



Silent Meditation

"If they drive God from the earth, we shall shelter Him underground."

- Fyodor Dostoevsky

"Everybody's dying except the devil."

- Eboni Marshall Turman

"I have been on the verge of being an angel all my life, but it's never happened yet."

- Mark Twain

"The church, then, that is made an agency of continuity rather than of change, conformity rather than transformation becomes the reigning ideology of the day, and the church that is comfortable with the powers-that-be is no threat to them."

- Peter J. Gomes

"I am more afraid of those who are terrified of the devil than I am of the devil himself."

- Saint Teresa of Avila

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

REFORMATION SUNDAY

October 25, 2020, 10:55 AM

Gathering Music

Jon Weddell

(Songs in this service are used by Permission. CCLI License #11439355; CSPL164710)

Welcome and Announcements
and Offertory Invitation

Fred Robinson

One: May the Spirit of the Living Christ be with you all!

Many: And also with you.

Introit

“You Are My Hiding Place”

M. Ledner

You are my hiding place; You always fill my heart with songs of deliverance.

Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in you.

I will trust in you.

Let the weak say, “I am strong in the strength of the Lord.”

* Call to Worship

One: We give thanks for the reminder of consistent grace and mercy from God through Jesus Christ.

Many: We remember the lives that were lost in the struggle to reform the church on earth . . . those who were martyred, those who died fighting, those who perished in hiding, and who were killed on all sides.

One: We remember also the lives that have been lost throughout history in the name of religion and for those who die today for daring to believe.

Many: We thank you for the instruction that comes through our church heritage, the understanding of the saints, the gift of community, and a deeper appreciation of God’s gift of Holy Communion and Holy Baptism.

One: We thank you for the presence of Jesus Christ in us, with us, and for us, and for the support of the Holy Spirit, ever-reforming us.

All: Amen! May we ever be reformed by the work of God's love!

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing,
 Our present help amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.
 For still our ancient foe does seek to work us woe
 with craft and power great, and armed with cruel hate,
 on earth without an equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
 But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choosing.
 You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus sets us free!
 With mighty power to save, victorious o'er the grave,
 Christ will prevail triumphant.

And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us,
 We will not fear for God has willed the truth to triumph through us.
 The powers of evil grim, we tremble not for them;
 Their rage we can endure, for lo, their doom is sure:
 One little word shall fell them.

That word beyond all earthly powers forever is abiding;
 The Spirit and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us siding.
 Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
 the body they may kill; God's truth shall triumph still;
 God's reign endures forever.

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

Children’s Book “I Like Me” by Karen Beaumont

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Special Music

“Arms of Love”
 Meg Houlihan, soloist

A. Grant

Hear the word of the Lord,
you rulers of Sodom!
Listen to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!
What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt-offerings of rams
and the fat of fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.

When you come to appear before me,
who asked this from your hand?
Trample my courts no more;
bringing offerings is futile;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and Sabbath and calling of convocation—
I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity.
Your new moons and your appointed festivals
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me,
I am weary of bearing them.
When you stretch out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church
Many: **Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.**

Anthem

“I Sought the Lord”

D. A. White

Sermonic Text

Acts 19:11-20

Fred Robinson

God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them. Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.’ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit said to them in reply, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’ Then the man with the evil spirit leapt on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck; and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised. Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices. A number of those who practiced magic collected their books and burned them publicly; when the value of these books was calculated, it was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

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

“Who Are You”

Fred Robinson

Hymn

“We Are God’s People”

Symphony

**We are God’s people, the chosen of the Lord,
Born of God’s Spirit, established by God’s Word.
Our cornerstone is Christ alone and strong in him we stand:
O let us live transparently and walk heart to heart and hand in hand.**

**We are God’s loved ones, the bride of Christ our Lord,
For we have known it, the love of God outpoured.
Now let us learn how to return the gift of love once given:
O let us share each joy and care, and live with a zeal that pleases heaven.**

**We are the body of which the Lord is head,
Called to obey Christ, now risen from the dead.
God wills us be a family diverse yet truly one:
O let us give our gifts to God and so shall God’s work on earth be done.**

Benediction

Fred Robinson

Benediction Response

New Dimensions

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

Postlude

Jon Weddell

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

Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins,
Laura Hankins, Kathleen Smith

FIRST SUNDAY IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2020

It was wonderful to see all of you and hear your voices on the Zoom Virtual Gathering this past Sunday! Please join us on the first Sunday in November and December for more virtual gatherings.

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES ON ALL SAINTS' DAY, NOVEMBER 1

Hebrews 12: 1 (NSRV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight ... and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us."

As the challenging year of 2020 draws to a close, we want to honor those who came before, led, loved, and inspired us. Please send in a picture or pictures (or just their names if you don't have a picture) of people in your life who you want to remember, and we will call their names and show their photos during the live streamed service on Sunday, November 1.

