



## Silent Meditation

“Scripture – understood as the biblical canon that communities have historically deemed authoritative – whispers in our ears, and on occasion, we hear disturbing words.”

Luis Menéndez-Antuña

### OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

**October 3, 2021, 10:55am**

Prelude "Siyahamba/Thuma Mina: arr. M. Sedio  
A Marriage of Africa and American Jazz"

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 Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME  
Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,  
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions:  
All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.

\* Call to Worship Mary Claiborne  
One: We were created in relationship and for relationship.  
Many: **We are created for community!**  
One: God knew it was not right for us to be alone.  
Many: **We are created for community!**  
One: Through Jesus Christ, God entered into human relationship with us.  
Many: **We are created for community!**  
One: We rejoice in our unity with all humanity.  
Many: **We are created for community!**  
All: **In community we now worship our God.**

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

Here, O God, your servants gather, hand we link in hand;  
Looking toward our Savior’s cross, joined in love we stand.  
As we seek the realm of God, we unite to pray:  
Jesus, Savior, guide our steps, for you are the Way.

Many are the tongues we speak, scattered are the lands,  
Yet our hearts are one in God, one in love’s demands.  
In despair our hope appears, calling age and youth:  
Jesus, Teacher, dwell with us, for you are the Truth.

Nature’s secrets open wide, changes never cease;  
Where, O where, can weary souls find the source of peace?  
Unto all those sore distressed, torn by endless strife:  
Jesus, Healer, bring your balm, for you are the Life.

Grant, O God, an age renewed, show us how love thrives,  
Help us as we work and pray, send us for our lives  
Truth and courage, faith and power needed in our strife:  
Jesus, Leader, be our Way, be our Truth, our Life.

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Cheri Dennis

God-made-flesh, bone of our bone, we confess that we think we can go it alone. We confess that we try to do it all and, that in doing so, we neglect the gifts you have given us: the bone of our bone, the flesh of our flesh, the bodies you created, and the relationships you created us for.

Jesus Christ, you who lived in a human body, call us to community. Remind us that in you we are one. Awake in us a respect for one another; and celebrate with us the diversity within that unity. May it be so now and forever. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Cheri Dennis

You are the divine creation, and it is not right for you to be alone. Know now that you are forgiven and called back into relationship with God and with one another. Amen.

\* Song "Malo! Malo! Thanks Be to God" J. Manibusan  
(This is a call and response song giving thanks in many languages.  
Jon and Henry will sing first, then respond with bold phonetic spelling.)

Refrain:

Tongan: Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!  
Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!  
Portuguese: Obrigado! Alleluia!  
O-bree-ga-doh! Alleluia!  
Spanish/Korean: Gracias! Kam sa ham ni da!  
Grah-seeahs! Kahm sah hahm nee dah!  
Tongan: Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!  
Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!

Verse 1:

Chamoru:	Si Yu'us maa'se!	See joos mah-ah-sih!
Indonesian:	Terima kasih!	Three-mah kah-seeh!
Tagalog:	Maraming salamat!	Mah-rah-meeng sah-lah-maht!
German:	Danke schön!	Dahn-kuh shuh(r)n!
Polish:	Dziękuję! We thank you, Lord!	Jehn-koo-yeh! We thank you, Lord! (R)

Verse 2:

Creole:	Mési bokou!	Meh-see boh-koo!
Mandarin:	Xie xie!	Shee-eh shee-eh!
Japanese:	Arigatō!	Ah-ree-gah-toh!
Italian:	Grazie!	Grah-tsee-eh!
Vietnamese:	Cám ơn! We thank you, Lord!	Gahm urn! We thank you, Lord! (R)

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Song "Know That God Is Good" MUNGU NI MWEMA  
Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.  
Halle, hallelujah. (3x) Hallelujah, Hallelujah.  
Mungu ni mwema. (3x) Ni mwema, ni mwema.  
Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.

