



Silent Meditation

"The courage to seek alternatives in this world is such a gift."

- Ashon Crawley

"In Jesus Christ, God disarmed himself. God surrendered himself without protection and without arms to those who keep crying for more and more protection and arms. In Jesus Christ, God renounced violence. And of course, he did this unilaterally, without waiting for us to lay down our weapons first."

- Dorothee Solle

"The following Jesus requires not just assent of the heart, but a fundamental reordering of socio-economic relationships . . . This is not a call 'out' of the world but into an alternative social practice."

- Ched Myers

"To follow Jesus means to accept the cross, to walk with him against imperial violence and religious collaboration, and to pass through death to resurrection."

- Marcus Borg

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 21, 2021, 10:55 AM

Prelude "A Prayer for Lent" E. Broughton

One Great Hour of Sharing Video

Welcome and Announcements Fred Robinson
and Offertory Invitation

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

Many: And also with you.

Introit "The Summons" KELVINGROVE

**"Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean in you and you in me?"**

Call to Worship Cheri Dennis

One: This is the day God has promised: the day of the new covenant.

Many: **May we come to worship with our hearts open so that they can become filled with God's love.**

One: That is God's desire. No longer carved on cold stone, God's covenant is engraved on our hearts.

Many: **So let us be receptive to God's covenant so that God can shape and mold us into instruments of peace, love and justice.**

One: Let us follow the spirit of God and reach out to our neighbors, friends and family, even to strangers as we spread the love of God and strive to create a new world centered around new possibilities and new ways of being and new ways of living.

All: **Ready our hearts, Dear God, so that we gladly serve you, your people and your creation with humility and grace.**

There is a place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God,
A place where sin cannot oppress, near to the heart of God.

*O Jesus, blest Redeemer, sent from the heart of God,
Hold us, who wait before you, near to the heart of God.*

There is a place of comfort sweet, near to the heart of God,
A place where we our Savior meet, near to the heart of God. (R)

There is a place of full release, near to the heart of God,
A place where all is joy and peace, near to the heart of God. (R)

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Holy Creator, we have refused to give our neighbors
the honor they deserve.

We have rejected others,
as Jesus was rejected before us.

Status drives us.

Gossip lures us.

Power tempts us.

Hereditary prejudice ensnares us.

We choose chaos over kindness,

And disconnection over spiritual bonds,

May our hearts repent,

Returning to your voice.

May our souls reconnect,

Returning to our neighbor

May our minds renew,

Returning to the ones you created us to be,

May your grace abound. Amen

Song

“Create in Me a Clean Heart”

Psalm 51

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me. (2x)

Cast me not away from your presence, O Lord,
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,
And renew a right spirit within me.

Assurance of Pardon

Fred Robinson

A new heart, a generous spirit, a fresh start: these are the gifts our God gives to us. Through Christ, we are cleansed; through Christ, we are healed; through Christ, we become new people. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response

“Oh, How Good Is Christ the Lord”

OH QUE BUENO

**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

“Come O Fount/If You Could Hie to Heaven”
Lisa Cloninger, Kathleen Smith

arr. Hall/Grant

Hebrew Scripture

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Melissa Noll

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

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

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

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

OPEN OUR EYES

**Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch you and say that we love you.
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.**

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

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

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

**Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;
Day by day that voice still calls us, saying, "Christian, follow me."**

**As of old, Saint Andrew heard it by the Galilean lake,
Turned from home and toil and kindred, leaving all for Jesus' sake.**

**Jesus calls us from the worship of the treasures we adore,
From each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love me more."**

**In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,
Jesus calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love me more than these."**

**Jesus calls us! By your mercies, Savior, may we hear your call,
Give our hearts to your obedience, serve and love you best of all.**

Benediction

Fred Robinson

Benediction Response

“The Summons”

KELVINGROVE

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Postlude

“Lamentation”

G. Peterson

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

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

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

At this time, with consultation with our staff and church leadership, Sunday Worship will be live-streamed every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. until further notice. Please know the leadership of Holy Covenant will be closely monitoring developments and will keep you informed of future decisions. 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."

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SPECIAL OFFERING

Holy Covenant UCC has traditionally participated in the 5 special offerings. Under the theme, "Let Love Flow," the 2021 One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering will be collected in March. This Lenten offering carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis around the world and supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC within Wider Church Ministries. Nearly 65 percent of UCC congregations participate in the annual OGHS offering, and 95 cents of every dollar goes directly to mission programming.

[Click here for more information.](#)

You may share your gifts via Holy Covenant's Website (www.holycovenantucc.org), Subsplash Wallet or PayPal, or mail your check to: Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte, NC 28269 earmarked for OGHS. (Subsplash & PayPal may add fees.)

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM, WEDNESDAYS 12:15PM

Join the discussion as we delve into the beginnings of Paul's missionary journey in the book of Acts. Join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89642315861>

Meeting ID: 896 4231 5861

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

The Sojourners Class is currently studying Paul's Letter to the Philippians. Feel free to join us anytime. There are no pre-requisites for this class, only a curiosity about scripture and an eagerness to see how God is still speaking to the church. For more information and a copy of the study guide, please contact Cheri Dennis at cherid@holycovenantucc.org or 704-519-6016. All are welcome to join us a 9:45 every Sunday via Zoom.

