



Meditation

“The timing of another person’s freedom may not be convenient for us.”

“Sometimes we have to do something when it’s inconvenient.”

“Well then, when...If not today, then when?”

The quotes are from "Sermon Brainwave Podcast #858 – Karoline Lewis, Joy J. Moore, Matt Skinner.



What is Your Sabbath Freedom?



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

August 21, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "Take Me In" D. Browning

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Introit "We Are an Offering" D. LILES

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you.

We are an offering.

God, use our voices; God, use our hands;

God, use our lives; they are yours. We are an offering.

All that we have, all that we are,

All that we hope to be we give to you, we give to you.

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you.

We are an offering. We are an offering.

*** Call to Worship Martha Bomely**

One: Our God knows us intimately.

Many: God, you knew us before we knew us, before we knew ourselves.

One: Our God is holy.

Many: Holy God, you consecrate us.

One: Our God will reassure.

Many: Holy God, you will give us words to speak.

*** Invocation (unison) Martha Bomely**

Mothering God, we rejoice that you placed us in the womb and called us forth. You called us forth to build and to plant. Give us the blueprint as we build and bless our hands as we plant. We rejoice in knowing that our steps are guided by you, and you are reliable. We delight ourselves in your presence and give thanks as you deliver us from fear and let your love have its way in us. Embolden us to speak your truth to power and let the power of your truth always be evident in us. Amen.

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

* 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.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Transforming God, too often we have been afraid to speak out against the injustices of this world. We have worshipped in ways that made us feel good rather than honor you in our words and deed. Show us the path to faithful living. Show us how to build beloved and just communities. Teach us how to do your work in this world. Empower us to plant seeds of love, faith, and hope. May we bloom where we have been planted to your glory.

Hymn 544

"If I Have Been the Source of Pain, O God"

CAMACUA

If I've insisted on a peaceful life,
Far from the struggles that the gospel brings,
When you prefer to guide me to the strife, forgive me, God

Receive, O God, this ardent word of prayer,
And free me from temptation's subtle snare,
With tender patience, lead me to your care. Amen, Amen.

Words of Grace

Cheri Dennis

The Mystery we name God, leads us into all truth. Feel the gentle nudges without and within, helping us to course correct. Life in the Spirit is not static, and neither are we. Let the grace of God help us to build that which lasts and plant what nourishes. Amen.

Children's Message

Laura Hankins

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

**For the troubles and the sufferings of the world,
God, we call upon your mercy: The whole creation's laboring in pain!**

**Lend an ear to the rising cry for help from oppressed and hopeless people.
Come! Hasten your salvation, healing love!**

**We pray for peace, the blessed peace that comes from making justice,
To cover and embrace us. Have mercy, Lord!**

**We pray for power, the power that will sustain your people's witness:
Until your kindom come, Kyrie eleison!**

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.

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

SANCTUARY

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 58:9b-11

Martha Bomely

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

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

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

Hymn

“Praise My Soul”

LAUDA ANIMA

**Praise, my soul, the God of heaven; glad of heart your carols raise;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven, who, like me, should sing God’s praise?
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the Maker all your days!**

**Praise God for the grace and favor shown our forebears in distress;
God is still the same forever, slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Sing our Maker’s faithfulness!**

**Like a loving parent caring, God knows well our feeble frame,
Gladly all our burdens bearing, still to countless years the same.
Alleluia! Alleluia! All within me, praise God’s name!**

**Angels, teach us adoration; you behold God face to face.
Sun and moon and all creation, dwellers all in time and space:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise with us the God of grace!**

* Sermonic Scripture

Luke 13:10-17

Cheri Dennis

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, ‘Woman, you are set free from your ailment.’ When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, ‘There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day.’ But the Lord answered him and said, ‘You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?’ When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

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

“Best Sabbath Ever!”

