



Meditation

In the parable of Lazarus and the “rich man” in hell, the rich man has no name because that was all he was—just a rich man. If you make wealth your very identity, and something takes the money away, there is no “you” left.

— Timothy J. Keller

Jesus is a master storyteller. Some of the parables Jesus tells just speak for themselves. The message is obvious. Little commentary is necessary. Truth is revealed for all to see and experience.

— Todd R. Goddard

On the streets and roadsides of every nation on earth are individuals like Lazarus. We sometimes walk past them without seeing them.

— Bishop Greg O’Kelly

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

September 25, 2022 10:55 am

Prelude "Joy of My Desire" J. Randolph

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

One: May the peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Introit "Let Us Adore" J. Chajes

Lower Voices:

Let us adore
the ever-living God
and render praise
unto God,
who spread out the heavens
and established the earth
and whose glory
is revealed in the heavens above
and whose greatness

Upper Voices:

Let us adore
the ever-living God
and render praise
unto God,
who spread out the heavens
and established the earth
and whose glory
in the heavens above
and whose greatness

All: Is manifest throughout all the earth.

You are our God. There is none else.

* Call to Worship Kristin Andes

One: Come to this place and time of promise.

Many: We are becoming the house of hope, the field of sunflowers, the vineyard of great caring.

One: Come to a shared commitment to abundance possible for all people.

Many: We are an earthenware jar, to keep safe the tomorrow of children. Our security question is - the word of God, and our password is love.

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

* Invocation (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

One: Let us pray.

Many: God, we give you thanks that you make us redeemers, not just receivers of redemption. You bring us among friends and then ask for each one of our signatures to change your world. We hold the earthenware jar you call the church and fill it with all your promises. Amen.

* Song

“On Eagle’s Wings”
(based on Psalm 91)

M. Joncas

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in God’s shadow for life,
Say to the Lord: “My refuge,
My Rock in whom I trust!”

Refrain:

And God will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
Make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God’s hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
And famine will bring you no fear;
Under God’s wings your refuge,
God’s faithfulness your shield. (R)

You need not fear the terror of the night,
Nor the arrow that flies by day;
Though thousands fall about you,
Near you it shall not come. (R)

For to the angels God’s given a command
To guard you in all of your ways;
Upon their hands they will bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone. (R)

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Glencie Rhedrick

God, I have defaulted to un-hope in my life and I have encouraged un-hoping in others. I have criticized plans before hearing them out and I have turned to family, church, friends, colleagues with my face painted, “we’ve tried that before and it didn’t work.” Together we have laughed at new ideas and circulated only bad news. Plant your promises deep in the field of our lives, and forgive us our presuming to define your future. Amen.

Hymn 502

“Dear God, Embracing Humankind”

REST

Dear God, embracing humankind, forgive our foolish ways;
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind, in purer lives your service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

Drop your still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess the beauty of your peace.

Breathe through the pulses of desire your coolness and your balm;
Let sense be numb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire, O still, small voice of calm.

Words of Assurance

Glencie Rhedrick

God wipes pessimism from the open heart and sends others to affirm in us even the most fragile possibilities of the future. We are forgiven.

Song

GOODNESS IS STRONGER

Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.

Victory is ours; victory is ours through God who loves us. (2x)

Children’s Message

Laura Hankins

Pastoral Prayer

Glencie Rhedrick

Song

“God Weeps”

S. E. Murray/M.A. Miller

God weeps at love withheld, at strength misused,
At children’s innocence abused,
And till we change the way we love, God weeps.

God waits for stones to melt, for peace to seed,
For hearts to hold each other’s need,
And till we understand the Christ, God waits.

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*)

OPEN OUR EYES

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch you and say that we love you.
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.

Old Testament Reading

Psalm 91: 1-6, 14-16

Kristin Andes

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust.'

For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;

he will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

You will not fear the terror of the night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.

Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.

When they call to me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.