[Click here to join the Zoom meeting.](#)

Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 Passcode: 523903

SEVEN LAST WORDS *of* CHRIST

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

GOOD FRIDAY

April 2, 2021 at 12 pm

Livestream at www.holycovenantucc.org



1st Word
Rev. Cheri
Underwood Dennis



2nd Word
Rev. Janet
Garner-Mullins



3rd Word
Rev. Melissa
McQueen-Simmons



4th Word
Rev. Eve Stevens



5th Word
Rev. Carla
Patterson



6th Word
Rev. Nina
Weaver Wynn



7th Word
Rev. Glencie
Rhedrick

Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem, The Hill We Climb, gave me strength and comfort during a difficult time. I was reminded again how poetry feeds the soul. For over a year, we've been physically separated from loved ones. Poems are one way that we reconnect. I share a love of poetry with my family. Our mother's favorite is Wild Geese, by Mary Oliver. The poet reminds us that:

*Whoever you are, now matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.*

Poems can change the way that we view our world. I've included some links to poems that may uplift and inspire, and videos of the poets Mary Oliver and Amanda Gorman reading their poems. Which is your favorite?



*Image by
Manfred Antranias
Zimmer
from Pixabay*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/collections/142028/poems-of-hope-and-resilience>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/field-guide-families/202102/poets-resilience>

<https://onbeing.org/blog/mary-oliver-reads-wild-geese/> - Mary Oliver

<https://youtu.be/LZ055illiN4> - Amanda Gorman

Laura Hankins

HOLY COVENANT: WHO WE ARE CONNECTED TO IN MINISTRY:

Holy Covenant is connected to many organizations that are interdenominational and many that are secular. Meaningful ministry takes place with all of them.

Transcend Charlotte: This group provides a number of services for transgendered individuals. Their mission is to "Pursue social justice and equity for trans and gender expansive communities."

MeckMin: An Interfaith ministry that promotes action toward justice, healing, and peacemaking.

Crisis Assistance Ministry: Provides assistance and advocacy for people in financial crisis, helping them move toward self-sufficiency.

Mis Amigos Project (formerly Migrant Assistance Project): a grassroots volunteer group proving rapid response to crises with the refugee and immigrant community in Charlotte.

In the past, we've supported outside groups with meeting spaces such as the **North Charlotte Secular Home School Community**, **Narcotics Anonymous**, and **Campus Pride**'s Alternative Breaks Programs. We hope to do the same in the future as soon as it is safe for in person gatherings

AIDS WALK CHARLOTTE 2021, MAY 1

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 on May 1 to make a positive impact to RAIN 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 **AIDS WALK CHARLOTTE 2021 - Holy Covenant United**

Church of Christ (onecause.com). All funds raised will benefit **Charlotte R.A.I.N.** and their work with those living with AIDs or at risk. Questions? Please contact Debbie Davis at **Debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com**.



LET'S MAKE MORE BAGGED LUNCHES! APRIL 12

It was a joyous occasion when several of us (masked and cautious) were able to safely gather at church to pack over 300 lunches for local shelters in conjunction with A Roof Above. What a delight to see friends and do volunteer work at the same time! We are scheduled to make another 175 lunches on April 12 so please consider lending a hand. Please email Suzanne at **suzlam@yahoo.com** if you are interested in helping. Thank you, HCUC, for your ongoing support of our neighbors!

Your donations allocated to **Community Outreach** will keep this program going!



SPRING CLEANING? WE NEED VCR TAPES AND DVD'S!

Assisted Living Centers are asking for donations of your used VHS and DVD movies as they try to find ways to manage COVID restrictions. If you have any that you could part with, please drop them at the church. We'll deliver them.

REACH THE PASTORS

Pastor Fred Robinson, 770-344-8002, fredrick@holycovenantucc.org

Pastor Cheri Dennis 704-519-6016, cherid@holycovenantucc.org

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, Tom & Kathy Habel, Helen Lambert, Sharon Landis, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Cynthia Simpson, Lloyd Spencer, Mamie Stokes, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

Family & friends of Jimmy Tucker (Diane Neese)

Louis & Bonnie (Kathleen Wagner), Linda Angstrom (Beth Sharp), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dominic Ciciollo), Sally Cloninger (Lisa Cloninger), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), Pauline Jones and James & Neisy Williams (Jeff Edwards-Knight), George Jongeling (Darline Warren), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Linda Matkins (Robert Shepherd), Nevin Milan (Kathleen Wagner), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Vernon & Andrea Powell (Robert Shepherd), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Lauren Reisenberger (Ida Mangione), Kyle Simmons (Dawn Simmons), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), Deborah Wingard (Melissa Noll)

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

jon@holycovenantucc.org

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

office@holycovenantucc.org

Mailing address: PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269
3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510
www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810