our shepherd.**
All: **Come, let us worship God our creator, for all of God’s mercy and grace.**

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad;
The Passover of gladness, the Passover of God.
From death to life eternal, from earth unto the sky,
Our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.

Our heart be pure from evil, that we may see a right
The Christ who reigns eternal in resurrection light;
We listen for the teachings once heard so calm and plain,
For we, too, want to follow and raise the victor strain.

Now let the heavens be joyful, let earth its song begin,
The whole world keep high triumph, and all that is there-in;
Let all things seen and unseen their notes of gladness blend,
For Christ again has risen, our joy that has no end.

Pastoral Prayer

Fred Robinson

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

Hymn 247

“My Shepherd Is the Living God”
(verses 1 and 2)

CONSOLATION

My shepherd is the Living God, I therefore nothing need;
In pastures fair, near pleasant streams you settle me to feed.
You bring my wandering spirit back when I forsake your ways,
And lead me for your mercy’s sake in paths of truth and grace.

When I walk through the shades of death, your presence is my stay;
A word of your supporting breath drives all my fears away.
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows, your oil anoints my head.

Hebrew Reading

Psalm 25: 1-7

Cheri Dennis

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O 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.

Gift in Song

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”
Felicia Robinson, vocalist

FAITHFULNESS

Gospel Reading

Mark 16: 1-7

Cheri Dennis

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, ‘Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?’ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, ‘Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.’

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

“Unburied by Grace”

Fred Robinson

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(Online Communion adapted from Enfleshed)

Preparation for Communion: Remembering Times Together

“We Gather Here in Jesus’ Name”

COME, SHARE THE LORD

We gather here in Jesus’ name.

Christ’s love is burning in our hearts like living flame.

For through Christ’s sacrifice the whole wide world unites.

Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here; everyone belongs.

Finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

Christ joins us here and breaks the bread.

Our God who pours the cup is risen from the dead.

The one we love the most is now our gracious host.

Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

*We are now a family of which our God is Head.
Though unseen, Christ meets us here in the breaking of the bread.*

*We'll gather soon, in glory rise.
We'll see the wonder of our God and of our Christ.
Now we anticipate the feast for which we wait.
Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.*

Words of Invitation

Fred Robinson

Community of saints, beloved of God, we are invited to gather at the Communion Table of love, to feast on the dreams of God, to be nourished by the bread and wine, and to remember Christ's sacrifice.

The table calls us from institutional halls of power, from shelters and the streets; from classrooms and pulpits, from half-way homes and prison cells.

The table calls us as we are, from wherever we are, to be in solidarity with Christ, who lives and loves on the margins.

Come, and love relentlessly; following Christ on paths of uncertainty, taking risks for one another, calling down unjust power from its throne and lifting up the lowly, the impoverished, and the over-burdened.

Come, and answer the call of Christ, no matter your social location, to take on the cause of the marginalized, the oppressed, the outcast, and the isolated—with the understanding and with the faith that together—we might en flesh new possibilities of healing, of connection, and freedom from all that destroys life.

And so let us come to the table, expectant, eager, open to tasting the rich blessings of heaven born from unexpected places, and people, and experiences.

In this meal, may we remember the life, death, and resurrection of the One who still takes on flesh among us today.

Prayer of Consecration

Fred Robinson

And so we now pray, come Holy Spirit, Breath of God, Renewer of life, settle on these gifts both in this sanctuary and in the sanctuaries of the living rooms and homes of our viewers, that we might be transformed in our remembrance of your radical love, your eternal embrace, and your grace that makes all things new. For the sake of our shared lives, the life of this land on which we live, and the lives of those yet to come, nourish us and renew our hope that soon Christ may rise again among us.

Words of Institution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving God, we thank you for this meal, a meal that nourishes us, body and soul. May it sustain us on our journey and enable us to freely live into the persons you called us to be. Where any social norm or imbalance of power limit our ability to thrive, may we be a witness for Christ and pursuer justice for all your people. Amen.

* Hymn 478

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river,
I’ve got peace like a river, in my soul.

I’ve got joy like a fountain,
I’ve got joy like a fountain,
I’ve got joy like a fountain, in my soul.

I’ve got love like an ocean,
I’ve got love like an ocean,
I’ve got love like an ocean, in my soul.

I’ve got faith like an anchor,
I’ve got faith like an anchor,
I’ve got faith like an anchor, in my soul.