Send pictures and names, either via regular mail to the church office (PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269) or via email to kathleenie53@msn.com by Wednesday, October 28.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

UPDATE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

September 4, 2020

Dear Holy Covenant United Church of Christ community:

We very much look forward to being together in worship but, in good conscious, we can only take that step when we can do so safely. We miss worshiping and having fellowship together as a congregation. Quarantine has been hard on all of us. In the meantime, the COVID-19 Response Team has been thinking creatively about some outdoor gatherings such as a Vesper Service and a parking lot picnic. We will revisit these ideas when the Governor of North Carolina moves us to Phase 3 at which time more people will be allowed to gather. However, we have concluded that it is NOT yet time to return to in-person worship and will reassess that decision around Thanksgiving.

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. This means not being 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 this fall. 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, Bible Study and our periodic WISE meetings). We will provide an update before Thanksgiving regarding how we will celebrate Advent, what the New Year will look like, and when we will have the opportunity to worship in person again.

Sincerely,

Fred Robinson, Interim Senior Pastor
Fredrick@HolyCovenantUCC.org

Tom Magraw, Consistory President
TomM@HolyCovenantUCC.org

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

STEWARDSHIP 2021

Beloved, let us love one another... (1 John 4:7)

As our Stewardship campaign moves into our third week, please prayerfully consider how you want to support the church. The work of our church can continue because of the generous financial and volunteer support of every member. Because of you, our mission of sharing God's love continues. Thank you to all who have already submitted their pledges.

Please support our church during this time by raising your hand to serve and/or submit your pledge through email or the church website at holycovenantucc.org/make-your-pledge-online/.



CONFIRM NOT CONFORM; A DISCUSSION GROUP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Calling all 6th through 10th graders!! Hear ye, hear ye, parents and grandparents! A Confirmation class via Zoom will start Tuesday, Nov. 3 at 7 PM and continue every other week. Kids do not have to be regular attenders at Holy Covenant. We hope this will be a supportive discussion group. [Click here](#) for more information and a sharable invitation. Contact Jo Ann Jellison at joannjellison@yahoo.com or 804-937-1180.

HCUCW WISE TEAM

Teens and young adults are experiencing unprecedented uncertainty, elevated stress and symptoms of anxiety and depression related to the pandemic. Whereas older adults may be able to say "this, too, shall pass," those ages 13-23 have had serious disruptions to their education, their social lives and their ability to plan for the future. The American Psychological Association has a new report titled "Stress in America," that gives details and recommendations (found at apa.org). Here's one to start:

- Take your foot off the gas and remind yourself that we are in a global pandemic. Encourage young people to do their best but give them space when they don't have the energy or motivation. Providing young people this flexibility can keep them from feeling overwhelmed.

Thanks go to Phil Kaveler and Darline Warren for joining me (Tina Dickens) in our **Charlotte CROP Walk for Hunger** on church property last Sunday afternoon. More thanks to all the donors who gave online and sent checks. HCUCG also made a generous donation. Gifts received so far total \$1,335.00 for our team. 25% of all donations will be split between Loaves & Fishes, Roof Above (Urban Ministry Center) and Loaves & Fishes in Mecklenburg County. If you want more info about how the funds are used in the rest of the world, check out www.cwsqglobal.org.



MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS AT 12:15PM

All are welcomed to join our weekly Bible Study through the [Book of Acts](#). We'll explore how this text speaks to us today.

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

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

SOJOURNERS CLASS - NOT YOUR TYPICAL BIBLE STUDY SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM

All are invited to join the Sojourners Class on Sunday mornings at 9:45 am via Zoom. For the next four weeks we'll be taking a look at the book of Ezekiel from the Hebrew Scriptures. Ezekiel was a prophet of God like no other! This coming Sunday we'll explore chapters 25-32 - God's prophecies through Ezekiel about the countries surrounding Israel. Questions, contact Cheri Dennis at cherid@holycovenantucc.org.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87673409762?pwd=VnVGZDNT0EtycnoycWJ6RTVktjF4UT09>

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.



REACH THE PASTOR

During this pandemic, Pastor Fred and Pastor Cheri are keeping office hours, though maybe not at the church. You can arrange a personal meeting through Zoom or a regular phone call. Have questions? Just want to chat, catch up? Discuss a personal matter. Call us! Pastor Fred Robinson, 770-344-8002 or Pastor Cheri Dennis 704-519-6016.

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

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Micheal Hall and Dickie Lamm in the death of Micheal's mother, Creola Hall.

Diane Burleson in the death of her mother, and the death of her son.

Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Julie Klever, Helen Lambert, Sharon Landis, Karen Long, Von & Melissa McQueen-Simmons, Irene Mikkelson, Rick & Cheryl Milam, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Yvette Stewart-Ross, Mamie Stokes, Anita Taylor, Ed Vickery

Friends & Family Members

David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), George Jongeling (Darline Warren), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Robert Marcial (Aida Marcial), Michael Morse (Beth & Ed Sharp), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Nick Pernice (Dawn Simmons), Vernon & Andrea Powell (Robert Shepherd), Kevin & Tracy Reed (Dawn Simmons), Darrell & Jackie Reichert, Jeff (Diane Neese), Lauren Reisenberger (Ida Mangione), Renee & Aiden Rohn (Debbie Davis), John & Marisa Sizemore (Tina Ettesen), Gene Sullivan (Jason Sullivan), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Fred Robinson, Interim Pastor

fredrick@holycovenantucc.org

Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Associate Pastor

cherid@holycovenantucc.org

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

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Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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