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Meditation

“In the end, though, maybe we must all give up trying to pay back the people in this world who sustain our lives. In the end, maybe it’s wiser to surrender before the miraculous scope of human generosity and to just keep saying thank you, forever and sincerely, for as long as we have voices.” — Elizabeth Gilbert

“Compassion hurts. When you feel connected to everything, you also feel responsible for everything. And you cannot turn away. Your destiny is bound with the destinies of others. You must either learn to carry the Universe or be crushed by it. You must grow strong enough to love the world, yet empty enough to sit down at the same table with its worst horrors.” — Andrew Boyd

“Compassion is the basis of morality.” — Arthur Schopenhauer

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

July 24, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "For the Troubles and the Suffering" R. G. Neto

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

One: May the peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Introit 309 "We Are Your People" WHITFIELD

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 Terrence Hayes

One: We gather to rejoice in the Holy One.

Many: **Revive us, O God, make us alive in Christ!**

One: We assemble as people called to community by and with the Redeemer.

Many: **Restore us, O God, make us alive in Christ!**

One: We come open to the possibilities made new by the Creator.

Many: **Revive us, O God, make us alive in Christ!**

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

*** Invocation (*unison*)**

Compassionate One, your love sustains us, molds us, and empowers us. May we dwell in that love as you dwell in us-faithfully, joyfully, and abundantly. Renew us as your people grounded in you and flourishing with you. Amen.

*** Hymn “Somebody’s Knocking at Your Door” SOMEBODY’S KNOCKING**

**Somebody’s knocking at your door; somebody’s knocking at your door;
O sinner, why don’t you answer? Somebody’s knocking at your door.**

**Knocks like Jesus. Somebody’s knocking at your door. (2x)
O sinner, why don’t you answer? Somebody’s knocking at your door.**

**Can’t you hear him? Somebody’s knocking at your door. (2x)
O sinner, why don’t you answer? Somebody’s knocking at your door.**

**Answer Jesus. Somebody’s knocking at your door. (2x)
O sinner, why don’t you answer? Somebody’s knocking at your door.**

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Just God, we sense your anger at the injustice that thrives in the world. We share your grief at the discord that rages among your children, the rejection of those who bear your image, and the oppression of those you know by name. We turn toward you for strength and guidance to turn away from the norms of this world, the lure of self-righteousness, and the appeal of comfort over justice. Embolden us to believe that another world is possible and empower us to participate in its creation. Amen.

Words of Grace

The One who is holy and righteous makes us holy and righteous. We are participants, heirs, and co-creators of new life found in the redemptive love of Jesus Christ and in the realm of the Holy One which has no end. In this, grace abounds and liberates us to new mornings, new mercies, and new life.

Children’s Message

Dom Ciciollo

From “*I Am God’s Dream*” by Matthew Paul Turner

Hymn

“Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive”

DETROIT

**“Forgive our sins as we forgive,” you taught us, Lord, to pray,
But you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.**

**How can your pardon reach and bless the unforgiving heart
That broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart?**

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

“Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive”

DETROIT

**In blazing light your cross reveals the truth we dimly knew:
What trivial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!**

**Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls and bid resentment cease.
Then, by your mercy reconciled, our lives will spread your peace.**

Prayer for Illumination (*unison*)

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that as the Scriptures are read and your Word is proclaimed, we may hear with you what you say to us today. Amen.

Hebrew Scripture

Psalm 138

Terrence Hayes

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;
I bow down towards your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;
for you have exalted your name and your word
above everything.

On the day I called, you answered me,
you increased my strength of soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.

They shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.

For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he perceives from far away.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;
you stretch out your hand,
and your right hand delivers me.

The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.

Do not forsake the work of your hands.

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

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

Hymn

“With Grateful Heart My Thanks I Bring”

ST. PETERSBURG

(Based on Psalm 138)

**With grateful heart my thanks I bring;
Before the “gods” your praise I sing.
I worship in your holy place
And praise you for your truth and grace;
For truth and grace together shine
In your most holy Word divine.**

**I cried to you, and you did save;
Your word of grace new courage gave.
The kings of earth shall thank you, Lord,
For they have heard your wondrous word;
Yes, they shall come with songs of praise**

For great and glorious are your ways.

**O Lord, enthroned in glory bright,
You reign alone in heavenly height;
The proud in vain your favor seek,
But you have mercy for the meek.
Through trouble though my pathway be,
You will revive and strengthen me.**

**You will stretch forth your mighty arm
To save me when my foes alarm.
The work you have for me begun
Shall by your grace be fully done.
Your love forever will endure:
Your mercy, Lord, is ever sure.**

* Gospel Lesson

Luke 11:1-13

Cheri Dennis

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’ He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.’

And he said to them, ‘Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, “Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.” And he answers from within, “Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.” I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

‘So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!’

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.

Invitation to Generosity

Terrence Hayes

Compassion stirs us to generous action and hopeful giving. We share the abundance of our resources and spread the gifts we have received for the good of the world and the work of the kingdom.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*unison*)

God our Companion, receive these gifts as seeds to be nurtured and grown into new abundance, more possibilities, and magnifying gifts for your kingdom on earth. Amen.

Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

* Hymn

“Seek Ye First”

LAFFERTY

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you. Allelu, alleluia.

Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek and you shall find;
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. Allelu, alleluia.

You shall not live by bread alone, but by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of God. Allelu, alleluia.

* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

* Benediction Response

"Send Us Out"

J. M. Talbot

Send us out to proclaim the reign of your kingdom,
Send us out to proclaim and to heal,
Send us out with your power and your authority
To overcome and to heal the world.

Postlude

“God in Your Grace”

S. E. Murray

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WE COULDN'T PROVIDE OUR WARM WELCOME WITHOUT THE HELP OF:
Steve Cimelli, Dawn Schmitz, Anne Hayes, Shakti Subramanian, JoAnn Jellison
Keith Dennis, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins

USHERS, GREETERS, LITURGIST AND COMMUNION SERVERS

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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. Please contact Consistory President Lisa Cloninger if you have any questions or concerns, lisa@holycovenantucc.org, or 704-516-0322.



Mark your calendars now for a viewing of this locally produced documentary about living without a home. For three years, a group of people experiencing homelessness met weekly to create this film documentary about living on the street in Charlotte. Holy Covenant is pleased to host a viewing of this film on **Sunday, Sep. 11, 2022 at 2:00pm in our sanctuary**. Following the documentary, there will be a 30 minute TalkBack with local folks who had a hand in creating this film. A light lunch will be provided for those who wish to “hang around and fellowship” between worship & the showing.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY - A UCC SPECIAL OFFERING

“Good news...Great joy...All the people!” (Luke 2:10)

The Christmas Fund provides Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks for retirees and those facing unforeseen financial hardship. This UCC offering, typically taken in December, is now available on our website listed under Designated Gifts. <https://holycovenantucc.org/give-2/> Checks are also graciously accepted. Notate in your memo line Christmas Fund. Thank you for your continued generosity!

CELEBRATE PRIDE WITH HOLY COVENANT UCC!

Share your ONA Pride of Holy Covenant UCC at this year's Charlotte Pride Event. Volunteers are needed for our church booth on Saturday and Sunday August 20-21 beginning at 12 noon. Masks will be required. Signup in the Gathering Room or you can sign up through SignUpGenius

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-charlotte1>. Please contact Debbie Davis with questions at Debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com and thank you for your support of this important outreach ministry.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Hong, Helen Lambert, Karen Long, Irene Mikkelson, Cheryl Milam, 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), Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), Earl & Debbie Coble (Cindy Coble), 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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