Benediction

Fred Robinson

* 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

“And Can It Be”
arr. Allison Gilliam

SAGINA

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Coronavirus update on worship

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

We are grateful for all who make our virtual Sunday Worship possible, and delight in your joining us via live stream every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. until further notice. Be on the lookout 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

Join us live Sundays in worship at 10:55am
<http://holycovenantucc.org/virtual-hc/>

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

Elder for May: Tom Magraw, tmagraw@aol.com or 704-614-5405
Media: Brian Hankins, Lisa Cloninger, Laura Hankins, Kathleen Smith

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

COVID-19 and "Stay at Home" rules have disrupted so much, even our in-gathering of special offerings for the **2020 One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)** which should have been March 22nd. But it's never too late. For many years, Holy Covenant, through individual donations, has supported OGHS as one of the **UCC's Five for Five Offerings**. This support makes new life and growth possible in so many ways worldwide. Once this pandemic is over, the projects supported by OGHS will still be going. The combined gifts coming to OGHS empower young girls through education, help women learn trades; rebuild communities after disaster, and support communities through agriculture as they learn to sustain themselves. As Paul writes, "the one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose," working together to grow God's kingdom on earth.

Investing in Florida Recovery is challenging enough for people with means, but hundreds—including people with fixed incomes, the ill, elderly, and disabled—simply lack the resources to rebuild on their own.

With generous contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), the United Church of Christ with the help of volunteer work teams from around the country, who have given thousands of hours, have restored close to 200 homes.

A 70-year-old disabled Navy veteran said, "Having a roof that was leaky and falling in was very difficult for me. I did not know what I would do." His Volusia County, Florida, home lost most of the roof's shingles to Hurricane Irma's winds (2017). The storm opened the way to major leaks, which destroyed much of the ceiling in the main living area and bedroom. UCC Disaster Ministries partnered with Volusia Interfaiths/Agencies Networking in Disaster (VIND) to help the most vulnerable disaster survivors. VIND helped the veteran obtain a loan to pay for a new roof, and deployed a volunteer work team from Altoona (Pennsylvania) United Church of Christ to complete the interior repairs in his home.



"The volunteers ... did it with such love and compassion, taking the job under their wings and making it perfect," the veteran said. "My health was deteriorating due to breathing in particles and debris from the water damage in my home, but it is improving now. I have a new outlook and I am no longer depressed." Thanking VIND and the volunteers, he said, "You have changed my life." Needs are being met in Florida with support from OGHS. Volunteer work teams, a construction supervisor, and over two dozen UCC congregations have volunteered to help repair homes.

Not too far away from Volusia County, the Florida Panhandle is still trying to recover from a very powerful hurricane, Hurricane Michael (2016). UCC Disaster Ministries is working with Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRG) in seven counties. In fall 2019, Betzi Yungclas, an

experienced UCC Partners in Service volunteer, and Benji Benzschawel, a full-time construction manager, were deployed to the area. They will assist the LTRGs with building coordination and volunteer management for a year. “While progress has been made in Florida over the last year in recovery, there are still significant unmet needs,” said Ken Skalitzky, UCC Disaster Recovery Specialist for the Eastern Region. “Please support disaster recovery with your work teams, donations and prayers,” Skalitzky said. “Our ability to support long-term recovery in Florida is but one example of our living the gospel of Christ.” It is also a chance to invest in the futures of communities. OGHS MISSION MOMENT Our ability to support long-term recovery in Florida is but one example of our living the gospel of Christ. It is also a chance to invest in the futures of communities.

If you would like to contribute to this offering, you may do so by mail or online. Be sure to put OGHS in the reference line, or in the NOTE field when giving online.

Mailing a check securely to:
Holy Covenant UCC
PO Box 481286
Charlotte, NC 28269



Try our new app in the My Church App. Download it here!
<http://customchurchapps.com/my-church-app/>

Find the GIVE button at the bottom of the home page, that will allow you to make a one time, or recurring contribution of any amount, and designate where those funds are to be used.



Make your offering online through our website:
holycovenantucc.org/give/

THANK YOU! Your support helps build our stories about how we are living out God's love and expressing love of neighbor, children and creation, our 3 Great Loves.

