



Legends & Traditions of Christmas

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

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIRST SUNDAY IN CHRISTMAS

December 26, 2021, 10:55 am

Prelude "Nativity Medley" arr. J. Purifoy

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the peace of the Christ Child be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "Come, O Long Expected Jesus"
Dulcimer & Guitar

* Call to Worship Cheri Dennis

One: Children are precious to God. The child Samuel grew in God's favor and the child Jesus grew likewise.

Many: **For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: Older adults and elders are precious to God. Young and old together praise God's name.

Many: **For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: Creation is precious to God: cedars, mountains, snow & frost, shining stars.

All: **For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

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

* Hymn 144

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all you saints arise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time the Savior comes, off-spring of the Virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh, the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”

Hail the Bearer of God’s peace! Hail the Son of righteousness,
Light and life our Savior brings, risen with radiant, healing wings.
Mildly laying glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us all from earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”

Children’s Message

Laura Hankins

Duet

“Sing We Now of Christmas”
Handpan Drum, Handbells

Pastoral Prayer

Bill Englebreth

Lord’s Prayer (*in unison*)

Our God, in whom is heaven, blessed be your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. He established them for ever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

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

Many: Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

* Epistle Lesson

Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

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.

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Judah L. Jones, Bill Englebreth

The 12 Days of Christmas

“Angels We Have Heard on High” - *Dulcimer & Guitar*

The Legend of the Pickle - The Legend of the Tabby Cat

“Suo Gân” (*Welsh Lullaby*)

*Sleep child upon her bosom,
It is cosy and warm;
Mother's arms are tight around you,
A mother's love is in her breast;
Nothing shall disturb your slumber,
Nobody will do you harm;*

*Sleep in peace, dear child,
Sleep quietly on your mother's breast.*

*Sleep peacefully tonight, sleep;
Gently sleep, my lovely;
Why are you now smiling,
Smiling gently in your sleep?
Are angels above smiling on you,
As you smile cheerfully,
Smiling back and sleeping,
Sleeping quietly on her breast?*

*Do not fear, it is nothing but a leaf
Beating, beating on the door;
Do not fear, only a small wave
Murmurs, murmurs on the seashore;
Sleep child, there's nothing here
Nothing to give you fright;
Smile quietly in her bosom,
On the blessed angels yonder.*

Candy Canes, Yule Logs, Cookies, & Wassail
“Here We Come, A-Wassailing”

Trees, Wreaths, & Luminaries -The Legend of the Poinsettia
“O Holy Night”

Ugly Sweaters - The Missing Child
“This Is My Wish”

* Hymn 154 “Go, Tell It in the Mountain” AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUAL
Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior’s birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Benediction “Nunc Dimittis” Judah L. Jones, Bill Englebreth

Postlude “Carol of the Bells” arr. B. Greer

*Songs in this service are used by Permission.
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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.

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 REVS. JONES & ENGLEBRETH!

The Reverend Judah L. Jones is an ordained minister in the Western NC Conference of the United Methodist Church. She holds a Master of Divinity (MDiv) from Duke Divinity School. Despite being born blind, Judah has challenged limits and continues to accomplish her vocational goals. She serves in extension ministry as a preacher, singer/songwriter, actor, artist, and comedian. Former positions include Senior Pastor, Director of Pastoral Care, Substance Abuse Counselor, and Minister of Music. She served as Minister of Music at Holy Covenant UCC 2006-2014. She has spent the past year and a half as “Artist in Residence”, because she has been staying safe at home during the pandemic. She is married to Bill Englebreth, a recently retired UM minister and table tennis professional. You can follow Judah on Facebook at Judah Blind Prophet.

YEAR-END GIVING

Holy Covenant's fiscal year ends on Friday, December 31 so any contributions for 2021 or prepayments for 2022 must be received at the church by noon on the last day of this year, or **postmarked on or before 12/31/2021 if being mailed; please use the secure address of Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269**

Questions about year-end contributions, stock gifts or electronic giving may be directed to Dawn Simmons at office@holycovenantucc.org. We are blessed by your generosity and many ministries at Holy Covenant!

Holiday office hours:

The church office will be opened December 31 until noon, and will be closed in observance of New Year's Day, reopening Tuesday, January 4th.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY, TUESDAYS AT 12:15 PM RECONVENES JAN 4

Everyone is invited to join us for our mid-week bible study. Contact Laura Hankins, laura@hankins-clt.us.

SOJOURNERS CLASS SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM

Come join the Sojourners in our temporary stay in *Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence*, a new book by Diana Butler Bass. Come wonder with us about what Jesus could possibly need to be freed from. For more information, contact Cheri Dennis (704-519-6016, cherid@holycovenantucc.org)

USHERS AND GREETERS AND READERS

Thank you to each of you for helping make worship a meaningful experience. If you'd like to be a worship participant, please use this link to sign up with your interest:

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

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

Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins, Keith Dennis,
Shakti Subramanian, Barbara Schneller

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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If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to prayers@holycovenantucc.org.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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

Friends & Family Members

Marie Raley and family in the death of her brother, Tom Lowman (Jean Raley-Dennis)

Don Carver in the death of his wife, Debbie

Aurora Christian, Rachel & Ryan Christian (Beth Sharp), Kathy (Basco) Craton (Diane Neese), Nikki Echeverri (Melissa Noll), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Will Hong (Jim Hong), Pat Key (Patti Key), Alec Kirchhoefner (Melissa Noll), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Michael & Chris Mele-Wagner (Dominic Ciciollo), Robbie Middleton (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), John Page (Martha Bomely), Robert Plummer (Martha Bomely), Kyle Simmons (Dawn Simmons), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Tim & Shannon Ward (Laura Hankins), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), John Zastro (Barb Schneller), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)

In gratitude for your generosity,

We wish you a very Merry Christmas

and a Blessed New Year to come!

The staff of Holy Covenant UCC

Cheri Jon Dawn Laura Jennifer Jill



*Let the spirit of Christmas wrap you on Christmas Eve
and ensure your well being through the days to come. Unknown*