



### Silent Meditation

When we talk about spirit, we are referring to the life force in everything. Each of us is seen as a spirit who has taken the form of a human in order to carry out a purpose. Spirit is the energy that helps us to connect, and also helps us in ritual and in connecting with the ancestors.”

~Sobonfu Some'

We are powerful because we have survived.

~Audre Lorde

“The wound is the place where the Light enters you.”

~Rumi

**Our Faith is over 2000 Years Old. Our thinking is not.  
Happy Pride!**

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

June 27, 2021, 10:55am

Prelude "Love Divine, All Love's Excelling" BEECHER

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you. Amen.

Introit "Rain Down" by Jaime Cortez  
(Based on Psalm 33)

\* Call to Worship Von McQueen-Simmons  
Covenant of Openness and Affirmation adopted by Holy Covenant United Church of Christ, Charlotte, NC, at the July 9, 2000, congregational meeting:

One: We of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ affirm Christ's call to love our neighbors as ourselves,

Many: and to reach out to all people, including those who have experienced oppression, discrimination, isolation, and ostracism.

One: We accept the call from the General Synod for congregations to form a Covenant of Openness and Affirmation.

Many: We recognize the destructive power of homophobia in our society and among Christians.

One: We seek to act as agents of reconciliation and wholeness within the world, within the Church Universal, and within our congregation.

Many: We affirm that all are worthy of love and declare ourselves welcoming to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities who seek to live in loving relationships.

One: Therefore, we of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Congregation,

Many: welcoming into the full life and ministry of this family of faith persons of every sexual orientation and gender identity.

All: We join together as a covenantal community to celebrate and share our common communion with the reassurance that we are indeed created by God, reconciled in Christ, and empowered by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

*\* Please rise in body or spirit*

\* Hymn 391

“In the Midst of New Dimensions”

J. Rush

In the midst of new dimensions / In the face of changing ways,  
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples / Wandering in their separate ways?

*Refrain:* 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.

Through the flood of starving people / Warring factions and despair,  
Who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care? (R)

As we stand a world divided / By our own selfseeking schemes,  
Grant that we, your global village / Might envision wider dreams. (R)

We are man and we are woman / All persuasions, old and young  
Each a gift in your creation / Each a love song to be sung. (R)

Should the threats of dire predictions / Cause us to withdraw in pain,  
May your blazing phoenix spirit / Resurrect the church again. (R)

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Song

“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying”

CHILDREN PRAYING

Lord, listen to your children praying.  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place.  
Lord, listen to your children praying.  
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

Children’s Message

Cheri Dennis

Gift in Song

“The Rainbow Connection”

KL Ascher & PH Williams

*Lisa Cloninger, vocals, Kathleen Smith, piano*

*Why are there so many songs about rainbows  
And what's on the other side?  
Rainbows are visions, but only illusions,  
And rainbows have nothing to hide.  
So we've been told and some choose to believe it;  
But I know they're wrong, wait and see.  
Someday we'll find it - the Rainbow Connection -  
The lovers, the dreamers and me.*

*Who said that every wish would be heard and answered  
When wished on the morning star?  
Somebody thought of that, and someone believed it;  
Look what it's done so far.  
What's so amazing that keeps us star gazing,  
And what do we think we might see?  
Someday we'll find it - That Rainbow Connection -  
The lovers, the dreamers and me.*

*All of us under its spell, we know that it's probably magic...*

*Have you been half asleep And have you heard voices?  
I've heard them calling my name.  
Is this the sweet sound that call's the young sailors;  
The voice might be one and the same.  
I've heard it too many times to ignore it,  
It's something that I'm supposed to be.  
Someday we'll find it -The Rainbow Connection -  
The lovers, the dreamers and me.*

\* Scripture Lesson

Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15

Von McQueen-Simmons

*(The Inclusive Bible)*

For God is not the author of death and does not delight in desolation. God created all things to be alive all things of the world are made to be wholesome and there is no poison in them the nether world has no power over the earth for justice last forever,

\* Gospel Reading

Mark 5:25-34  
(NRSV)

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

**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

"Our Faith Will Heal Us"

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

\* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

**You have been exceedingly generous to us, O God.**

**We return a portion of what we have to you in grateful thanksgiving.**

**Bless our offerings that they will nurture the seeds of hope and healing in this community and beyond. Amen.**

\* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise God all creatures here below,**

**Praise God above all heavenly hosts,**

**Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\* Hymn 181                    “You Are Salt for the Earth, O People”  
You are the salt for the earth, O people: salt for the reign of God!  
Share the flavor of life, O people: life in the City of God!

*Refrain:*

Bring forth the reign of mercy, bring forth the reign of peace;  
Bring forth the reign of justice, bring forth the City of God!

