



Photograph by Asael Peña on Unsplash

Silent Meditation

God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from [Godself],
because it is not there. There is no such thing.

~C.S. Lewis

We are not at peace with others because we are not at peace with ourselves, and
we are not at peace with ourselves because we are not at peace with God.

~Thomas Merton

No justice, no peace. Know justice, know peace.

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 11, 2021, 11am

Prelude "He Lives! Sound Praises!" Lani Smith

Welcome and Announcements and Offertory Invitation Fred Robinson

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Gathering Music "More of You" NYSTROM

Call to Worship Fred Robinson

One: At the beginning of the day, at the beginning of the week, the faithful yet fearful people gathered together. It was then that the Spirit of God came among them and whispered:

Many: **Peace be with you.**

One: Their hearts skipped a beat as they double checked that the lock on the front door was still latched. So the Presence of God spoke a little louder:

Many: **Peace be with you.**

One: They looked around at each other, puzzled, amazed, befuddled, and bewildered. Some smiled. Some doubted. Some wondered if it were just too magical sounding or too good to be true. So the Christ showed them that his own scars were not the end of the story and that is when the words of God began to feel joyous:

Many: **Peace be with you.**

One: From that day on, the people of God repeated the words to one another when they gathered. From one generation to the next, they exchanged the words as a greeting to one another to remember that Holy interruption to fear:

All: **Peace be with you!**

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!
 Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: All creation is amazed.
 In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.
 Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.
 Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.
 Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend.
 Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven nevermore shall be the same.
 Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.
 Tell its grim, demonic chorus: “Christ is risen! Get you gone!”
 God the first and last is with us. Sing Hosanna, everyone!

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Cheri Dennis

One: Holy One, our confession won't be news to you, but maybe if we allow it to be spoken aloud, You can help us find a way forward.

Many: Holy One, we have doubts. We're not talking about doubts like Thomas—his were perfectly reasonable—after all we too long to see You, touch You, and truly know You.

One: Our doubts feel different. We doubt that the peace you offer is really possible because our own minds are a mess of thoughts.

Many: We doubt that new life is possible because the wounds we bear are still overwhelming.

One: We doubt that You really intended to call us when You called the disciples to be of service in creating a new way of being in the world.

Many: We hear the age-old stories, but we are filled with doubts about ourselves, and if we are honest, doubts about your Holy possibilities. Holy One, in these moments of stillness, hear our doubts and settle our hearts, souls, and minds...

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

Cheri Dennis

Beloved People of God, hear the holy invitation of grace offered to every generation: Peace be with you. You are God's beloveds not because of what you have done or not done. You are God's beloveds because of who you are, and who you are is a people called and gifted to be a presence of peace and love in this world. Your shortcomings are forgiven. Grace abounds. God calls to you. Peace be with you.

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

Fred Robinson

Pastoral Prayer

Fred Robinson

Gospel Lesson

John 20: 19-31

Fred Robinson

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but

believe.’ Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.’

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us.

Many: Alleluia! Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 133

Joy Decker

A Song of Ascents.

How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the Lord ordained his blessing,
life for evermore.

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us.

Many: Alleluia! Thanks be to God.

Song

“Hine Ma Tov”

(Translation: Behold, how good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity.)

Hine ma tov uma nayim shevet achim gam yachad (2x)

Hine ma tov, lai lai lai (2x)

Sermonic Scripture

Acts 4: 32-35

Cheri Dennis

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was

not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us.

Many: Alleluia! Thanks be to God.

Sermon "An Easter Church: Of One Heart and Soul" Cheri Dennis

Hymn 266 "Filled with the Spirit's Power" SHELDONIAN

Filled with the Spirit's power, all hearts as one,
The infant church confessed Christ's victory won.
O Holy Spirit, in the church today
No less your unifying power display.

Now with the mind of Christ set us on fire,
That unity may be our great desire.
Give joy and peace; give faith to know your call,
And readiness in each to work for all.

Widen our love, good Spirit, to embrace
In your strong care all those of every race.
Like wind and fire with life among us move,
Till we are known as Christ's, and Christians prove.

Benediction Cheri Dennis

Benediction Response 581 WORLD PEACE PRAYER

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 "To Walk in God's Ways" Lani Smith

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

Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins,
Laura Hankins, 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."

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

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

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

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.

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!

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.





"Comfort food" style choices

Electronic methods available for your offerings

Schedule offerings, one time or recurring, through your bank's online payment system. Many financial institutions offer free services to its customers.

Mailing a check? Please use this secure address:
Holy Covenant UCC
PO Box 481285
Charlotte NC 28269

Donate on our website
HolyCovenantUCC.org,
via Subsplash Wallet®* or PayPal®*.
*Fees may apply to these types of transactions

GIVE TODAY

For gifts of stock or additional funding opportunities, please contact the church office
office@holycovenantucc.org or 704-599-9810

Holy Covenant United Church of Christ is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. Contributions may be tax deductible.

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Try 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.

We will be adding new features to the My Church App. Check it out!

3RD ANNUAL AFRICAN AMERICAN CONVOCATION, APRIL 16-17

Fri, Apr 16, 2021, 3:00 PM - Sat, Apr 17, 2021, 4:00 PM EDT

The Southern Conference of the UCC brings outstanding presenters to be featured at the African American Convocation in April. This is a two-day Convocation on April 16th & 17th. The Convocation will feature dynamic preaching, biblical studies, inspiring worship, and thought-provoking workshops. This will be an all-virtual Convocation. Theme is "Moving with Praise, Prayer and Proclamation" (Acts 2:1-11). Bishop Yvette Flunder (D.Min.) of the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries will be opening worship preacher, and Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson will be closing preacher. John W. Kinney (Ph.D.), Dean of Virginia Union, will be guest panelist and lecturer. The registration cost is \$25 and youth are free. Register using the following link: <https://bit.ly/3qj91Ev>. Continue to check soc-ucc.org for additional information leading up to the event.

Scholarships are available - contact the office. Office@holycovenantucc.org

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, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Cynthia Simpson, Mamie Stokes, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

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), 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), 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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