



Silent Meditation

"It is through eating and drinking together that human beings celebrate the joy of living and co-living. What is the point of being hospitable, of co-living humanely, of holding a mutual respect and a serene tolerance if we cannot eat and drink together? When we eat and drink together we collectively guarantee the continuation of life with all the generosity, celebration and joy that accompany such an event. At the end, as it is with the [Kin-dom] of God, there is a table that has been prepared so that communal partners can finally feast and celebrate the re-encounter in our Common Home."

-Marcus Borg

"I want to be outside with the misfits, with the rebels, the dreamers, second-chance givers, the radical grace lavishers, the ones with arms wide open, the courageously vulnerable, and among even—or maybe especially—the ones rejected by the Table as not worthy enough or right enough."

-Sarah Bessey

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER ~ HOLY COMMUNION

May 2, 2021, 11am

Prelude "We Come to the Hungry Feast" M. Sedio

Welcome and Announcements Fred Robinson
and Offertory Invitation

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Introit "Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song" BRIDEGROOM

**Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight,
like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

**To the members of Christ's body, to the branches of the Vine,
to the church in faith assembled, to our midst as gift and sign:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

Call to Worship (*Paraphrased from N.T. Wright*) Cheri Dennis

One: Made for spirituality, we wallow in introspection.

Made for joy, we settle for pleasure.

Made for justice, we clamor for vengeance.

Made for relationship, we insist on our own way.

Made for beauty, we are satisfied with sentiment.

Many: **But new creation has already begun. The sun has begun to rise.
Christians are called to leave behind, in the tomb of Jesus Christ,
all that belongs to the brokenness and incompleteness of the
present world ...**

All: **In times like these, remind us, O Lord, that that is what it means
to be Christian: to follow Jesus Christ into the new world, God's
new world, which God has thrown open before us.**

Hymn

“Here in This Place”

GATHER US IN

Here in this place, new light is streaming,
Shadows of doubt are vanished away:
See in this space our fears and our dreamings
Brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
Gather us in, our spirits inflame.
Call to us now and we shall awaken,
We shall arise at the sound of our name.

Here we receive new life in the waters,
Here we receive the bread of new birth:
Here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
Call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink, the wine of compassion,
Give us to eat the bread that is you:
Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
Lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining,
Not in some heaven light-years away,
Here in this place the new light is shining,
Now is God present, and now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever,
Gather us in and make us your own,
Gather us in, all peoples together -
Fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Pastoral Prayer

Fred Robinson

There’s a wideness in God’s mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
There’s a kindness in God’s justice, which is more than liberty.
There’s no place where earthly sorrows
Are more felt than in God’s heaven;
There’s no place where earthly failings have such kindly judgment given.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our minds;
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God’s word;
And our lives would show thanksgiving for the goodness of our God.

Scripture Lesson

Psalms 22: 25-31

Cheri Dennis

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.
May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.
For dominion belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.
To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.
Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,
and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

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.

Sermonic Scripture

Luke 14: 1, 7-14

Fred Robinson

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place.

But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

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

“Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner”

Fred Robinson

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

One: We invite all who celebrate Christ’s life and love to join us at this table of fellowship. We who have been wandering find a place here. Here with bread and wine we are welcomed by our true host, the Living Christ. May those who are unsure find their place today. May those who have forgotten, rediscover joy in this sacramental welcome.

Many: Like the women who stumbled toward the tomb, we know the experience of great obstacles blocking our entrance to hope; of wandering blinded by grief and self-absorption. On this wondrous morning we are reminded that no rock, no obstacle, no impossibility can match the capacity of God’s astonishing love: “He’s not here, he’s risen,” the angel said.

One: The Living One is here!

Many: **God's Spirit is with us.**

One: Lift up your hearts!

Many: **We lift them up to God.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Living One our Savior;

Many: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

One: Word becomes flesh, flesh becomes bread, bread becomes body, body becomes word.

Many: **Word becomes flesh, we remember you in bread and wine, body and blood, broken so that we, with all creation, may be made whole. Through your death, the power of fear is destroyed; through your resurrection, the power of hope is restored.**

One: Together we recall anew these words and acts of Jesus Christ. As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: "Take, eat: This is my body, broken for you." In like manner, Jesus took the cup, and after giving thanks, gave it to the disciples and said: "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my life blood, which is poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins." Remembering this boundless love, we offer our praise and proclaim our faith:

All: **Christ was born. Christ lived, loved and died. Christ is now risen! Christ rises again and again in our lives!**

One: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Christ died.

