



## Silent Meditation

"Prayer is not asking.  
Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God,  
at [God's] disposition, and listening to [God's] voice  
in the depth of our hearts."

— Mother Teresa

"As we grow our faith, we wait in silence. As we listen for [God's] voice, we have hope that [God] will speak. It may not be a loud boom or thunder, but a soft whisper. [God] may use a song, a butterfly, a sermon, a stranger, or even a red cardinal, but there is hope that God will come through for us."

— Dana Arcuri

"We' is the most important word in the social justice vocabulary. The issue is not what we can't do, but what we CAN do when we stand together."

—Rev. Dr. William J. Barber Jr.

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

May 8, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude                      “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”                      arr. M. Dorian

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements                      Cheri Dennis

One: Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Many: Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

Introit                      “There’s a Spirit of Love in This Place”                      arr. M. A. Miller

There’s a spirit of love in this place. (2x)

You can’t see it, but it’s there, just as precious as the air.

There’s a spirit of love in this place.

There’s the presence of peace in this room. (2x)

In God’s tenderness is found peace that passes human bounds.

There’s the presence of peace in this room.

\* Call to Worship (*based on Rev. 7:9-16*)                      Terrence Hayes

One: We gather once more as a great multitude; from various peoples and places, we’ve come.

All: **Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor and power be to our God.**

One: We gather once more to shout “Alleluia!” Salvation belongs to the Holy One.

All: **Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor and power be to our God.**

One: We gather to worship day and night; the one who guides us to the springs of life.

All: **Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor and power be to our God.**

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

Invocation (*based on Psalm 23*)

Terrence Hayes

One: God, our shepherd, restorer of our souls, the one who calls us to nap in green pastures.

Many: **We enter into this moment of worshipful gathering, trusting that you will guide us along the paths of righteousness.**

One: Wherever we may be in this world, let us know the comforting presence of any your rod and staff.

Many: **We are expectant, O God, that our fears will fade, that our cups will overflow, and that your goodness and mercy will accompany us in this hour and beyond.**

All: **Now, let us worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.**

\* Hymn 379

"Come, We Who Love God's Name"

ST. THOMAS

**Come, we who love God's name, and let our joys be known;  
Together God's great love proclaim, and thus surround the throne.**

**Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;  
But we our thanks and praise will bring for love so deep and broad.**

**God's grace on earth is found, the seeds of glory sown;  
Celestial fruits on earthly ground from faith and hope have grown.**

**The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets  
Before we reach the heavenly fields, or walk the golden streets.**

**Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;  
We're traveling through Emmanuel's ground, to greater worlds on high.**

Invitation to Confession

Cheri Dennis

God, as you call us more intentionally into the fullness of life that abounds in your presence, let us acknowledge the ways our unbelief has separated us from your vision for our lives and all creation.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

**God, we confess that we often let hopelessness have too much power over our lives. In the face of crisis, our faith has frequently faltered. In the midst of calamity, our fearlessness has faded. In the presence of tribulation, our worry has weakened our ability to act justly. Help our unbelief, O God! Bring us back to you, Great Redeemer. Remind us of the unfailing treasure that is in your love and care for all of creation—For your grace is sufficient, from the valley of death to the tables you've prepared for us. Embolden us, again, and revive our spirits.**

Hymn 188

“Give Me a Clean Heart”

DOUROUX

Give me a clean heart so I may serve you.  
God, fix my heart so that I may be used by you.  
For I'm not worthy of all these blessings.  
Give me a clean heart, and I'll follow you.

Words of Assurance

Cheri Dennis

Friends, hear the Good News: God believes in us even when our belief in God is challenged. God's grace and mercy abounds, and in God and Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Response

“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!

Children's Message

Laura Hankins

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

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 echo 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 trials 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.

Prayer for Illumination “Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus”

LEMME

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in God's wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of God's glory and grace.

\* Gospel Lesson

John 10:22-30

Terrence Hayes

At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.'

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

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

Hymn 247

"My Shepherd is the Living God"

CONSOLATION

**My shepherd is the living God, I therefore nothing need;  
In pastures fair, near pleasant streams you settle me to feed.  
You bring my wandering spirit back when I forsake your ways,  
And lead me for your mercy's sake in paths of truth and grace.**

**When I walk through the shades of death, your presence is my stay;  
A word of your supporting breath drives all my fears away.  
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my table spread;  
My cup with blessings overflows, your oil anoints my head.**

**The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days;  
O may your house be my abode, and all my work be praise.  
There would I find a settled rest, while others come and go—  
No more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.**

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’ And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.’

