



## Silent Meditation

"Earth is crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees  
Takes off his shoes –  
The rest sit around it and pluck blackberries."  
– Elizabeth Barrett Browning

"Ecological conversion means falling in love with the Earth as an inherently valuable, living community in which we participate, and bending every effort to be creatively faithful to its well-being, in tune with the living God who brought it into being and cherishes it with unconditional love."  
– Elizabeth Johnson

"Love all of God's creation, the whole of it and every grain of sand.  
Love every leaf, every ray of God's light!  
Love the animals, love the plants, love everything."  
– Fyodor Dostoyevsky

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER ~ EARTH SUNDAY**

**April 24, 2022 10:55 am**

Prelude "Terra Beata" arr. M. Hayes

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Kristin Andes

One: In the name of God, who creates planets, the name of Jesus Christ, born on planet Earth, and the name of the Spirit who envelops our planet. Amen.

**Many: Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with God's presence.**

One: Christ, we come to into your presence, today, to worship in this sanctuary called Earth.

**Many: Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with your presence.**

Introit "Not One Sparrow Is Forgotten" arr. J. L. Jones  
*Lisa Cloninger, Kathi Smith, Laura Hankins, Meg Houlihan*

\* Call to Worship Terry Raley-Dennis

One: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and the Spirit of God moved over the waters.

**Many: And God said, "Unbind creation!" And God declared it to be good.**

One: God said, "Let there be light" and called the light "day" and the darkness "night." And God declared it to be good.

**Many: God spoke the word to call the land from the water, and in God's eyes, it was good.**

One: God's word called to life the soybean and the milking cow, the robin and the earthworm,

**Many: the honey bee and the gray wolf, the microbe and the mackerel, and God's heart saw them to be good.**

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

One: Then God spoke a final time, making creatures who carry the divine image: us.  
Many: Forming humans by holy word, to tend and steward all that God had made.  
One: And God saw that it was all very good.  
Many: And God declared that it is all very good.  
One: On the seventh day, God rested.  
All: And on this seventh day, we come to worship and remember our role as partners in creation.

Hymn 28

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

DIX

For the beauty of the earth, for the splendor of the skies,  
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies,

*God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,  
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light, (R)

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,  
Friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild, (R)

For the good that love inspires, for a world where none exclude,  
For a faith that never tires, and for every heart renewed, (R)

Call to Confession

Kristin Andes

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Our beautiful blue and green home is an awesome gift. Yet we trade clean air for the power of convenience, clean water for easy waste disposal, and wilderness for elbowroom. We marvel more at our inventions than over your creations, O God. Share your wisdom and teach us how to protect, and restore your rivers and mountains, seas and prairies, wetlands and forests. Guide us in living sustainably, being satisfied that “enough” is enough of a feast, and not consuming more than we need. Guide us to repair and revere your Very Good: our habitat, climate, and food supplies. Send your spirit over the waters again to stir us to action, justice, and wise choices. We pray we can be a part of bringing back creation to glory and peace. Amen.

Hymn 563

“We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky”

ENDLESS SONG

We cannot own the sunlit sky, the moon, the wildflowers growing,  
For we are part of all that is within life’s river flowing.  
With open hands receive and share the gifts of God’s creation,  
That all may have abundant life in every earthly nation.

When bodies shiver in the night and, weary, wait for morning,  
When children have no bread but tears, and war horns sound their warning,  
God calls humanity to wake, to join in common labor,  
That all may have abundant life in oneness with their neighbor.

God calls humanity to join as partners in creating  
A future free from want or fear, life’s goodness celebrating.  
That new world beckons from afar, invites our shared endeavor,  
That all may have abundant life and peace endure forever.

Assurance of Pardon

Kristin Andes

One: Christ hears our confession, forgives our sins against Earth, and will work with us in our renewed effort to honor God’s creation.

Many: **Christ, teach us to love Earth as our home.**

One: Christ invites us treat this planet with reverence as God’s sanctuary.

Many: **Shalom! Shalom! Earth is our home!**

Gift in Song

“Blue-Green Hills of Earth”  
*Kathi Smith, Lisa Cloninger*

arr. S. Bates-Congdon

Children’s Message

Laura Hankins

Prayers of the People

Terry Raley-Dennis

One: To bring new life to the land, to restore the waters, to refresh the air,

Many: **we join with the earth and with each other.**

One: To renew the forests, to care for the plants, to protect the creatures,

Many: **we join with the earth and with each other.**

One: To celebrate the seas, to rejoice in the sunlight, to sing the song of the stars,

Many: **we join with the earth and with each other.**

One: To recall our destiny, to renew our spirits, to reinvigorate our bodies,

Many: **we join with the earth and with each other.**

One: To recreate the human community, to promote justice and peace, to remember our children,

Many: **we join with the earth and with each other.**

One: We join together as many and diverse expressions of the one Loving Mystery, for the healing of the earth and the renewal of all life.

