



## Silent Meditation

“Following Jesus is not for the faint of heart.”

Vicki Kemper, UCC Minister (& many others!)

“You call us into your church  
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,  
to be your servants in the service of others,  
to proclaim the gospel to all the world  
and resist the powers of evil,  
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,  
to join him in his passion and victory.”

UCC Statement of Faith

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**August 30, 2020, 10:55 AM**

Gathering Music "Slane" TRADITIONAL IRISH  
*Kathi Smith, Bridget Green*

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis  
and Offertory Invitation

One: May the Spirit of the Living Christ be with you all!  
Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "As We Gather" M. Fay/T. Coomes

**As we gather, may your Spirit work within us.  
As we gather, may we glorify your name.  
Knowing well that as our hearts begin to worship,  
We'll be blessed because we came, O Lord;  
We'll be blessed because we came.**

\* Call to Worship Ed Vickery

One: We who dwell in the shelter of the Most High

All: **Seek God here.**

One: We who come to be inspired and changed

All: **Seek God's Spirit here.**

One: We who know how little we know

All: **Seek God's Word here.**

Song of Confession "Have Mercy on Me" G. Gustafson

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love.**

**According to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions.**

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love.**

**Wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin. (2x)**

Assurance of Pardon Cheri Dennis

Be now my vision, O God of my heart;  
 Nothing surpasses the love you impart—  
 You my best thought, by day or by night,  
 Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.

Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;  
 Ever within me, my soul is assured;  
 Mother and Father, you are both to me,  
 Now and forever your child I will be.

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

SANCTUARY

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.  
 With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

New Testament Reading

Romans 12:9-21

Ed Vickery

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ No, ‘if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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

“A Living Prayer”  
*Lisa Cloninger, David McGuirt*

A. Krauss

Gospel Scripture

Matthew 16:21-28

Cheri Dennis

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, ‘God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.’

Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?’

‘For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.’

**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

“Discipleship Then, Discipleship Now”

Cheri Dennis

Hymn

“We Are Your People”

WHITFIELD

*Lisa Cloninger, soloist*

We are your people: God, by your grace,  
You dare to make us Christ to our neighbors  
Of every nation and race.

Called to portray you, help us to live  
Closer than neighbors, open to strangers,  
Able to clash and forgive.

Glad of tradition, help us to see  
In all life’s changing where you are leading,  
Where our best efforts should be.

Joined in community, breaking your bread,  
May we discover gifts in each other,  
Willing to lead and be led.

God, as we minister in different ways,  
May all we’re doing show that you’re living,  
Meeting your love with our praise.

Benediction

Cheri Dennis

Benediction Response “Come! Live in the Light!”

WE ARE CALLED

*We are called to act with justice;*

*We are called to love tenderly;*

*We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.*

Postlude

“Make Me a Servant”

K. Willard

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

### THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

#### UPDATE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

July 7, 2020

Dear Holy Covenant United Church of Christ community:

To say that this time of quarantine has been hard on all of us is an understatement. As a Church, we miss worshiping and having fellowship together. We want to get back to church! Our thought is we will get back to in-person worship once it is healthy and safe for you, our members. Even before stay at home directives were issued Holy Covenant called together a Pandemic Response Team. Our Consistory and the Pandemic Response Team have concluded that it is NOT yet time to return to in-person worship.

Our decision is based on the following reasons:

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet is recommended. This means the sanctuary will hold many fewer attendees than pre-COVID-19.
- Singing can project an airborne spray of tiny droplets that: travel farther than 6 feet and hang in the air longer than the droplets resulting from talking in a normal voice. So we would not be able to sing as a congregation or assemble a choir although we will certainly provide music.
- Wearing masks will be necessary, even after the Governor's order expires, because we have many in our community who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, given underlying medical conditions and age.
- Entering and leaving the building will have to be monitored in order to help keep social distancing during the process.
- Children are not apt to be true to social distancing. There can be no hugging, even in the parking lot, except by family members living together.
- If we reconvene while only 25 people are allowed in the building, and we have two pastors, a musician, and a sound system operator, that limits attendees to 21. No one wants to be the one standing at the door telling the 22nd person who arrived that they cannot come in.