Many: **Amen.**

One: These are the gifts of God for the people of God. All things are ready. Let us eat and drink together.

Prayer after Communion

All: **May all we do be in response to new life. May the love of the cross, the power of the resurrection, and the presence of the Living God lead us forward. May the Spirit of God give new strength to all our living. Alleluia, amen.**

I greet you, sure Redeemer, with my heart,
Glad for the saving love that you impart,
Who pain did undergo for my poor sake;
I pray you from our hearts all cares to take.

You are the source of mercy and of grace,
Reigning omnipotent in every place;
So rule in us and our whole being sway.
Shine on us with the light of your pure day.

You are the life, by which alone we live,
And all our substance and our strength receive.
Sustain us by your faith and by your power,
And give us strength in every trying hour.

Our hope is all in you and you alone;
We trust the promise that your word makes known.
O dear Redeemer, make us calm and sure,
That in your strength we evermore endure.

Benediction

Fred Robinson

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

“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”

arr. A.M. David

(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."

THE MICHAEL G. BROOKS SCHOLARSHIP 2021-2022 APPLICATIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

The purpose of this Fund is to encourage Youth in both their educational growth as well as their service to God. Scholarship funds of \$2000 will be considered annually for all applicants.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION *see application

- Must be considered a youth: defined as a high school graduate, within the ages of 17 - 25.
- Must be a member of Holy Covenant for a minimum of 1 year. If not a member, at least one parent must be. (Preference will be given to youth who are members).
- Must show evidence of participation in activities at Holy Covenant and/or throughout the greater community. (Examples: Sunday School, Choir, Youth Group, Room In The Inn, clean-up days, Scouts, Clubs). Participation can be reported based on pre-COVID participation in church & community activities.
- Must show evidence of academic pursuits. (Examples: GPA, evidence of desire to learn and achieve excellence)

PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION AND DISBURSEMENT:

- Obtain an application from the church office or [download here](#)
- Complete and submit no later than June 1, 2021 to Cheri Dennis, cherid@holycovenantucc.org.
- Members of the Christian Education Team will review all applications.
- Applicants will be notified no later than July 31, 2021.
- Disbursement of scholarship fund will be made to the recipients' educational organization by the Holy Covenant Financial Department upon receipt of the scholarship funding, anticipated early August, 2021.

See application for additional information.

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

If you, or someone you know, will be graduating soon, please contact the office, office@holycovenantucc.org. We would love to have a photo, and a short bio, so we can share the good news, and celebrate their success! *The Class of 2021 is Twenty Twenty Done!!*



MeckMIN invites youth!

IN OUR OWN BACKYARD INTERFAITH YOUTH CAMP, JUNE 10-13, 2021

Rising 9th - 12th graders who participate will visit several houses of faith including the Hindu Center, the Muslim Community Center of Charlotte, Friendship Missionary Baptist Church and the synagogues at Shalom Park. They'll have service opportunities at the Galilee Center and Roof Above -- and an eye-opening tour led by staff at QC Family Tree. And, of course, they'll have fun and lots of opportunities for conversation with a diverse group of new friends. [Click here for the flier.](#)

We've also planned two information sessions open to you, interested youth and their parents or guardians. One will be held April 22 at 5 p.m. and the other on April 24 at 11 a.m. [The attached flyer has full details.](#) Contact LeDayne McLeese Polaski, Exec Dir of MeckMIN, 704-965-9241

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM, WEDNESDAYS *12:30PM* NEW TIME! NEW LINK!

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/81153885298?pwd=ZXIzVG80Yko5N2dWNnloVG12ckJndz09>

Meeting ID: 811 5388 5298 Passcode: 750474

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.

MECK. COUNTY OFFERS COVID-19 HOMEBOUND PROGRAM

Are you homebound due to an ongoing physical or mental disability and unable to travel to a COVID-19 vaccination clinic? You may be eligible to receive the vaccine at your residence. Complete the request form available on Mecklenburg County's vaccine web page www.MeckNC.gov/COVID-19 OR CALL 980-314-9400.



"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.

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows

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!



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), Michael & Beth Bliss (Robert Shepherd), 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), 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

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

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