



Silent Meditation

"Remember finally, that the ashes that were on your forehead
are created from the burnt palms of last Palm Sunday.
New beginnings invariably come from old false things that are allowed to die."

—Richard Rohr

"What Jesus is doing *instead* is communicating a way of being.

He shows us protest.

He shows us conviction.

He shows us what loving GOD looks like,
including laying down one's life for one's friends."

—Dorothee Solle

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PALM AND PASSION SUNDAY

March 28, 2021, 10:55 AM

Prelude "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" arr. L. Smith

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 "Bring Many Names" WESTCHASE

**Bring many names, beautiful and good,
Celebrate in parable and story,
Holiness in glory, living, loving God.
Hail and Hosanna! bring many names!**

Call to Worship (*based on Zechariah 9*) Cheri Dennis

One: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Look, your leader comes to you.

Many: **Ride on, Christ Jesus, no one can hinder you!**

One: Look, your leader comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Many: **Ride on, Christ Jesus, no one can hinder you!**

One: See the crowd coming into the city! Join the glad procession with songs of praise.

Many: **Ride on, Christ Jesus, no one can hinder you!**

One: We come, lifting our palm branches shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Many: **Ride on, Christ Jesus, no one can hinder you!**

One: On this holy day, we come with lifted hands, waving palms, and raised voices to proclaim that you are Savior of the world!

All: **Ride on, Christ Jesus, no one can hinder you!**

(upper voices)

Strong mother God, working night and day,
 Planning all the wonders of creation,
 Setting each equation, genius at play:
 Hail and Hosanna, strong mother God!

(lower voices)

Warm father God, hugging every child,
 Feeling all the strains of human living,
 Caring and forgiving till we're reconciled:
 Hail and Hosanna, warm father God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
 Saying no to falsehood and unkindness,
 Crying out for justice, giving all you have:
 Hail and Hosanna, young, growing God!

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Fred Robinson

One: The worshiping crowds wanted a forceful leader.

Many: Too often, we continue to place our trust in force and warriors and weaponry.

One: The people wanted a political solution where Jesus would use power to establish control.

Many: We too trust more in power than peace and nonviolence.

One: The Hebrews identified their oppressors as evil.

Many: Though we know better, we too are inclined to divide the world into good and evil people.

One: Gracious Jesus, may we catch a glimpse of your humility on this Palm Sunday; do not pass us by but stay and invade the inward citadels of our souls with your ways of peace and justice.

All: Correct us where we go astray. Assist us with the challenge of loving the unlovable which includes our enemies. Help us learn how to transcend the differences we have and acquire the art of reconciliation and forgiveness. Let your mind be within us, bring peace to our souls, O Prince of Peace.

Sung Response

“O Lord, Hear My Prayer”

TAIZÉ

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 Grace

Fred Robinson

One: Christ came riding a donkey of humility and reconciliation, not a charging war horse of judgment. Through Christ’s love and peace we are forgiven!

Many: Thanks be to God!

Response

“Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me”

GLORY TO GOD

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Christ, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end, Amen. (3x)
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

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.

Gospel Lesson

Mark 11: 1-11

Fred Robinson

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” They told them what Jesus had said;

and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

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

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

Reflection

“Free Indeed”

Fred Robinson

Anthem

“Kum ba Yah”

arr. J. Carter

PASSION AND PALM NARRATIVE

FIRST MEDITATION

Luke 19:29-39; 22:39-46

Cheri Dennis

JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM . . . PRAYER ON MOUNT OF OLIVES

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, ‘Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, “Why are you untying it?” just say this: “The Lord needs it.”’ So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ They said, ‘The Lord needs it.’ Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

'Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!'

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.'

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' [Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.] When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, 'Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.'

Hymn 216

"All Glory, Laud, and Honor"

ST. THEODULPH

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, O Christ, we sing,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!
The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way;
Our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you this day.**

**O Promised One of Israel, of David's royal line,
The one called "God's beloved," of flesh and yet divine;
To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
To you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.**

Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Loving God, we confess that our wills are as rebellious as Jerusalem's and that our faith is sometimes more show than substance. Stir up within us the gift of faith that we may not only praise him with our lips, but may follow him in the way of the cross.

While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?' When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, 'Lord, should we strike with the sword?' Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.' But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.' A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!' Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly.

Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?' They kept heaping many other insults on him.

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. They said, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us.' He replied, 'If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.' All of them asked, 'Are you, then, the Son of God?' He said to them, 'You say that I am.' Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!'