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, ‘Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?’ I said to him, ‘Sir, you are the one that knows.’ Then he said to me, ‘These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’

**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.

**Christ will come again, God’s justice to complete,  
To reap the fields of time and sift the weeds from wheat:  
Then let us passionately care for peace and justice here on earth,  
And evil’s rage restrain with love, till Christ shall come again.**

**Christ will come again, and life shall be complete.  
The waters from the throne shall wash the nations’ feet:  
Then let us passionately care for health and wholeness here on earth,  
And ease our neighbor’s pain with love, till Christ shall come again.**

**Christ will come again, and joy shall be complete  
As flames of lightning love bedeck the judgment seat:  
Then let us passionately share the whole great gospel here on earth,  
Until all things attain their end, when Christ shall come again.**

Offering Dedication

Terrence Hayes

**One:** We believe in the God of justice and righteousness, and God believes in us to carry forth the mission of loving and caring for community. Let us now dedicate the offerings this church has received so that we may continue to walk humbly with God and with neighbors.

**All:** We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the fortification of the beloved community. Let these gifts do justice in the world. Let them be a sign of our belief in the God who saves, heals, and sets free. Let these gifts, and the works of our hands and feet, be a blessing to all in need. 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!**

\* Hymn 314

"Community of Christ"

LEONI

**Community of Christ, who make the Cross your own,  
Live out your creed and risk your life for God alone:  
The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds belong,  
Whose children are of every race and every song.**

**Community of Christ, look past the church's door  
And see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor.  
Take hands with the oppressed, the jobless in your street,  
Take towel and water, that you wash your neighbor's feet.**

**Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound—  
Cry out for justice and for peace the whole world 'round:  
Disarm the powers that war and all that can destroy,  
Turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.**

**When menace melts away, so shall God's will be done,  
The climate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;  
Our currency be love and kindness our law,  
Our food and faith be shared as one for evermore.**

\* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

\* Benediction Response                      "The Summons"                      KELVINGROVE  
Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name!  
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Postlude                      "Salvation Belongs to Our God"                      A. Howard/P. Turner

*Portions of this service written by Rev. Mia M. McClain, the Associate Minister at Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC and a member of the Southern Conference UCC.*

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**WE COULDN'T PROVIDE OUR WARM WELCOME WITHOUT THE HELP OF:**  
Lisa Cloninger, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins,  
Anne Hayes, Dawn Schmitz, Shakti Subramanian

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT**

We 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. Thank you for your cooperation.



## **SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED...**

Come one, come all! The Missions and Justice Team needs YOU to put together hygiene kits and food bags after church on Sunday, May 15. These are essential for the many asylum-seeking migrants who pass through the Charlotte Greyhound station from the border in their way to their new homes. Bring your lunch and we will get packing! For more information and to RSVP, email Suzanne Lamorey at [suzlam@yahoo.com](mailto:suzlam@yahoo.com).

## **HELP WANTED**

Techie? Detail-oriented? Looking for a way to contribute to the life of Holy Covenant? We need a person or persons to create the PowerPoint slides for our weekly worship service. It requires about an hour of time between Friday & Saturday afternoons. Training and template materials provided. This is an important element of our live-streamed service outreach. In our stewardship team campaigns, we speak of giving in terms of time, talent & treasure. You would get a two-fer: both your time & talent are needed! If interested, please contact the church office for further details, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org) or 704-599-9810.

## **WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES AT HCUCC**

Crafter's Circle Tuesdays 1:30 - 3:30.

The Labyrinth Group meets Thursdays at noon

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS**

The Sojourners meets Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM in the Conference Room, or via Zoom. We are currently reading *The New Monasticism: What It Has to Say to Today's Church* by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. For more information, contact Pastor Cheri at 704-519-6016 or [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org).

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

HCUCC's Missions & Justice Team is partnering 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**

Cynthia & Tommy Simpson in the death of her sister, Mamie Stokes  
Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Laura Hankins, 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), Sandy Burby (Linda Burby), 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), 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 MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Cheri Dennis, Interim Pastor**

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

**Dawn Simmons, BSBF, Executive Assistant**

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