With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church;
Many: Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

* Gospel Reading

Luke 16:19-31

Glencie Rhedrick

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames." But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us." He said, "Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment." Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them." He said, "No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent." He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

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

Glencie Rhedrick

Invitation to Generosity

Kristin Andes

We are invited to offer resources, time, abilities, compassion, in a tangible expression of our hope for the future for ourselves, this community of faith and many others near and far away. [include directions for receiving in the particular church.] Be generous, my friends, with your trust in the future.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

God, we have received hope; we give you time. We have received hope; we give one another the church. We have received hope; we offer these gifts that they may become the change or simply the promise of change among those who need this clear image that they are not abandoned.

Amen.

* Doxology I HEAR ANGELS
"Holy, holy, God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come"
All creation is bringing glory to the Lamb who sits upon the throne.

* Hymn 306 WAREHAM
"The Church of Christ, in Every Age"
The church of Christ, in every age beset by change, but Spirit led,
Must claim and test its heritage and keep on rising from the dead.

Across the world, across the street, the victims of injustice cry
For shelter and for bread to eat, and never live before they die.

Then let the servant church arise, a caring church that longs to be
A partner in Christ's sacrifice, and clothed in Christ's humanity.

* Benediction Glencie Rhedrick

* Benediction Response SIZOHAMBA NAYE
We will walk with God, my brothers; we will walk with God.
We will walk with God, my sisters; we will walk with God.
We will go rejoicing till the kin-dom has come.
We will go rejoicing till the kin-dom has come.

Postlude S. McEwan
"Great Is the Lord"

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*Candid photographs and/or video recording share our work and witness
and invite others into the fellowship of our congregation. Some pictures/video
may be published in church print publications, on our website or on our
official social media sites. If you do not wish to have your image published,
please contact the church office by phone or email.*

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

Lisa Cloninger, Terry Raley-Dennis, Brian Hankins,
Henry Hankins, Kathi Smith, Shakti Subramanian

We encourage sign ups of **greeters** and **ushers**, ready to welcome and help members and guests starting at 10:30 every Sunday. Please sign up on the SignUpGenius link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-ushers>

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

IN PERSON ACTIVITIES UPDATE 09 23 2022

Mecklenburg County is in the "green", meaning we have once again reached the low community level for COVID-19. Hooray! Consistory voted to move to a "masks optional" designation for in-person activities at the church effective immediately and ask that member decision to mask or not mask be respected. We will continue to monitor COVID trends as we move into the cooler months and will adjust as needed. 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. If the "mask optional" designation prevents you from attending worship in person, please let us know so we are aware of the impact of this decision on individual church members. 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.

PLEASE WELCOME BACK REV. GLENCIE RHEDRICK TO THE PULPIT

Glencie 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 Institute of Integral 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!

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.

HELP CLEAR THE TRAILS OCTOBER 15 - 9AM

Join us Saturday, Oct. 15 to enjoy cooler fall weather and church fellowship as we clear our hiking trails and enjoy nature.

CELEBRATE AUTUMN! OCTOBER 16 - FOLLOWING WORSHIP

We'll have a BBQ picnic to celebrate the season! Pork BBQ, deserts, and beverages will be provided. Please bring your favorite side item. Join us for a trail walk, or time on the labyrinth.

VACCINE CLINIC SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16 - 12-4PM

Aline Sullivan will hold a vaccine clinic at HCUCC, Sunday, October 16th after worship until 4pm. Contact the church office if you wish to be included. She will have available both the Regular & HD Flu shots, COVID-19 Bivalent Booster (BA4 & BA5), SHINGRIX and Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis.) **Bring:** ID, your COVID vaccine record, if applicable, insurance card, and wear a short sleeved or loose sleeved shirt. Aline Sullivan, BS, PharmD., R.Ph

CROP HUNGER WALK 2022 SUNDAY OCTOBER 30 - FOLLOWING WORSHIP

The Holy Covenant branch of the Charlotte CROP Hunger Walk will happen on the church's property, Sunday, October 30 after worship. If you can join us, please let Tina Dickens know by email- taichitina@gmail.com or talk to her at church. 25% of all donations will stay local and give assistance to three charitable agencies.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

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

Members

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

Friends & Family Members

Julia Smith and family in the death of her husband, Troy Smith (Robert Shepherd)
Friends & family of Aida Marcial who live in Puerto Rico
Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Marta Kosinska & Jon Spencer (Lloyd & Gussie Spencer), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Joe Parks (Beth Christian Sharp), Jerry & Marie Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), 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)