



Silent Meditation

**THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.**

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 26, 2021, 10:55am

Prelude "God Looked Beyond My Fault" LONDONDERRY AIRE

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 Martha Bomely

One: I am the church; you are the church.

Many: **We are the church together.**

One: We depend on our seniors and long-time members
to remember where we came from and where we have been.

Many: **We are the church together.**

One: We depend on our children to retell our sacred stories
as they grow.

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

Many: We are the church together.

One: We depend on our youth and young adults to ask us why we do things this way and to suggest something new.

Many: We are the church together.

One: We need each other to be the church.

Many: We are the church together.

All: Come let us worship our God together for we are the church together.

*** 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!**

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Cheri Dennis

Creator of us all,

We sometimes forget: We forget that we are not alone. We forget that you made us. We forget that we have had help along the way. We forget to ask for what we need.

Embodied God,

Remind us that we are surrounded. We are surrounded by the people you have created, and by the many gifts you have given them to share. Remind us of our own gifts, and the ways we may use them in community.

Suffering Savior,

We confess that in our own struggle to survive, we have ignored other communities. We have forgotten that they too have the right to survive. Make us mindful. Make us compassionate. Help us to see you in one another. In your name we pray, Amen.

Words of Assurance

Cheri Dennis

Beloved in Christ, know that you are God's own and that through divine love you are freed to begin anew the work of living together in compassionate community.

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

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

Scripture Reading

Psalm 124

Martha Bomely

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side -- let Israel now say -- if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when our enemies attacked us, then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us; then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us; then over us would have gone the raging waters. Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth. We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church;

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

Gift in Song

“Take Time to Be Holy”

arr. S. Hamilton

Hebrew Scripture

Numbers 11:4-6,10-13

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."

Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the Lord became very angry, and Moses was displeased. So Moses said to the Lord, "Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child,' to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, 'Give us meat to eat!'

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

“When Enough Is Enough”

Melissa McQueen-Simmons

* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

Cheri Dennis

For the many and varied gifts we bring and receive from one another, we give you our thanks. May these tangible gifts and all the intangible gifts we share among us make known to the world that God is within and among us. 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.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Please remember to wear your mask when indoors as mandated by Mecklenburg County officials. Thank you for your cooperation.

WELCOME BACK REV. MELISSA MCQUEEN-SIMMONS

We welcome back to the pulpit Rev. Melissa McQueen-Simmons. Melissa is a native of Greensboro, NC, an Iraqi-Veteran, a first-generation college graduate, and a member of Holy Covenant UCC. 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."

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING

October 3, as part of World Communion Sunday, we will receive the Neighbors in Need special offering. Contributions may be made at any time throughout the month. This year, NIN's themed "Unfailing Love" offering is focused on supporting organizations and projects that are serving homeless and immigrant neighbors or communities. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities.

OCTOBER CHALLENGE FROM THE PASTOR

Theology. Even after five years in seminary, that's a word that I never quite grasp the meaning of. Simply put, it's the study of God or god. It's the study of the nature of the nature of the divine. Or maybe the study of faith. Then there's a particular religion's theology - that religion's specific beliefs about God or god. Then there's the theology that's a verb - sort of. The idea of "doing theology." (Well, for the English teachers, the verb in that sentence is "doing", not theology. 😊. I guess I could use "theologizing.")

During the month of October, I'm inviting the entire congregation to "theologize" with me. I'm inviting you to "do theology" in community as we study together the Book of Proverbs. There are 31 days in the month of October & 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs. I challenge each of us, including me, to read one chapter each day beginning Oct. 1st.

The overall goal of the Book of Proverbs is to "teach the acquisition of wisdom and the avoidance of folly." Wisdom and folly are explicitly mentioned all through Proverbs, but there are many more nuanced words used for similar ideas. What are they? What Proverbs still ring true? What Proverbs make no sense?

The Sojourners Class (see below) will discuss Proverbs during our Sunday morning sessions in October. We will "do theology" in community. If you aren't able to join us on Sunday mornings, please contact me and share with me what you've learned about God, what questions do you have, what doesn't make sense, or what makes perfect sense but you don't agree. This is how we "do theology" in community. This is how we hear our still-speaking God. I hope you'll join me on this journey. Pastor Cheri

WESTERN NC ASSOCIATION & SOUTHERN CONFERENCE NEEDS

It's that time of year again that the church needs her members to "step up to the plate," so to speak, and volunteer their time and abilities. A very big "Thank You" to those of you who have agreed to serve as a member of the Holy Covenant Consistory. Members are also needed to serve on the Boards of Directors for the Western North Carolina Association & the Southern Conference. There is a need for one lay person for each board. The term of each position is 2 years. Meetings are held monthly via Zoom. Thanks for considering these positions. Please let me know if you are interested. Pastor Cheri - cherid@holycovenantucc.org, 704-519-6016.

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 Questions & RSVP's Jo Ann Jellison, joannjellison@yahoo.com or Pastor Cheri, cherid@holycovenantucc.org.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY TUESDAYS, 12:15 PM

This fall we'll be studying the book of Romans, the longest of Paul's letters. Please contact the office if you'd like a study guide. Also, if you're interested in an evening bible study group, please contact Laura Hankins,

Laura@hankins-clt.us. Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85497779201>

SOJOURNERS CLASS, SUNDAYS AT 9:45 AM

Join us Sundays at 9:45 in-person or via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87673409762?pwd=VnVGZDNTOEtycnoycWJ6RTVkTjF4UT0909#success> Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 Passcode: 523903

Candid photographs and/or video recording share our work and witness and invite others into the fellowship of our congregation. Some pictures/video may be published in church print publications, on our website or on our official social media sites. If you do not wish to have your image published, please contact the church office by phone or email.

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

Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins, Laura Hankins,
Meg Houlihan, Kathleen Smith, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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

Friends & Family Members

Guy & Cena Brown (Jeff Edwards Knight), 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), Alec Kirchhoefner (Melissa Noll), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Michael & Chris Mele-Wagner (Dominic Ciciollo), 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)