The Lord's Prayer (*unison*) - *from the New Zealand Prayer Book*

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echos through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trial too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

\* Gospel Lesson

Luke 24:12-36

Kristin Andes

But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'

**One:** For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us.

**Many:** Thanks be to God.

Homily

"Living Hope into Being"

Kristin Andes

Moment for Mission

Suzanne Lamorey

\* Offering Dedication (*unison*)

Terry Raley-Dennis

**We are surrounded by Earth's gifts of beauty, diversity, and power. We are called to be stewards and caretakers of our amazing and fragile pale blue dot. Every part of nature is connected. Every gift we receive comes from you. Accept and bless our gifts of money, skills, and service to our ongoing shared work with our Creator. Amen.**

\* Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"**

**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!**

\* Affirmation of Faith

Kristin Andes

One: Let us affirm our faith together.

Many: We believe that God creates all things, renews all things, and loves all things. We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence, a home for us to share with all human beings and with all creation. We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a piece of Earth, a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross, for all human beings and for all creation. We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation, reconciling all things to God, renewing all creation, and filling the cosmos. We believe the Spirit renews life in creation, groans in empathy with a suffering creation, and waits with us for the rebirth of creation. We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.

\* Hymn 433

"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"

PROMISE

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;  
There's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last a victory,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

\* Benediction

Kristin Andes

Postlude

"Terra Beata"

arr. G. McCoy

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## SOURCES:

Season of Creation, Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania  
Diana Smith, Unitarian Universalist Association  
David Huber and Kathy Bartilson, The Green Group, Wisconsin Conference UCC  
U.N. Environmental Sabbath Service, Earth Day 1990

*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

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

Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

### IN-PERSON WORSHIP UPDATES

As low community spread (under 5%) rates persist in our area, we continue in-person activities with optional masks in our church building.

However, we do encourage attendees to wear masks indoors who are immunocompromised or fall into any other higher risk groups. We also ask that you mask if you know you have had exposure to others with respiratory illness or are awaiting COVID testing results. We will continue to spread out seating in the sanctuary during worship and will have cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer available at several points in the building.

### SOJOURNERS CLASS WILL RETURN MAY 1ST AT 9:45AM

### 2022 AIDS WALK, SATURDAY, MAY 7

The 2022 Aids Walk will be on Saturday May 7. For \$35 or more, you will receive a 2022 T-Shirt and you can donate as a walker for the shirt or as a donor to support this important need Please join us! Questions? Contact Debbie [debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com](mailto:debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com). Donate at

<https://p2p.onecause.com/aidswalkclt/team/holy-covenant-united-church-of-christ>

## **THE MICHAEL G. BROOKS SCHOLARSHIP 2022-23 ANNOUNCEMENT**

The purpose of the Michael G. Brooks Scholarship Fund is to encourage youth in both their educational growth and their service to God. Scholarship funds up to approximately \$2,000 will be considered annually for all applicants. For Process and Procedures and the Application documents, please see the weekly electronic newsletter or contact the church office. Direct questions to Dawn Robinson at [DrRobinson0415@gmail.com](mailto:DrRobinson0415@gmail.com).

## **WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES AT HCUCC**

### **The Labyrinth Group is Moving to Thursday**

Join us at noon for some quiet time in nature. Melissa Noll and Laura Hankins will co-lead. In the event of rain, we'll meet in the sanctuary for guided meditation and a finger labyrinth.

### **Crafter's Circle Tuesdays 1:30 - 3:30**

Join us in the gathering room on Tuesdays at 1:30. Bring a craft, share a craft, or learn a craft in a judgement free zone. Masks are required.

### **Mid-week Bible Study, Tuesday Evenings, 7-8 PM**

We'll be wrapping up our study of Galatians on Tuesday. Please read Galatians 3:1-5; 5:1-26. Look for what Paul is saying about flesh, the law, and Spirit. Reflect on the following: Being in Christ makes a difference in my life in these ways... Join Zoom.us, using Meeting ID: 863 0293 0259 Passcode: 837569 Questions? Contact Laura Hankins, [laura@hankins-clt.us](mailto:laura@hankins-clt.us).

## **BACKPACK MINISTRY FOR DAVID COX ELEMENTARY**

HCUCC's Missions & Justice Team partners with our neighbors at University City UMC to 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**

### **Members**

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

### **Friends & Family Members**

Emily (Kim Tyler), Faye Blakely (Diane Neese), Gretchen Calder (Martha Bomely), Martha Catul (Cheri Dennis), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), Marquis Glenn (Dawn Simmons), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Donetta Halley (Ed Vickery), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Alec Kirchhoefner (Melissa Noll), Bob Lyon (Melissa Noll), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Joe Parks (Beth Christian Sharp), Janey Pernice (Dawn Simmons), Jerry Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Betty Rivenbark (Jeff Rivenbark), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Kyle Simmons (Dawn Simmons), Sylvia Smith (Laura Hankins), Joyce Tyler (Bill Tyler), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Wanda Williams (John Rapp), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller), Paul Zinkann (Pam Zinkann), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)

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

### **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Pastor**

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

**Dawn Simmons, BSBF, Executive Assistant**

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