It is our responsibility as a church to ensure health and safety. While we are committed to getting back to in-person worship as soon as reasonably possible, as you can see, that time is not now based on the limitations listed above.

Enjoy our streaming services through the summer. Even after we restart in-person worship we will continue to offer virtual activities such as live streaming worship and Zoom meetings (e.g. Sojourners' Class). We will provide an update around Labor Day regarding when we will have the opportunity to worship in person again.

Sincerely,

Fred Robinson, Interim Senior Pastor  
[Fredrick@HolyCovenantUCC.org](mailto:Fredrick@HolyCovenantUCC.org)

Tom Magraw, Consistory President  
[TomM@HolyCovenantUCC.org](mailto:TomM@HolyCovenantUCC.org)

Join us live Sundays in worship at 10:55am

<http://holycovenantucc.org/virtual-hc/>

*Out of an abundance of caution for everyone's safety and wellbeing,  
today's live stream is composed of pre-recorded service elements.*

*Thanks to Brian Hankins for editing and compiling the elements  
into a cohesive worship experience.*

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

Lisa Cloninger, Bridget Green, Brian Hankins, Dorrie Hankins, Henry Hankins,  
Laura Hankins, David McGuirt, Kathleen Smith

**DIAPER DISTRIBUTION MINISTRY**

Our involvement in the Migrant Assistance Program has morphed from the Greyhound Bus Ministry of 2019 into the COVID Diaper Distribution Ministry of 2020. The coalition has been trying to deliver diapers to home-bound asylum-seeking families here in Charlotte. Our Missions and Justice team at Holy Covenant has accepted the challenge of attempting to deliver diapers every month for 30 families from September to the end of the year. Can you sponsor one of the families for \$50 a month? Our team will take care of the purchase and delivery of the diapers with your financial support. Donations, in any amount, can be designated by visiting [holycovenantucc.org/give-2/](http://holycovenantucc.org/give-2/) and choosing Diaper Distribution Ministry under the Designated Gifts Fund.



**MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY RESUMES, SEPTEMBER 2**

We are delighted to restart our weekly Bible Study in the [Book of Acts](#) this Wednesday, September 2 at 12:15 p.m. We will be studying Acts 6:1-7 which records an account of internal division in the early church. The Greek-speaking Hellenists believed their widows were being treated unfairly by the local Hebrews in the church. How did the apostles handle this potentially divisive situation? How did the problem arise in the first place. What does this account teach us about avoiding conflict in the church. I look forward to discussing these and other questions on Wednesday. Hope to see you there.

Pastor Fred

The new link for this class is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81830620353?pwd=QUNmS0dMdEV5K1BRd2VmMWpFQlIVQT09>

Lead by Pastor Fred Robinson, [Fredrick@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:Fredrick@holycovenantucc.org).



**SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL BIBLE STUDY**

All are invited to join the Sojourners Class on Sunday mornings at 9:45 am via Zoom. We are currently discussing *Revolution of Values* by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. Questions, contact Cheri Dennis at [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org).

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87673409762?pwd=VnVGZDNT0EtycnoycWJ6RTRVktjF4UT09>

Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762

Passcode: 523903

## 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](mailto:Education@holycovenantucc.org).



## BACK TO SCHOOL TIME!

For any students in Mecklenburg County, Monday, August 17 was the first day of school. CMS and many charter schools are offering online learning. Some other districts are offering a mixture of online and in person classes. This creates many challenges, especially for students with special needs, one-income families, and those who are housing insecure. Online education also places an additional burden on employed parents. While working remotely, parents are expected to also be available to supervise remote learning, without missing a beat at work. For many families the work-life boundary has been obliterated. Essential workers still require safe, affordable child care.



