



(Image by Andre Tiassin_Unsplash)

Silent Meditation

"I am not concerned that I am not known;
I seek to be worthy to be known."
~Confucius

"Not all of us can do great things.
But we can do small things with great love."
~Mother Teresa

"It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies,
but just as much to stand up to our friends."
~J.K. Rowling

Our Faith is over 2000 Years Old. Our thinking is not.

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

September 19, 2021, 10:55am

Prelude "Holy, Holy, Holy/Blessed Assurance" arr. L. Bergquist

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Introit "Let Us Adore" J. Chajes

Lower Voices:

Let us adore
the ever-living God
and render praise
unto God,
who spread out the heavens
and established the earth
and whose glory
is revealed in the heavens above
and whose greatness

Upper Voices:

Let us adore
the ever-living God
and render praise
unto God,
who spread out the heavens
and established the earth
and whose glory
in the heavens above
and whose greatness

All: Is manifest throughout all the earth.
You are our God. There is none else.

* Call to Worship Kristin Andes

One: Jesus challenges us in today's gospel:

Many: **Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.**

One: Jesus challenges us in today's gospel to welcome the child in Jesus name:

Many: **Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.**

And whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.

** Please take a comfortable posture that supports your
worshiping, reading, and singing.*

One: Jesus welcomed all who followed him with unconditional love.
Many: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.
One: God bids all of us to come and worship.
Many: God says to each of us, "Welcome, my child."
All: Let us now, together with all of the children around the world, worship our God.

* Hymn 70

"God Is Here! As We Your People Meet"

ABBOTT'S LEIGH

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font, and pulpit, here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,
Here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living to believe and to adore.

Sovereign God, of earth and heaven, in an age of change and doubt
Keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive;
We, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

Call to Confession

Cheri Dennis

Let us think about all the children in our own lives, our community's life, and in our world. What are their needs; where do we fail as individuals and community to welcome, nurture, and care for them? (Silence)

Prayer of Confession (*Unison*)

God, we often have not welcomed the children as Jesus has commanded. Too many children in our community and world suffer from violence, abuse, neglect, and poverty. We know that if we were to join together to welcome and care, to celebrate and honor our children we would save ourselves and our world. We need forgiveness. We want to make amends. We want to change. We want to learn to welcome all children, for in loving and caring for them, we welcome your reign of justice and peace. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Cheri Dennis

We give thanks for our savior and teacher Jesus Christ, who was born among us as a child needing nurture and care, and grew to reveal your power to make all things new. We give thanks and rejoice that in Christ we are forgiven and given strength to grow in discipleship. Thanks be to God!

Song

“Know That God Is Good”

MUNGU NI MWEMA

Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Song

GOODNESS IS STRONGER

Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.

Victory is ours; victory is ours through God who loves us. (2x)

Children’s Message

Laura Hankins

Prayer for Illumination

OPEN MY EYES

OPEN MY EYES

Silently now I wait for you, ready, my God, your will to do;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Epistle Lesson

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Kristin Andes

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

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

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

Hymn

“like a child”

LIKE A CHILD

like a child love would send to reveal and to mend,
like a child and a friend, Jesus comes
like a child we may find claiming heart soul and mind,
like a child strong and kind, Jesus comes

like a child we will meet, ragged clothes, dirty feet,
like a child on the street, Jesus comes
like a child we once knew coming back into view,
like a child born anew, Jesus comes

like a child born to pray and to show us the way,
like a child here to stay, Jesus comes
like a child we receive all that love can conceive,
like a child we believe Jesus comes

(Capitalization and punctuation are intentional per poet/composer D. Damon.)

* Gospel Lesson

Mark 9:30-37

Cheri Dennis

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

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

"Who Is a Child?"

Cheri Dennis

* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

Cheri Dennis

O God, you who have given us life, you who have made every child a holy child, we give you thanks for the offerings of time and talents and money with which you have blessed Holy Covenant. Bless these offerings to your work on earth as you bring your kingdom to this world as it is in heaven. Amen.

