



Photo by James Coleman on Unsplash

Silent Meditation

“Like when you sit in front of a fire in winter —
you are just there in front of the fire. You don't have to be smart or anything.
The fire warms you.”

~Desmond Tutu

“You showed me that my past didn't make me unworthy to receive the
nearness of God in the elements. I could stand before the table of grace a
whole person -- deeply flawed and still incredibly valued,
hand-made by a loving God”

~Lenny Duncan

“Most of us do not live especially holy lives, after all. We spend most of our
time sitting in traffic, paying bills, and being irritated with one another.

Yet every week we are invited to stop all of that for one hour at least.

We are invited to participate in a great drama
that has been going on without us for thousands of years,
and one that will go on as long as there is a single player left standing.”

~Barbara Brown Taylor

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

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

November 7, 2021, 10:55am

Prelude "Morecambe" arr. S. Nielson

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Stewardship Update Martha Bomely

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME

Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine, and wheat;

A banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;

As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

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

* Call to Worship (*Based on Psalm 127*)

One: Unless our God builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

Many: **We have come into this house, built by the Holy One, to worship the God of Creation.**

One: Unless our God watches over the city, those who watch stand guard in vain.

Many: **We have come to listen to the stories of people who throughout the generations have shown us the way by their trust in the promises of God, who is always watching over us.**

One: The widow who gives her last coin and the foreign widow who provides food and housing for Elijah remind us of the risks we are free to take with confidence that God will take care of us through times of plenty and times of want, all along our journey through life.

All: **So let us celebrate this gathering which can bind us together. Give thanks that we are no longer strangers with God's people here or throughout the nations. Let us worship God!**

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

Thy Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

When we feel afraid, think we've lost our way,
 Still you're there right beside us.
 And nothing will we fear as long as you are near.
 Please be near us to the end. (R)

Hebrew Scripture

1 Kings 17:8-16

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.' So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.' As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' But she said, 'As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied, and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.' She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah.

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

THY WORD

We will not forget your love for us and yet
 Our hearts forever are wandering.
 Jesus be our guide, hold us by your side,
 We will love you to the end.

Thy word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths.

* Gospel Lesson

Mark 12:38-44

Cheri Dennis

As he taught, he said, 'Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation. 'He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.'

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 Risky Business of Trust"

Cheri Dennis

* Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

God has made us stewards of the rich resources that were given in Creation and are given anew each day. We make our offerings knowing that all that we have has come from God who will continue to provide. In response to God's love and provision, we dedicate our offerings as a sign of our gratitude for your love and care, O God. We pray that we may follow in the spirit of the poor woman who gave her all without hesitation. Amen.

* Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

* Preparation

Cheri Dennis

One: Let us prepare our hearts, open our minds and give thanks to our God. Creator God, in the beginning you put life into the emptiness, light into the darkness and saw that it was good.

Many: You created people to live on the earth, to love and be loved, to care for this creation and be fruitful. And you saw it was good, very good.

One: And when we failed to praise you for a harvest of plenty, to obey your commands and care for the world that you put in our hands, you sent us Jesus to show us the way.

Many: May this meal nourish us, strengthening us to bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free.

All: Thank you, God, for inviting us to share in your mission to bring peace and abundant life to your creation. Amen.

Words of Institution

Cheri Dennis

We remember that on the night Jesus was handed over, while at supper with his friends, he gave us a pledge of love that does away with death. Jesus took bread, gave thanks for it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "Take and eat, all of you: This is my body, surrendered for you."

And when the supper was over, Jesus took a cup filled with wine, gave thanks for it, and shared it with them, saying: "Take and drink, all of you: This is the seal of a new covenant, my poured-out life. I will drink this cup with you again at the table of God's joy in the New Day that is coming. Whenever you do these things, remember me."

Come, eat, drink. Christ is the giver of this feast, and all are welcome, whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey.

Hymn during Communion 336

MORECAMBE

"Here, O My Lord, I See You Face to Face"

Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon you lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
Here share the cup, the gracious gift of heaven;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste a-fresh the calm of sin forgiven.

This is the hour of banquet and of song;
This is the heavenly table spread a new;
Here let me feast, and, feasting, still prolong
The brief, bright hour together here with you.

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.

CHOIR REHEARSAL FOLLOWING WORSHIP TODAY

COMMUNION CHOREOGRAPHY

Because of COVID restrictions, our communion distribution is different from pre-COVID times. There is only one station for receiving communion – a table on the floor in front of the chancel steps. The bread is on the left side in individual paper cups. The juice is on the right, also in individual cups. Please follow the usher's directions. There is an elder on both sides of the table. Please pick up your own bread first and partake as the elder says, "The bread of life given for you." Then pick up your own juice as the second elder says, "The wine of the new covenant given for you." There is a trash can beside the table for the used cups. If you would prefer to receive communion at your seat, please let an usher know.

HCUCC ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 14, 2021

We need you for a quorum! **Our 2021 Annual Meeting** is our opportunity to discuss and share the work of the church with the entire congregation. **(This year the meeting will be held in-person and virtually)**! The Annual Report and Proposed 2022 Budget will be available electronically before the meeting for your review. Printed copies will be available for in-person attendees. If you have any questions about the Annual Meeting, please contact Consistory President Jo Ann Jellison, joannjellison@yahoo.com or 804-937-1180. Look for the electronic message with the access links in your email. Electronic documents will be available this week.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT OUR CONGREGATION'S ANTI-RACISM JOURNEY

In October, 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 another opportunity to participate, scheduled for **Wednesday, 11/17 at 7:00 p.m.** Attendees will participate in small-group discussions that 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. Contact Holly Middleton at 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.

Members

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

Family & Friends in the death of Marian Dawson (John Rapp)

Joyce & Roy, Amanda & Jeremy (Ed Vickery), Martha (Kathleen Wagner), Mary Jo (Kathleen Wagner), Kathy (Basco) Craton (Diane Neese), Nikki Echeverri (Melissa Noll), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), Pat Key (Patti Key), Alec Kirchhoefner (Melissa Noll), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Michael & Chris Mele-Wagner (Dominic Ciciollo), Robbie Middleton (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Robert Plummer (Martha Bomely), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Tim & Shannon Ward (Laura Hankins), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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