Prayer for Illumination

CHEREPONI

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,  
Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.**

Scripture Reading

Genesis 2: 18-24

Mary Claiborne

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

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

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

Song

"Baruch Hashem Adonai"

D. Rodgers

**Baruch hashem Adonai. Baruch hashem Adonai.**

**Blessed be the name of the Lord. Baruch hashem Adonai.**

\* Gospel Reading

Mark 10: 2-16

Cheri Dennis

Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' They said, 'Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her.' But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**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

“The Elephant in the Room”

Cheri Dennis

\* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

**God of all creation, in communion with one another here in this church, and in unity as one body with all humanity, we ask that you breathe your life-giving breath upon the gifts we've received that they might be a blessing to your creation. Amen**

\* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Spirit, creatures here below.  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts;  
Praise God the source of all our gifts. Amen.**

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Our Story of Communion and Connection

Cheri Dennis

**One:** First, God created one person.

**Many:** But it was not right for that one person to be alone.

**One:** That person had God, but needed an equal, so God made animals.

**Many:** Cats and dogs, elephants and lions, birds of the air, cattle in the field, and fish in the sea.

**One:** But it still wasn't enough, so God made another person, an equal, someone to share with, and talk with. So God created relationship. God created communion.

**Many:** This at last is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh!

**One:** And then God took it one step further. God looked at the many people living in relationship with one another and decided to join the

community! God came to be with us as one of us, and his human family called him Jesus.

**Many: This at last is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh!**

**One:** And one night, when Jesus sat with his community, he took bread, and broke it, and blessed it, saying, "This is my body." Then he took the cup, saying, "This is my blood."

**Many: This at last is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh!**

**One:** Come, Holy Spirit, and make us one body of Christ.

**Many: This at last is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh!**

**One:** Bone of our bone; flesh of our flesh, one with each other and all humanity: the Body of Christ. Come and join the community of Christ around the world for the table is set and all are welcome.

Music during Communion      "Roll Down, Justice!"  
Lisa Cloninger

M. Miller

\* Prayer of Thanksgiving (*in unison*)

We thank you God, for refreshing us at your holy table. We thank you for our Christian family in this community and around the world. May we always be reminded to see the world through Christ's eyes, and to work for a time when all may share together at Your table. Amen

\* Hymn 347      "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

LINSTEAD

Let us talents and tongues employ,  
Reaching out with a shout of joy:  
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

*Refrain:* Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
Pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
Pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,  
At his table he set the tone,  
Teaching people to live to bless,  
Love in word and in deed express. (*R*)

Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
Bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
Gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God (Immanuel) everywhere! (*R*)

\* 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

“Chereponi”

arr. M. Sedio

*Songs in this service are used by Permission.  
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## 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.

### 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. 1<sup>st</sup>.

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](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org), 704-519-6016.

### **CROP HUNGER WALK 2021**

(Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty)

The annual Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk will be happening on November 7 at 2:30. Registration starts at 1:30. Location is American Legion Memorial Stadium. **The Holy Covenant branch of the Walk will be held on October 31 at 1:00 on church grounds.** All are welcome to join either of the walks. We will be helping to alleviate world hunger as well as locally. 25% of all donations will stay in Mecklenburg County and be divided between 3 agencies - Crisis Assistance Ministries, Loaves & Fishes/ Friendship Trays and Second Harvest Bank. For more information, contact Tina Dickens at [taichitina@gmail.com](mailto:taichitina@gmail.com).

### **NEW MEMBER/INQUIRER CLASSES - ALL ARE WELCOME!**

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

*October 10 & 24 - 9:45 AM, Welcome Sunday November 7 during worship* Questions & RSVP's Jo Ann Jellison, [joannjellison@yahoo.com](mailto:joannjellison@yahoo.com) or Pastor Cheri, [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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**

Kristin Andes & Tom Magraw in the death of Kristin's sister Cindy Nance  
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, Bob Saylor, Cynthia Simpson, Mamie Stokes, Anita  
Taylor

### **Friends & Family Members**

Brian Beaver (Bob Saylor), Guy & Cena Brown (Jeff Edwards Knight), Dennis  
Cloninger (Lisa Cloninger), Kathy (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), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Dick Saylor  
(Bob Saylor), Tom Schneller (Barb Schneller), Joyce Tyler (Bill & Kim Tyler),  
Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), Steve Zrebeic &  
Calvin (Jeff Edwards Knight)