Cheri Dennis

Invitation to Generosity

Martha Bomely

The Divine source is the one from whom all blessings flow. We have an eternal invitation to bring our resources to God's house to use for the building of kingdom and as seed that there might be a continual harvest. These acts reflect the God who knows us and the God who calls us. Join me now in dedicating the offerings we've received to the work of God's kingdom.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Martha Bomely

Fount of Every Blessing, receive our gifts in the joy in which they were given. May they bless your church universally, our community and our world. May none suffer lack and may we always give from generous hearts. May we always take joy in being blessed to give and to share with you and each other. Amen.

* Doxology

THANK YOU LORD

**Thank you, Lord. (3x) I just want to thank you, Lord.
Been so good. (3x) I just want to thank you, Lord.
Thank you, Lord. (3x) I just want to thank you, Lord.**

* Hymn 573

"Lead On Eternal Sovereign"

LANCASHIRE

**Lead on eternal Sovereign, we follow in your way;
Loud rings your cry for justice, your call for peace this day:
Through prayerful preparation, your grace will make us strong,
To carry on the struggle to triumph over wrong.**

**Lead on eternal Sovereign, we follow not with fear,
For in each human conflict your words of strength we hear:
That when we serve with gladness, you will not let us fall,
Our trust is in your promise that love will conquer all.**

**Lead on eternal Sovereign, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
And all your saints together will sing a hymn of peace;
Then all in your dominion will live with hearts set free,
To love and serve each other for all eternity.**

* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

* Benediction Response 391

NEW DIMENSIONS

**God of rainbow, fiery pillar
Leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey
Now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.**

Postlude

“I Hear Angels”

G. Gustafson

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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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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:
Steve Cimelli, Keith Dennis, Brian Hankins, Henry Hankins

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 Cloninger if you have any questions or concerns, lisa@holycovenantucc.org, or 704-516-0322.



SUNDAY, SEPT. 11, 2022 AT 2:00PM IN OUR SANCTUARY.

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 Sept 11 at 2PM. Watch the trailer of this documentary at:

<http://www.playworksonline.org/p/streetsmarts.html#>

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.

INTERESTED IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IN NORTH CAROLINA?

At Holy Covenant, we have many areas on which to focus our attention in our work to bring God’s kin-dom to earth as it is in heaven. One of those areas is Racial Equity. We are invited to join the **Reimagining America Project’s** next criminal justice webinar on **Wednesday, August 24th at 7pm**, “Opportunities for Criminal Justice Reform in North Carolina: How the Governor’s Taskforce for Racial Equity Can Point a Way Forward”. Register at

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_zBwRE25RDmWUkZSmUwRYg

The Reimagining America Project (RAP) is a commission of the Center for Social Justice and Reconciliation (CSJR) of Union Presbyterian Seminary (Pastor Cheri's alma mater!)

SAVE THE DATE! HELP CLEAR THE TRAILS OCT. 15 - 9AM

After 24+ months of very little use but lots of storms, the trails in Holy Covenant's backyard are not quite hike-ready. Join us Saturday, Oct. 15 to enjoy cooler fall weather and church fellowship as we clear our hiking trails and enjoy nature.

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.

THE LABYRINTH GROUP AND THE MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY ARE ON HIATUS

SOJOURNERS CLASS

For more information, contact Pastor Cheri: cherid@holycovenantucc.org or 704-519-6016. All are welcome either in person or via Zoom. See the link in the e-newsletter.

USHERS, GREETERS, LITURGIST AND COMMUNION SERVERS

Please sign up on the SignUpGenius link:

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

Ushers and Greeters, please contact Martha Bomely with questions, martha.bomely@gmail.com. Communion Servers, please contact Laura Hankins with questions, laura@hankins-clt.us.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Keith & Cheri Dennis in the death of Keith's mother, Helen Dennis

Family & Friends in the death of Karen Long

Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Hong, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Cheryl Milam, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reddy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

Angela Fish and family in the death of her husband Peter (Dom Ciciollo)

Sandy Burby (Linda Burby), Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), 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), Jerry & Marie Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Joyce Ward (Ed Vickery), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller), Paul Zinkann (Pam Zinkann), Steve Zrebeic & Calvin (Jeff Edwards-Knight)