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Meditation

“This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. I am not included within the pale of glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me.”

~Frederick Douglass, July 5, 1852 –
At an event commemorating the signing of the
Declaration of Independence.

The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.

~Thomas Merton

Dreams pass into the reality of action. From the actions stems the dream again; and this interdependence produces the highest form of living.

~Anais Nin

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

July 3, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies" Kathleen Smith

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

One: May the peace of God be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "We Are Your People" arr. Brian Wren

We are your people, Spirit of grace.

**You dare to make us Christ to our neighbors
of every nation and race.**

**Glad of tradition, help us to see
In all life's changing - Where you are leading,
Where our best efforts should be.**

**Spirit, unite us, make us by grace
Willing and ready, Christ's living body,
Loving the whole human race.**

* Call to Worship Keith Dennis

One: May a joyful sound to the Holy One. Let the earth rejoice.

Many: **How awesome are your works, O Sovereign!**

One: Creation groans under the pressure of war, environmental abuse, and communal disconnection.

Many: **We cry out to you, Present God, and you hear and respond.**

One: You turn our mourning into movement and stir our souls to action and to rest.

Many: **Everlasting God, we will give thanks and praise you for you clothe us in joy and peace.**

** Please take a comfortable posture that supports your*

worshipping, reading, and singing.

*** Invocation (*Unison*)**

God with us, you send us into the world as your agents of restoration and change. You speak to us in the stillness of our rest and the chaos of a frenzied world. You guide us in troubling times, and you move us to dance in celebration. We give thanks for your presence among us. Open all points of receptivity within us as we worship you, Holy and Living God. Amen.

*** Opening Hymn 591**

“This Is My Song”

FINLANDIA

**This is my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for lands a-far and mine.
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine;
But other hearts in other lands are beating
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.**

**My country’s skies are bluer than the ocean,
And sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine;
Both other lands have sunlight, too, and clover,
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine.
O hear my song, O God of all the nations,
A song of peace for their land and for mine.**

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Cheri Dennis

Spirit of the Living God, temptation surrounds us. Self-preservation lures us to indifference. Fear of confrontation coaxes us to keep silent about things that matter. The desire to be right entices us to ignore the cries of our neighbors. Too often we ignore the call to go and to be in favor of staying stuck in our attitudes and behaviors. Too often, we are the ones who refuse to welcome you into our intimate space, who resist the work of transformation, and who remain unresponsive to the burdens of our siblings in creation. Spirit of Gentleness, redirect us back to the path of life, the way of justice, and the hope of peace. Amen.

Words of Grace

Our Companion and Advocate takes this journey with us. Our invitation to make the kingdom of God our dwelling place continually renews. The Righteous One opens the door and eases our entry into new life, new mercy, and new grace.

Hymn 576 “For the Healing of the Nations” WESTMINSTER ABBEY
For the healing of the nations, God we pray with one accord;
For a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
To a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom; from despair your world release,
That, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

The Prayer of Jesus (*unison*)

Loving God, through the Spirit's revelation, may Your true nature be honored everywhere. May Your reign of love come. May desire of Your heart for the world be done, in us, by us and through us in the power of the Spirit. Give us the bread we need for each day. Forgive us. Enable us to forgive others. Keep us from all anxiety and fear. For You reign in the power that comes from love which is Your glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn 576 “For the Healing of the Nations” WESTMINSTER ABBEY
All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned:
Pride of status, race or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow brief life's span.

You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
For our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind;
That by our response and service earth its destiny may find.

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy. Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, 'If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.' So Naaman went in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. And the king of Aram said, 'Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel.'

He went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of garments. He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, 'When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his leprosy.' When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, 'Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me.'

But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, 'Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel.' So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, 'Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.' But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, 'I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy! Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?' He turned and went away in a rage. But his servants approached and said to him, 'Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, "Wash, and be clean"?' So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

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

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

Special Music

“Free”

Michael Gungor

There's a world at war/ Lost in suffering/ Silent casualties
Oh God grant us peace

In these sleepless nights/ I can hardly breath/ Despite the brutality
I know that we'll be free

Chorus: So let the light in/ Keep it shining
Let it break into the darkness/ All the love dares us to see
We'll all be free

In these desperate times/ Love will hold us near
Love will join our hands/ Teach us to have no fear

As we lay our hate down/ And wash their feet
As we see our brother/ As we see our sister
As we see each other/ I know we'll be free
I know that we'll be free (*Chorus 2x*)

We'll be free, free/ We'll all be free (*Chorus 2x*)

* Gospel Lesson

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Cheri Dennis

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborer into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, “Peace to this house!” And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.” But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, “Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.”

‘Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.’

The seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!’ He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’

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.

Sermon

“Independence/Interdependence”

Cheri Dennis

Invitation to Generosity

Keith Dennis

The generous life responds to the call to mutuality and burden sharing. The generous life recognizes the abundance of creation and trusts the generosity of the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The generous life follows the steps of Jesus in meeting needs, spreading hope, and sharing love.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Creator, bless the gifts Holy Covenant has received. May they be used to bring hope to this community and the world. May our time be used preciousely, our treasure shared faithfully, and our talents demonstrated gloriously in your name. Amen.

Let us talents and tongues employ,
 Reaching out with a shout of joy:
 Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
 Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Refrain: Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
 Pass the Word around: loaves abound!
 Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
 Pass the Word around: loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,
 At his table he set the tone,
 Teaching people to live to bless,
 Love in word and in deed express. (Ref)

Jesus calls us in, sends us out
 Bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
 Gives us love to tell, bread to share,
 God (Immanuel) everywhere!

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Preparation

One: The fortitude of the Holy be with you
 Many: **And also with you**
 One: We bring our sacred Bodies to the Beloved
 Many: **It is healing to bring our Whole Selves to God**
 One: Let us give thanks to God who cares about our fleshly flourishing;
 Many: **To the Spirit who joins us in our suffering and redemption**

Invitation

Cheri Dennis

Music during Communion

Kathleen Smith

Distribution of Elements

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

IN PERSON ACTIVITIES UPDATE

The Consistory continues to closely monitor COVID trends. Out of an abundance of caution, masks will continue to be required during Sunday worship services and all indoor church activities until further notice. We encourage attendees who are immunocompromised or fall into any other higher risk groups to use their discretion as to whether to attend in-person church activities. 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. Live-streaming will continue for weekly worship services as always. Please contact Consistory President Lisa Clonger if you have any questions or concerns, lisa@holycovenantucc.org, or 704-516-0322.

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.

**THURSDAY'S LABYRINTH GROUP AND
THE MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY ARE ON HIATUS**

SOJOURNERS CLASS ON PAUSE, RESUMES JULY 10TH

Sojourners is on pause until July 10th, when we'll bring a new book: *Short Stories of Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* by Amy-Jill Levine. All are welcome! For more information, contact Pastor Cheri at 704-519-6016 or cherid@holycovenantucc.org.

Ushers, Greeters, Liturgist and Communion Servers

Please sign up on the SignUpGenius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-ushers>

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Bill & Jan Seaman, Anita Taylor, Kathleen Wagner

Friends & Family Members

Emily (Kim Tyler), Faye Blakely (Diane Neese), Sandy Burby (Linda Burby), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Donetta Halley (Ed Vickery), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Joe Parks (Beth Christian Sharp), Janey Pernice (Dawn Simmons), Jerry Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Kathy Sheppard (Vickie Griffeth), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Joyce Ward (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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