



## Silent Meditation

“If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”

~Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“We do not think ourselves into new ways of living, we live ourselves into new ways of thinking.”

~Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM

“Doctrine is to be the balm of a healing experience of God, not a theological scalpel to wound and exclude people.”

~Diana Butler Bass, PhD.

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

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**October 24, 2021, 10:55am**

Prelude "I Love to Tell the Story" arr. M. Hassell

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Stewardship Moment Debbie Davis

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME

**Let us build a house**

**Where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone**

**To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,**

**And live the Word they've known.**

**Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;**

**Let us bring an end to fear and danger:**

**All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.**

\* Call to Worship Ed Vickery

One: Come, let us worship our God with joy and thanksgiving: Everything  
in us says

Many: **Thank you!**

One: At worship in this sacred place we say it again:

Many: **Thank you!**

One: For your love, for your faithfulness;

Many: **Thank you!**

One: When earth's rulers hear what you have to say, O God, they'll sing of  
what you've done:

Many: **How great the glory of God!**

All: **Finish what you started in us, God. Your love is eternal—stay with  
us, now, that we may say thank you!**

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

\* Hymn 25

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

ST. ANNE

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,  
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same:

A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away;  
We fly forgotten, as a dream fades at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
Still be our God while troubles last, and our eternal home!

Prayer of Confession (*in unison*)

Cheri Dennis

Leadership and governance are on everyone’s mind these days. Competing visions of the common good strive for our attention. We think we know what is best for the common good but forget that our way is not always God’s way.

When we forget that God’s way leads all to the blessings of justice and mercy, forgive us. When we forget that God’s way leads all, especially the most vulnerable, to blessings of safety, health, and meaningful work, forgive us. When we forget that God’s way leads all to the blessings of the shared abundance of God’s beloved creation, O God, forgive us.

Assurance of Pardon

Cheri Dennis

The good news is that in Christ we are forgiven all of our failed efforts at achieving the common good. At the same time, we are strengthened through the Spirit to continue to strive for the common good in all we do. God invites us always to be a part of the family of God, seeking blessing for all. Amen.

\* Song

“Oh, How Good is Christ the Lord”

OH QUE BUENO

Oh, how good is Christ the Lord! On the cross, he died for me.  
He has pardoned all my sin. Glory be to Jesus.  
Glory be to Jesus! Glory be to Jesus!  
In three days, he rose again. Glory be to Jesus!

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Song

“Now”

R. COONEY

*Lisa Cloninger, cantor*

**Now is the moment. Now is the time. This very day there is salvation.**

Children’s Message

Laura Hankins

Prayer for Illumination

CHEREPONI

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,**

**Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.**

Hebrew Scripture

Isa 43:1-3a

Ed Vickery

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

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.**

\* Sermon Text

2 Corinthians 4: 16-18

Lloyd Spencer

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

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

“What a Long Strange Trip It’s Been”

Lloyd Spencer

\* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

Generous God, accept our gifts and use them so that we may be part of your great work in this world. Through our giving, bring justice and love closer to all, not just in our community but in the world beyond these walls. Strengthen our church and the whole United Church of Christ so that we grow together each day into a powerful voice for healing and peace. 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.

\* Hymn 522

“I Love to Tell the Story”

HANKEY

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;  
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

*Refrain:* I love to tell the story; and when I am in glory,  
to tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love.

I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems  
than all the golden visions of all our golden dreams.  
I love to tell the story; I tell it now to you;  
because I want to share it, because I know it's true. (R)

I love to tell the story; it's pleasant to repeat  
what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet.  
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard  
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word. (R)

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best  
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it, like the rest.  
And when I sing in glory, I know the new, new song,  
will be the old, old story that I have loved so long. (R)

\* Benediction

Lloyd Spencer

\* 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

“Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart”  
*Songs in this service are used by Permission.*  
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arr. L. Larson

**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

**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. J. LLOYD SPENCER**

Lloyd Spencer is originally from the Appalachian coal fields of West Virginia. He attended West Virginia Wesleyan College where he met his wife, Gussie. They married just a few days before graduation at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, 1974. After graduation they moved to North Carolina, serving in Currituck, NC. In 1989, he moved his ordination to the United Church of Christ and served churches in Louisville, KY, Lexington, NC, and Whitsett, NC near Greensboro. Lloyd and Gussie are the parents of two grown adults and the proud grandparents of two fantastic grandkids. We are delighted to have them among us! They have both been very involved in the life of Holy Covenant UCC since joining and Lloyd was recently a guest teacher of the confirmation class. Thank you both for your ministries!