You are a light on the hill, O people: light for the City of God!  
Shine so holy and bright, O people: shine for the City of God! (R)

You are a seed of the Word, O people: bring forth the reign of God!  
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice, grow in the City of God! (R)

We are a blessed and a pilgrim people: bound for the reign of God!  
Love our journey and love our homeland: love is the City of God! (R)

\* Benediction

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

\* Benediction Response

God of rainbow, fiery pillar  
Leading where the eagles soar,  
We your people, ours the journey  
Now and ever, now and ever, now and ever-more.

Postlude

“What the World Needs Now”                    by Burt Bacharach  
*Songs in this service are used by Permission.*  
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## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

**THANK YOU** for bearing with us as we open for in-person worship and other activities. Sunday morning in-person worship has gone well. Your cooperation in sitting safely distanced and in wearing masks is greatly appreciated. Blessings,  
Pastor Cheri

### **WELCOME REV. MELISSA MCQUEEN-SIMMONS!**

This Sunday, we are delighted to have as guest preacher, Holy Covenant member **Rev. Melissa McQueen Simmons**. Melissa is a native of Greensboro, North Carolina, an Iraqi-Veteran, and a first-generation college graduate. She earned her Master of Divinity (M.Div.) with an emphasis in Pastoral Care at Howard University. She is a mother to a charismatic toddler, and the spouse to the beautiful and graceful Vondalyn McQueen-Simmons. Melissa is ordained in the UCC and is installed as pastor and teacher to Many Voices: A Black Church Movement for Gay and Transgender Justice. She is the Spiritual Director / Virtual Pastor for Wholy Ground Spiritual Center, an intentional, virtual, wholistic faith experience. Melissa is a lover of international cuisines, travel, and music. Melissa says of herself, "As I continue on my path to living authentically, I am committed to helping others do the same - I am initiating the change I want to see."

### **EYEGLOSS COLLECTION**

MOST Ministries (Mission Opportunities Short Term) based in Ann Arbor, recycles and dispenses 10,000 pairs of eyeglasses in over 50 countries. Check your couches and recliners for those lost reading glasses, check your "catch all" drawer in your kitchen for those ten year old prescription glasses, and check your car for the sunglasses that went out of fashion five years ago. Drop them in the collection box in the Gathering Room. They'll be sent to Ann Arbor for cleaning, repairing, and labeling, then boxed up, ready for the next team going to Guatemala, Kenya, India, China, or any of 50 other countries. In the words of many of those who've received glasses, "*¡Dios le bendiga!*" God bless you! For more information on MOST and the eyeglass ministry, [click here](#). Follow a pair of glasses from donation to the new wearer!

<https://youtu.be/1uMlEnIJZQI>

## **MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM, \*TUESDAYS 12:30PM\***

Join us in our weekly bible study, on our new day and time, Tuesdays at 12:30PM. We'll continue our exploration of Paul's missionary journeys, as written in Acts.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81153885298?pwd=ZXl3VG80Yko5N2dWNnloVG1ZckJndz09> Meeting ID: 811 5388 5298 Passcode: 750474

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS - TIME FOR SOME HISTORY SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM**

Join us (in person or via Zoom) either in-person in the Conference Room and virtual through the Zoom link below. Please join us as you are able. Contact Pastor Cheri if you have questions: [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org) or 704-519-6016.

[Click here to join the Zoom meeting.](#) Or join using this Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 and Passcode: 523903

## **TRAVELING? WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THOSE TOILETRIES?!**

We are in need of toiletries and amenities you returned home with. Bring your unused travel size shampoos, soaps, lotions, shower caps, etc. We'll see they get to those who need them!

## **JOHNS RIVER VALLEY CAMP SUMMER 2021 SCHEDULE**

JRVC is a UCC camp for all ages, in Collettsville, NC, with a wide variety of weeklong programs with a many different focuses. Please see the [attached flier](#) for their programs, or visit [jrvc.org](http://jrvc.org). Holy Covenant UCC has scholarship funds for our youth interested in attending. Contact the church office for details.

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

Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins,  
Laura Hankins, Meg Houlihan, Kathleen Smith  
Our Ushers and Greeters

*We are excited to have the musical talents of Kathleen Smith  
as she fills in for Jon Weddell for the next few weeks.*



If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to  
[prayers@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:prayers@holycovenantucc.org).

## **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

### **Members**

Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jana Harrison, Jim Hong, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Cynthia Simpson, Mamie Stokes, Anita Taylor, Debbie Winston

### **Friends & Family Members**

Dana Bennett & Misty Burch (Kathleen Wagner), Michael & Beth Bliss (Robert Shepherd), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dominic Ciciollo), Al (Bo) Dennis (Keith Dennis), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), George Jongeling (Darline Warren), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Bonnie Lee (Kathleen Wagner), Thibault Ossenbühl (Melissa Noll), Vernon & Andrea Powell (Robert Shepherd), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Eulene Shepherd (Robert Shepherd), Joyce Tyler (Bill & Kim Tyler), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp)

### **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Pastor**

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**Jon Weddell, M.Div, MSW, Minister of Music**

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