**Journey to Gethsemane, go and feel the tempter's power;
Your Redeemer's conflict see, watch the anguish of this hour;
Do not hide or turn away; learn from Jesus how to pray.**

**Follow then to Pilate's hall, view the Lord of life arraigned;
Crowned with thorns and mocked by all, faithfully this pain sustained;
Greater still than shame or loss, Jesus now must face the cross.**

Prayer

Fred Robinson

Loving God, help us acknowledge the lack of peace on earth and the reality of darkness and pain, of prejudice, discrimination, and betrayal in the world. Give us eyes of compassion, ears of justice, hearts and hands of peace so that we may do your work in this world. Amen.

THIRD MEDITATION Luke 23:13-25, 26, 32-38, 44-53

Cheri Dennis

JESUS SENTENCED TO DEATH . . . CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS . . . DEATH OF JESUS

Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death.

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, ‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!’ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, ‘If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!’ There was also an inscription over him, ‘This is the King of the Jews.’

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, 'Certainly this man was innocent.' And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid.

Hymn 229

“Were You There?”

WERE YOU THERE

**Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?**

**Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?**

Prayer

Fred Robinson

Loving God, help us to not overlook the pain of injustice in the world. We know what we contemplate in the death of Jesus is beyond words, beyond understanding. May the Holy Spirit intercede for us and give voice to what, for us, is inexpressible. Amen.

Hymn

“My Song Is Love Unknown”

LOVE UNKNOWN

My song is love unknown, my Savior’s love to me,
Love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.
O who am I that for my sake my God should take frail flesh and die?

Christ came from heaven’s throne salvation to bestow,
But people scorned and none the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my friend, my friend indeed, who at my need his life did spend!

Sometimes they threw down palms and sweetest praises sang.
Hosannas and glad psalms through streets and markets rang.
Then “Crucify!” is all their breath,
and for his death they thirst and cry.

What has my Sovereign done? What makes this rage and spite?
Christ gave new strength to run, restored the gift of sight.
Sweet injuries! Yet they at these
themselves displease and ‘gainst Christ rise.

Benediction

Fred Robinson

Benediction Response

“Bring Many Names”

WESTCHASE

Great, living God, never fully known,
Joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
Closer yet than breathing, everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna, great, living God!

Postlude

“He Never Said a Mumbalin’ Word”

arr. P. Taylor

(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."

Holy Week at Holy Covenant UCC

3.28 at 11AM ~ Palm Sunday Service via Live stream

3.31 at 7PM ~ Spy Wednesday Service via Zoom

4.2 at Noon ~ Good Friday Service via Live stream



Join us on Easter Sunday Morning 4.4

9AM ~ Outdoor Service in Memorial Garden*

***You must register in advance (link in email) attendance is limited to 25 family groups or persons. You must arrive by 8:45 ~ masks must be worn & social distance maintained.**

Children's church will be available.



11AM ~ Service via Live stream

Space is limited and by reservation. Sign up today!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-easter>

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

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SPECIAL OFFERING

Thank you to all who have contributed to this offering! 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.](#)

In this final week, 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.) Thank you for letting your love flow!

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 will not meet on Easter Sunday. We will resume class on April 11th, beginning our discussion of the book *Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit* by Mary-Frances Winters. 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

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.



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?

<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:

Over the past few weeks we've shared the many ways we are in ministry and the many groups that we partner with to make it happen. I hope that you have a better idea of what we are about as a church.

Many of the groups that we partner with are ongoing and constant. We find ways to be a part of their ministry and events all year round. Other groups are ones that we partner with for a specific purpose and a specific time and then we, and they, move on. Ministries often crop up and individuals



*Image by
Manfred Antranias
Zimmer
from Pixabay*



take it upon themselves to get involved which means that there may even be ministries going on out there that we're not fully aware of and that's a good thing!

One of the things that we do, as a Mission and Justice Team at Holy Covenant, is to constantly be looking for new ways to be in ministry and new groups to minister with. We value any input that members of our congregation might give that will help us do that job. If you become aware of an organization or a ministry that might make a difference, we invite you to contact the church office, or a member of the Missions and Justice Team, and we will be glad to look at it.

Finally, let me say that Holy Covenant UCC is an extremely active church as far as outreach ministry is concerned. We all need to be very proud of the job we are doing and the number of people who are involved in those ministries. Let me say that the greatest connection that we have is our connection with each other and with the work we've been called to do as a church. It makes us who we are and it truly makes us a church following the call of Jesus to reach out beyond ourselves to make a difference in the lives of others.

Thank you for your support in ministry!
Lloyd Spencer

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, HCUCC, for your ongoing support of our neighbors!

Your donations allocated to [Community Outreach](#) will keep this program going!



REACH THE PASTORS

Pastor Fred Robinson, 770-344-8002, frecrik@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

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Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Associate Pastor

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