



Meditation

“I used to walk about the world pretending to be so tall. I would lift my chin higher, hopeful that in some small way I was actualizing my desired grandiosity. But I was not grand. I was not good or pure. I was only human. Now, I walk about the world aware of the grandiosity that surrounds me. And instead of feeling overwhelmed or small, I feel invited. Invited to explore a life that offers experiences much greater than any I have had thus far.”

~Marquita Burke De Jesus

**“A beautiful path does not need to invite people;
the beauty itself is already an open invitation!”**

~Mehmet Murat Ildan

“The most sacred invitation that a person can extend to us is to invite us into their pain. But that means that we have to choose to knock on a door that we often prefer to pretend is not there.”

~Craig D. Lounsbrough

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

August 28, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "Holy, Holy, Holy" arr. M. Hayes

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

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 Jeffery Edwards-Knight

One: Welcome to the banquet of hope, the open bar of prayer, the "anonymous" circle of acceptance.

Many: **We come because we are invited.**

One: Welcome to a fiesta of joy or a mercy meal of tenderness, where every seat is a place of honor.

Many: **We come because we are invited.**

One: Welcome to a party for God's love-reveal, where all seating is a circle, and karaoke is never necessary because we sing our own stories.

Many: **We come because we have an invitation, not on paper, simply our names.**

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

* Invocation (*unison*)

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

God, we come to this gathering of community where there are no barriers, and all our abilities are celebrated as gifts. We come to receive your hospitality of caring for each one of us and to learn from you how to offer such a celebration to stranger, friend, chosen family, those whose faces are unfamiliar to us, and the face who meets us in the mirror. amen. (sic)

* Hymn

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

NICAEA

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
Early in the morning we praise your majesty.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! Saints adore you truly,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim bow before you only,
From the beginning, God eternally.

Holy, holy, holy! Though we know but dimly,
Though the eyes of humankind your glory may not see,
You alone are holy, you alone are worthy,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Glencie Rhedrick

God, sometimes we say, "I'm too busy," to invitations to kindness, friendship, or activism, or pretend to be "too busy," and avoid being indebted, pitied, or rubbing elbows with those who make me uncomfortable. Sometimes we accept an invitation to be involved, celebrate with someone, or just have coffee, but back out or "no-show." Forgive us when we skip your parties. God, sometimes we are "imperfect guests," wanting to be the center of attention, and other times we insist on always being host, giver, one in control, receiver of praise and gratefulness. Forgive us when we fail in gratitude or generosity.

Hymn 544

“If I Have Been the Source of Pain, O God”

CAMACUA

If I have been the source of pain, O God;
If to the weak I have refused my strength;
If, in rebellion, I have strayed away; Forgive me, God.

If I have spoken words of cruelty;
If I have left some suffering unrelieved;
Condemn not my insensitivity; Forgive me, God.

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

Glencie Rhedrick

God loves, invites, nudges, embraces us in all our resistance to simply hold a balloon of joy and clap at the candles of another's cake. We are forgiven; a plate is set for us.

Children's Message

Laura Hankins

Pastoral Prayer

Glencie Rhedrick

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 kingdom come, Kyrie eleison!

The Prayer of Jesus (*unison*)

Glencie Rhedrick

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 Reading

Psalm 112

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

Praise the Lord!

Happy are those who fear the Lord,
who greatly delight in his commandments.
Their descendants will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.
Wealth and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.
They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;
they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.
It is well with those who deal generously and lend,
who conduct their affairs with justice.
For the righteous will never be moved;
they will be remembered for ever.
They are not afraid of evil tidings;
their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD.
Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid;
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.
They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn is exalted in honor.
The wicked see it and are angry;
they gnash their teeth and melt away;
the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

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

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

* Gospel Reading

Luke 14: 7-14

Glencie Rhedrick

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ‘When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, “Give this person your place”, and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, “Friend, move up higher”; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’

He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’

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

“At the Table: The Risk of Hospitality”

Glencie Rhedrick

Invitation to Generosity

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

We are invited to offer our resources, our time, our abilities, our compassion, on days when our lives are full and days when our lives feel empty. We are invited to offer what we have and accept what we need. The gifts that Holy Covenant has received are a “yes” to the invitation of God. Let us now dedicate those gifts to the work of God’s kindom.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

God, receive our gifts as our affirmative response to your invitation. In our giving, we find ourselves not lessened, but newly joyful, truly honored, and deeply fed by your blessing. 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.

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

WELCOME BACK REVEREND GLENCIE RHEDRICK

Today, we welcome the Reverend Glencie Rhedrick, to the pulpit. She is an ordained Baptist minister, currently serving as an associate minister at First Baptist Church-West. A graduate of Johnson C. Smith University, Glencie received her M.Div from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and is currently a PhD student attending California Integral Institute of Studies. Glencie currently serves as Chaplain for several organizations, is a local and national community activist and organizer, and was the former president of Mecklenburg Ministries. She is also an active member of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. Currently she holds the lead positions with numerous activist and outreach organizations. She is the convenor of a Facebook live show, 'SpeakingintheKeyofWE.' a conversation concerning Black Male Privilege and Patriarchy in the Church, raising the awareness of the biases women of African Ascent encounter in the Church and other segments of society. We are grateful for her time with us today!

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.



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.

CHOIR RETURNS SOON! Be ready. More info next week.

Hygiene Kit Build after Worship, September 4

We need you to help fill hygiene bags for the migrants at the bus station **after worship on September 4th**. Supplies are already ordered! Contact Suzanne Lamorey to let her know you'll help out! Suzlam@icloud.com

IT'S TIME TO FILL THE WICKER BASKET* & SHOPPING CART**

Children & college folk are back in school so it's time to share our resources, fill their stomachs, and clothe their bodies. Holy Covenant supports the *Jamil Niner Student Pantry at UNCC and the **Backpack Ministry at University City United Methodist Church supporting David Cox Elementary School.

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.

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
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

Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Donetta Halley (Ed Vickery), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Marta Kosinska & Jon Spencer (Lloyd & Gussie Spencer), Jane Kelly, Darin & Kristen Jellison (JoAnn Jellison) 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)

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to
prayers@holycovenantucc.org.

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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