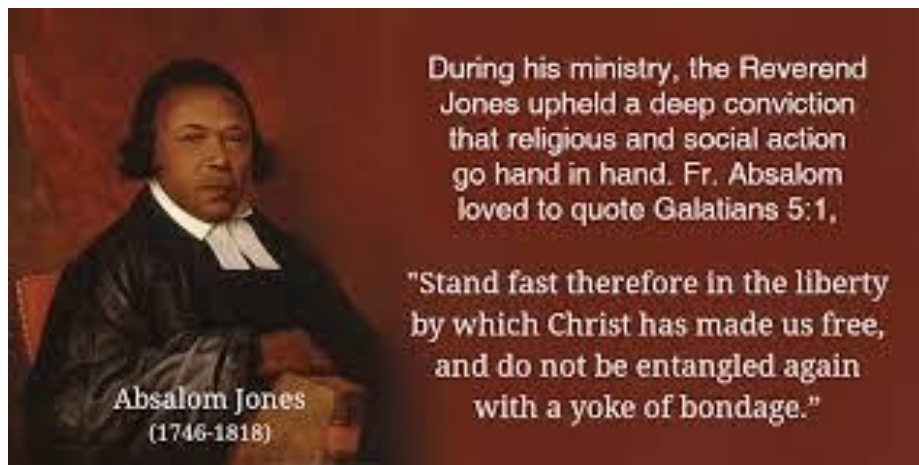
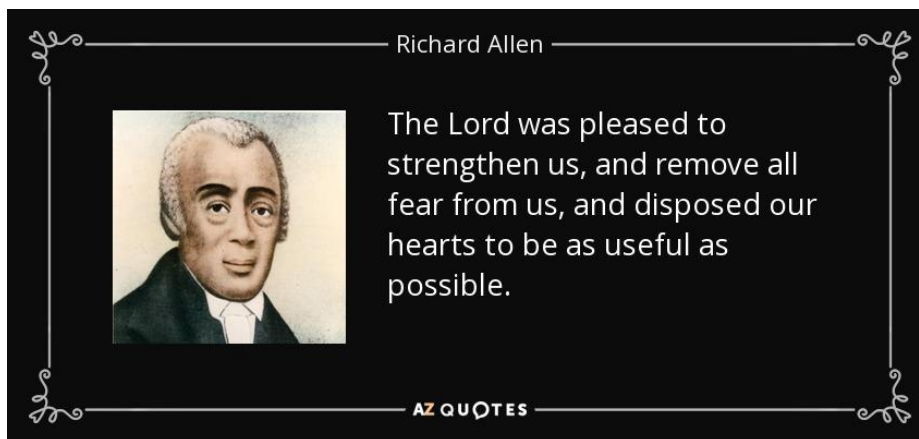




"History has its eyes on us."
Rev. Melissa McQueen-Simmons



Absalom Jones - founder of
the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas



Richard Allen (1760-1831) - founder of
the African Methodist Episcopal denomination (1794)

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

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY ~ BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

February 6, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "Let Us Break Bread Together" arr. D. Wyrzten

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis
One: May the Peace of God be with you.
Many: And also with you.

Introit "Praise God's Holy Name" K. Hampton
Sing till the power of the Lord come down.
Shout Hallelujah! Praise God's Holy Name! (2x)

* Call to Worship Ed Vickery
One: Isaiah, surprised by the Holy One in the Temple--A vision, a call, a response:
Many: **Here I am: Send me!**
One: Paul, surprised by the Spirit at his hateful work--An interruption, a challenge, a response:
Many: **I received from the Lord the word of grace I now proclaim!**
One: Weary fisher folk: surprised by Jesus at their empty boats--A sign, a promise, a response:
Many: **They left everything to follow!**
One: Holy One, you are ready to meet us wherever we are in our lives, offering vision, interruption, hope where we may least expect it.
Many: **Surprise us here at worship today with some grace unexpected that will change something in us--large or small--and send us into the world inspired and impassioned to do your work.**
All: **Let us worship the One whose call surprises and challenges us.**

Hymn 330 "Let Us Break Bread Together" LET US BREAK BREAD
Let us break bread together on our knees. (2x)
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
My God, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees (2x)
Let us praise God together on our knees (2x)

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

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

You call to us through the voices of the poor and the powerless, but we close ourselves off from their need. Lord have mercy. You call to us through the cries of those who struggle to change structures of oppression, but we turn away from their challenge. Christ have mercy. You hint, you invite, you surround us with calls to love you more fully, and follow you more faithfully, but we cling to comfort and safety. Lord have mercy. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Cheri Dennis

Friends, the call of God, like God's own grace, is new every day. Let us go forward with eyes and ears and hearts open to the work of God in our world, and draw on the courage to create with God a Just World for All.

Response

"Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me"

GLORY TO GOD

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Christ, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end, Amen. (3x)

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Children's Message

Laura Hankins

Song

"I Love the Lord"

R. Smallwood

I love the Lord, who heard my cry, and pitied every groan.
Long as I live and troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.

I love the Lord, who heard my cry, and chased my grief away.
O let my heart no more despair while I have breath to pray.