* Doxology

GIVE THANKS

Give thanks with a grateful heart,

Give thanks to the Holy One.

Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (2x)

And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"

Let the poor say, "I am rich"

Because of what the Lord has done for us. (2x)

Give thanks.

* Hymn 295

“I Sing a Song of the Saints of God”

GRAND ISLES

I sing a song of the saints of God,
Faithful their whole lives through,
Who bravely labored, lived, and died
For the God they loved and knew.
And one was doctor, and one was a queen,
And another a shepherd in pastures green:
They were saints of God, if you know what I mean.
God, help me to be one, too.

They loved their God, and they lived that love.
It was loving that made them strong.
They did what was right, for Jesus' sake,
Lived justly their whole lives long.
And one was a prophet, and one was a priest,
And another was slain by a fierce wild beast:
There is no earthly reason, none in the least,
Why I shouldn't be one, too.

They lived not only in ages past,
There are hundreds of thousands still.
The world is filled with living saints
Who choose to do God's will.
You can meet them in school, on the road, or at sea,
In a church, in a train, in a shop, or at tea:
For the saints are folk like you and like me,
And I mean to be one, too.

* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

* Benediction Response

SHALOM CHAVERIM

Shalom, chaverim! Shalom, chaverot! Shalom, shalom!
Lehitraot, lehitraot, shalom, shalom.

(Farewell, good friends. Till we meet again, peace and farewell.)

Postlude

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”
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arr. J. Vogt

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

A Note on In-Person Worship

Due to the increase in COVID cases, and the new or restated guidelines from the CDC and the NC Department of Health, the Holy Covenant COVID Response Team is keeping constant watch on public health updates.

Out of an abundance of caution, please remember to:

- Wear a mask when in the church building, as mandated by Mecklenburg County officials.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer often.
- Follow the usher's directions for seating in the sanctuary.

NEW MEMBER/INQUIRER CLASSES - ALL ARE WELCOME!

Both in-person and virtual classes, so everyone can attend.

September 26 - 9:45 AM, October 10 & 24 - 9:45 AM, Welcome Sunday November 7 during worship Ever wonder why we do what we do? Ponder who we are and how we got there? Curious about the UCC and its traditions?

Whether you are planning to join, or maybe not, had already joined and still have questions, or just want to get to know each other better, this will be the place for you! We are looking forward to our time together! Questions & RSVP's

Jo Ann Jellison, joannjellison@yahoo.com or Pastor Cheri, cherid@holycovenantucc.org.

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

We'll be studying the book of Romans. If you'd like a study guide, have interest in an in-person or evening bible study group, please contact Laura Hankins, Laura@hankins-clt.us.

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85497779201>

SOJOURNERS CLASS, SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM

The Sojourners Class continues to explore See No Stranger. Join us Sundays at 9:45 in-person or via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87673409762?pwd=VnVGZDNTOEtycnoycWJ6RTVkJF4UT0909#success> Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 Passcode: 523903

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

Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins, Laura Hankins,
Kathi Smith, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

A huge thanks to those who have been participating as ushers, greeters, and readers. You need not be a member. Instruction, guidance and camaraderie will be available each Sunday. Use the link below to the Sign Up Genius already partially populated by Consistory members. It would do our hearts good to see your name added!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f4daea928a0fbc70-hcucc>

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Kevin Decker, Jeff Edwards-Knight, 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, Deb Winston

Friends & Family Members

Guy & Cena Brown (Jeff Edwards Knight), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dominic Ciciollo), Dennis Cloninger (Lisa Cloninger), Kath (Basco) Craton (Diane Neese), Nikki Echeverri (Melissa Noll), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), Harper Little (Karen Long), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Cindy Andes Nance (Kristin Andes & Tom Magraw), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Joyce Tyler (Bill & Kim Tyler), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards Knight)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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