A number of community partners are working to summarize and address community needs. How can Holy Covenant help? Several groups are recruiting online volunteer math and reading tutors. Another option is to support teacher or school supply lists. QCEdConnect has created a very thorough website with a list of volunteer opportunities, as well as options for parents and learning pods to network.

<https://www.qcedconnect.com>

I encourage you to prayerfully consider how you might help even one student or family during this time.

Laura Hankins

## BACK TO SCHOOL

### LINK YOUR HARRIS TEETER VIC CARD NOW!

When you shop Harris Teeter brands, a percentage of your purchase is donated to the school that your VIC card is linked to. There are NO LIMITS to how much a school can earn. Help the HT "Together in Education" program. Get connected today! VIC cards must be linked each year.



## OTHER WAYS TO GET AND/OR GIVE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- Classroom Central has a number of remote volunteer opportunities. <https://classroomcentral.org/remote-volunteer-opportunities/>
- Spread the word with families to fill out the free and reduced application form found [here](#). Students who qualify will get five lunches and breakfasts FREE each week.
- Contribute to the fund to provide meals through the CMS Foundation. <https://cms-foundation.org/donate>
- Spread the word that children new to CMS need to be enrolled as soon as possible. Families are urged NOT to wait until school starts next week to enrol.
- CMS is providing iPads (for the youngest students) or Chromebooks for all students and will also provide a free hotspot if needed. Share the word that if families need a hotspot, they should inform their school. If they still have a hotspot from the Spring, it should still work for now but may need to be "reloaded" at some point in the semester.
- You can also designate a gift to the CMS Foundation to support hotspots. <https://cms-foundation.org/donate>

- Become a volunteer reading tutor through Read Charlotte. <https://www.readcharlotte.org/HELPS/>
- If you can do insulation or drywall QC Family Tree could use help getting space ready for the Tiny School they are hosting. Email Mady McColm at [madymccolm@gmail.com](mailto:madymccolm@gmail.com).
- Refugee Support Services is collecting used laptops to be reconfigured by E2D and given back to our Fruitful Friend Mentors to teach the adults in families about Digital Literacy. Laptops can be dropped off in the back parking lot of the Galilee Center (3601 Central Ave.) on Wednesday morning from 8:30am-9:30am.
- Lift up teachers, staff, administrators, students, families in prayer.



### **ABSENTEE BALLOTS**

The nonpartisan [League of Women Voters](#) is encouraging everyone to request a mail-in Absentee ballot now for the November election. Any registered voter may request and receive a mail-in absentee ballot - no excuse is needed.

Mail, deliver or email or fax your request today - here's the [form](#) and a list of the mailing addresses for county offices.

In Mecklenburg County: Send the completed Absentee Ballot Request form to Mecklenburg Board of Elections at PO Box 31788 Charlotte, NC 28231 -1788, or email it to [absentee@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:absentee@mecklenburgcountync.gov) or fax your request to 704-319-9722.

### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

#### **Members**

Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Rick & Cheryl Milam, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Terry Raley-Dennis, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Yvette Stewart-Ross, Mamie Stokes, Anita Taylor

#### **Friends & Family Members**

Tom & Dianne Bayes, in the death of Dianne's father, William Lorenz  
 Gretchen & Chris Calder (Martha Bomely) in the death of their son, Evan  
 Robert Marcial (Aida Marcial), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), George Jongeling (Darline Warren), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Roshani Parikh (Nishi Griffin), Vernon & Andrea Powell (Robert Shepherd), Darrell & Jackie Reichert, Jeff (Diane Neese), Renee & Aiden Rohn (Debbie Davis), Gene Sullivan (Jason Sullivan), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

### **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Fred Robinson, Interim Pastor**

[fredrick@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:fredrick@holycovenantucc.org)

**Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Interim Associate Pastor**

[cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org)

**Mr. Jon Weddell, M. Div., Minister of Music**

[jon@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:jon@holycovenantucc.org)

**Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant**

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