Litany for Black History Observance

Jeff Edwards-Knight

One: O God, you have heard the anguished cries of our ancestors. Their sounds echo and penetrate time to remind us of our foreparents who were brutally captured and forcibly enslaved, as they left the peaceful womb of their African homeland.

All: “Stony the road we trod.”

One: O God, you have seen the millions of dark bodies buried beneath the tumultuous waves of the deep. Bodies of African men and women who held the seeds of greatness. You have seen women’s dreams for a united family vanish as they were sold at auction blocks. You have seen the legacy of the African American family decimated and demeaned by those who have attempted to control our destiny.

All: “Bitter the chastening rod, felt in the days when hope unborn had died.”

One: Oh God, you have ignited the sparks within us into a blazing demand for freedom, equality, and justice. This quest cost Harriet Tubman sleepless nights, as she led her people to freedom; it was an equality that Rosa Parks and civil rights activists fought for and gave their lives for; it was a justice that Martin Luther King, Jr. stood for, as thousands stood with him at the Lincoln Memorial.

All: “Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet, come to the place for which our fathers sighed.”

One: Oh God, you have seen our tears. You have been pained by the evil of human hearts. Yet, you loved humanity enough that you sent your only Son to identify with the outcast, marginalized and rejected. As the cries of Jesus pierced your heart, so have the cries of your people-cries from different cultures and in different languages.

All: “God of our weary years, God of our silent tears.”

One: O God, you answered us during our exodus from Africa. You wiped every teardrop during our exile in captivity. Our foreparents dared to dream that one day, on these shores, we would become politicians, preachers, educators, doctors, writers, scientists, artists, and so much more.

All: “Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.”

One: Our ancestors’ hard work, their courage, their convictions, and their belief in you paved the way for our emancipation and education. But it is clear, you have liberated us. You have set us free. “Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I’m free at last.”

All: “Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget thee. Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand. True to our God and true to our native land.”

Prayer for Illumination

“Listen, God Is Calling”

NENO LAKE MUNGU

Listen, **Listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.**

Hebrew Scripture

Isaiah 6:1-8

Ed Vickery

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!’

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

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

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

Gospel Lesson

Luke 5:1-11

Cheri Dennis

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.’ Simon answered, ‘Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.’ When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!’ For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching

people.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed 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.

Sermon

“God Is Calling”

Cheri Dennis

Offering Dedication (*in unison*)

God who calls us to participate in your vision of justice for our world, may our offerings become our response: all your people fed, all your people safe, all your people housed, all your people educated. Amen.

* Doxology

THANK YOU LORD

Thank you, Lord. (3x) I just want to thank you, Lord.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

The Great Thanksgiving Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Life up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Because we are thankful, we sing! We sing your highest praises in one voice with the company of our ancestors who paved the way:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

LAND OF REST

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest!

Accept our praise and thanksgiving, as a sign of our willingness to be honest enough to live our lives with authenticity, truth, honesty, and integrity so much so that our very lives proclaim Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior as together we pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples:

*Songs in this service are used by Permission.
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The Litany for Black History Observance is from the African American Heritage Hymnal, © 2001 by GIA Publications)

The communion liturgy for today was adapted from one written by Rev. Amantha Barbee (former pastor at Statesville Ave Presbyterian, Charlotte, now in Decatur, GA) and Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown (pastor at Plymouth UCC in Seattle), © 2020.

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

Members of Holy Covenant's Consistory, Worship & Music Team, and Covid Response Team met Jan. 4th to discuss options regarding in-person worship, meetings, and classes in light of COVID. With a current COVID positivity rate of 30% in Mecklenburg County, it was decided to suspend in-person worship, classes, and meetings through January. We will continue to monitor the positivity rate, looking for a rate of under 10% and on a downward trend. Rest assured that we all want to have in-person worship as soon as possible but we also need to look out for the health and welfare of all who worship with us. **Live-stream worship Sunday mornings at 10:55 AM** <https://holycovenantucc.org/virtual-hc/>

SOJOURNERS CLASS SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM - Virtually Sundays in February

Join us this coming Sunday as the Sojourners Class discusses current events with an eye toward delving deeper into an issue from a Christian point of view. Everyone is welcome to join us via Zoom at 9:45 Sunday mornings by clicking [here](#): or go to www.zoom.us and use this Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 and Passcode: 523903. For more information, contact Cheri Dennis (704-519-6016, cherid@holycovenantucc.org)

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY TUESDAYS AT 12:15PM - Virtually

Zoom Meeting ID: 813 0509 4538 Passcode: 728201

For more information, contact Laura Hankins 704-724-1105, laura@hankins-clt.us)

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

Lisa Cloninger, Jeff Edwards-Knight, Brian Hankins, Laura Hankins, Meg Houlihan, Jo Ann Jellison, Eric Miner, Kathi Smith, Ed Vickery

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

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jon & Linda Heaslet, Jim Hong, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Anita Taylor, Kathleen Wagner

Friends & Family Members

Carly, Justin, Codie, Levi and Layla (Kevin Decker), Faye Blakely (Diane Neese), Aurora, Rachel & Ryan Christian (Beth Sharp), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Pat Key (Patti Key), Alec Kirchhoefner (Melissa Noll), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Robbie Middleton (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Janey Pernice (Dawn Simmons), Mary Ellen Rice (Kathleen Wagner), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Richard Tiche (Anita Taylor), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller) Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)

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