## **HOLY COVENANT UCC OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE - WE NEED YOU!**

Where is God Calling YOU to Serve at Holy Covenant? There is a team waiting for you! [Please review this information](#) and let Tom Magraw at [tmagraw@aol.com](mailto:tmagraw@aol.com) our Nominations team chair, or Pastor Cheri at [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org) know of your interest. And if you are currently serving on a team and want to make a change, please let us know that as well. We look forward to connecting you with committed folks to work with in making a difference in the lives of others.

Thank you to each of you who have pledged. We are currently paced at 75% of goal for General Fund, and 60% of goal for Building Fund.

You may submit your pledge by one of the following methods:

- 1- email your pledge to the church office at [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org); 2- mail your pledge to the church, Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269; or,
- 3- submit your pledge online through the church website at [holycovenantucc.org/make-your-pledge-online/](http://holycovenantucc.org/make-your-pledge-online/).

## **CHOIR REHEARSAL FOLLOWING WORSHIP TODAY**

Join us after worship for a one-hour choir rehearsal in the sanctuary to get our voices tuned up and ready for Advent and Christmas. We'll rehearse upper voices only TODAY.

## **NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING**

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. This offering will be received all during October.

## **CROP HUNGER WALK 2021 (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty)**

### **October 31 at 1:00 pm at Holy Covenant UCC**

\$15 will provide chickens for a family. \$25 will provide a water filter for a home. \$50 will provide 2 months of groceries. Please support the walking team as you are able to help our neighbors in the continental US, Haiti and other hurricane damaged areas. Even \$5 will be awesome! If you would like to donate, please give cash or a check (payable to **CROP**) to one of the walkers - Linda Carver, Tina Dickens, Phil Kaveler, Barb Schneller, or Darline Warren. C.R.O.P. will help to alleviate world hunger; 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).

## **ALL SAINTS CELEBRATION OCTOBER 31**

All Saints Day is the first day of November each year. It is a time when the church celebrates the lives of children of God who have passed on to God's eternal kin-dom. This year Holy Covenant will celebrate All Saints Day on Sunday, Oct. 31st. During the service, we will recognize the loved ones

we've lost in the past year or two. If you have a loved one you'd like to be remembered, please send the name and a photo if available of your loved one to the church office ([office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org)). Or you can call the office. The deadline is Thursday, Oct. 28th.

### **CONVERSATIONS ABOUT OUR CONGREGATION'S ANTI-RACISM JOURNEY**

Last week, the Racial Justice and Equity team led two highly rated introductory discussions on Black fatigue, which refers to the daily stressors and experience of systemic racism. We want to thank the volunteers and participants who took part and announce that two more opportunities have been scheduled:

**Wednesday, 11/17 at 7:00 p.m. Click [here](#) to join this meeting**

**Thursday, 11/18, at 7:00 p.m. Click [here](#) to join this meeting.**

Attendees will participate in small-group discussions facilitated by members of the Holy Covenant family. Discussions will emphasize listening skills and our goal is to provide a safe place for everyone to listen and be heard, no matter who or where you are on this journey. RSVP with your date preference [here](#). Contact Holly Middleton at [hsmiddleton@gmail.com](mailto:hsmiddleton@gmail.com) with any questions.

### **CARING FOR OUR LOCAL STUDENTS**

Support the Backpack Ministry at David Cox Elementary. We are collecting ready to eat healthy foods that a young student can prepare. Backpacks will be filled at UMC and distributed so the students have food for weekend and holidays away from their regularly prepared meals at the school. Often, younger siblings benefit from this program too. Your [food contributions](#) can be placed in the grocery cart of the gathering room. We'll do the rest!



## **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to

[prayers@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:prayers@holycovenantucc.org).

### **Members**

Bob Saylor and family in the death of his father, Dick Saylor

Kevin Decker, 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**

Joyce & Roy, Amanda & Jeremy (Ed Vickery), Martha (Kathleen Wagner), 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), Robbie Middleton (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Robert Plummer (Martha Bomely), Darrell & Jackie Reichert (Diane Neese), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Tim & Shannon Ward (Laura Hankins), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)

### **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Pastor**

cherid@holycovenantucc.org, 704-519-6016

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

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**Dawn Simmons, BSBF, Executive Assistant**

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