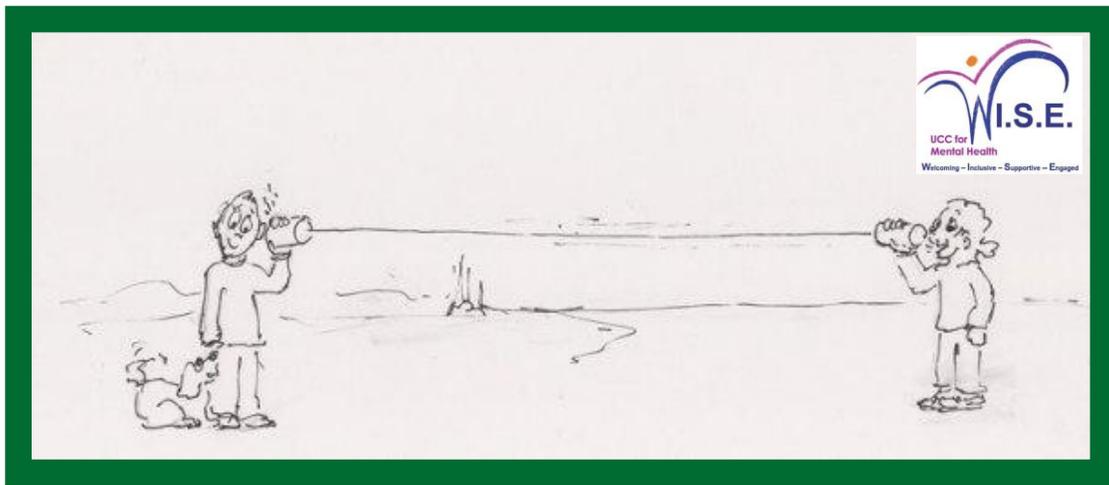
2020 VIRTUAL AIDS WALK

All are invited to join our Holy Covenant team as we come together to end HIV in the Charlotte community. We will be virtually walking this year during the month of May to make a positive impact to Charlotte RAIN organization and those impacted by HIV. By being a part of our team, you are empowering persons living with HIV and those at risk to be healthy and stigma free. Sign up on our Holy Covenant team site:



<https://p2p.onecause.com/aidswalkcharlotte/bob-saylorholy-covenant-ucc>.

All funds raised will benefit [RAIN](#) and their work with those living with AIDs or at risk. Questions, please contact Bob Saylor at bchs3201@aol.com.



EACH ONE, REACH ONE

As social distancing enters its third week, many of us miss the connections we'd come to count on in the service and socializing after. To that end, we're encouraging an "Each one, reach one" practice, whereby we each call one person each week--it could be the person who sat next to you, someone you know who lives alone, someone you would usually seek out after service. The church directory has phone and email data or you can contact the church office for contact information.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM EXCITING STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

In preparation for Pentecost, we will begin exploring the book of Acts chapter by chapter on Wednesday. The book covers the first 30 years or so of the early church, from the resurrection to about 62 CE. The narrative starts with Jesus saying goodbye to his followers then describes the life and work of the disciples of Jesus. It's an exciting action-packed story. All are invited to join us in our weekly Zoom Bible Study class on Wednesdays at 12:15 pm.

The link to the class is

<https://zoom.us/j/488584017?pwd=TE5YK2dub293ckhiYUUh5TDZmRTRndz09>

Password: 580673

Lead by Pastor Fred Robinson, Fredrick@holycovenantucc.org.

SOJOURNERS CLASS - VIA ZOOM NOT YOUR TYPICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sojourners Class invites you to join us in a Zoom class on Sunday mornings at about 9:50. We are currently studying the Gospel of Mark. This coming Sunday we'll be investigating Chapters 14-15 in the Study Guide. Newcomers are always welcome. Here is the link to the Zoom class:

<https://zoom.us/j/794891873>. If you'd like a copy of the Bible Study lessons, please email, text, or call Cheri Dennis, cherid@holycovenantucc.org or 704-519-6016.

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.



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

David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will & Addie May Hong (Jim Hong), Grady & Pat Judd (William Judd), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Carolyn Marshall (Linda Clark), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Mike Reynard & Linda Matkins (Robert Shepherd), Eileen Perry (Ed & Beth Sharp), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Renee & Aiden Rohn (Debbie Davis), Gene Sullivan (Jason Sullivan), Dorothy Underwood (Keith & Cheri Dennis), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Crystal Wing and Family (Martha Bomely), 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, M. Div., Minister of Music

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