



## **Meditation**

The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same.

Nor should you be the same nor would you want to.

~Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.

~Winnie the Pooh

"We lost not only through death, but also by leaving and being left, by changing and letting go and moving on. And our losses include not only our separations and departures from those we love, but our conscious and unconscious losses of romantic dreams, impossible expectations, illusions of freedom and power, illusions of safety -- and the loss of our own younger self, the self that thought it would always be unwrinkled and invulnerable and immortal."

~Judith Viorst

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

October 30, 2022 10:55 am

**SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE - GRIEF - RENEWAL**

Prelude

Kathleen Smith

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

Cheri Dennis

Stewardship Moment

Lisa Cloninger

Offering Dedication (*unison*)

**God, we now dedicate the offerings this church has received and will receive to the sacred work of building your kingdom here on earth. You have entrusted us with much in caring for your people and your creation. May we be wise in our use of these resources so that your kingdom will be on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Amen**

One: Now let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship. May the peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

**GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP**

\* Call to Worship

Holly Middleton

One: Jesus said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." And so, we are invited into this time of worship to bring the fullness of ourselves to the fullness of God.

Many: **We come, bringing our hurts, our worries and our fears.**

One: We come, because we have things to grieve, confessions to make,

Many: **We come, turning to God, who knows us, knows our hearts and loves us.**

One: We come seeking relief from pain, injustice, grief and despair. With the psalmist we say,

Many: **"O Lord, you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living, give heed to my cry, for I am low."**

All: **We come today to rest in God and so we can begin anew.**

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

\* Introit

“Come Build a Church”

K. Medema

Come build a church with soul and spirit.  
Come build a church of flesh and bone.  
We need no tower rising skyward;  
No house of wood or glass or stone.  
Come build a church with human frailty.  
Come build a church of flesh and blood.  
Jesus shall be its sure foundation.  
It shall be built by the hand of God.

GOD CALLS US TO CONFESSION

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Cheri Dennis

Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and follow your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

Cheri Dennis

Almighty God, who is great in mercy, promises forgiveness of sin to all who truly repent and are sincere in faith. Almighty God pardons and delivers us from all sin, confirms and strengthens us in all goodness, and brings us to everlasting life. Amen.

GOD CALLS US TO REMEMBER

Gift in Song

“The Old Churchyard”

*Lisa Cloninger, Meg Houlihan, Kathi Smith, vocalists*

Writing our Remembrances

Hymn 299

“For All the Saints” (v. 1, 2, 4)

SINE NOMINE

For all the saints who from their labors rest,  
Who to the world their steadfast faith confessed,  
Your name, O Jesus, be forever blessed. Alleluia! Alleluia!

You were their rock, their refuge, and their might;  
You, Christ, the hope that put their fears to flight;  
‘mid gloom and doubt, you were their one true light. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Ringed by this cloud of witnesses divine,  
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;  
Yet in your love our faithful lives entwine. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer

“A Prayer Meditation for All Saints Day”  
*Adapted from a prayer written by Safiya Fosua*

Kathi Smith

We give you thanks, O God, for all the saints who ever worshiped you  
Whether in brush arbors or cathedrals,  
Weathered wooden churches or crumbling cement meeting houses  
Where your name was lifted and adored.  
We give you thanks, O God, for hands lifted in praise:  
Manicured hands and hands stained with grease or soil,  
Strong hands and those gnarled with age  
Holy hands  
Used as wave offerings across the land.  
We thank you, God, for hardworking saints;  
Whether hard-hatted or steel-booted,  
Head ragged or aproned,  
Blue-collared or three-piece-suited  
They left their mark on the earth for you, for us, for our children to come.  
Thank you, God, for the tremendous sacrifices made by those who have gone  
before us.  
Bless the memories of your saints, God.  
May we learn how to walk wisely from their examples of faith, dedication,  
worship, and love.

**GOD CALLS US TO GRIEVE**

Scripture

Psalm 38: 9-11, 15

Gregg Walker

O Lord, all my longing is known to you; my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart throbs, my strength fails me; as for the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me. My friends and companions stand aloof from my affliction, and my neighbors stand far off. But it is for you, O lord, that I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.

Poem

“When the Tears Come” Rev. M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed

When the tears come,  
hold out your hands.  
Like the last leaves  
quivering on empty branches,  
finally accepting  
the closure of a season,  
let them fall  
slowly  
and softly  
onto your palms.  
Receive them as an offering.  
In praise of your strength.  
In honor of your tenderness.  
In forgiveness of your regrets.  
In acceptance of loss.  
You will find God  
praying with you.  
They'll light a candle for every tear.  
They'll place a flower on your hands like an altar.  
They'll chant softly to the tune of your weeping.  
No words are needed for this kind of worship.  
When the heart gets a moment to catch its breath  
and pain is released like a long slow exhale  
the Sacred draws close  
to hear the testimony.  
of your grief.

Ritual for Grief

Hymn

“I Love the Lord”

**I love the Lord, who heard my cry, and pitied ev'ry groan.  
Long as I live and troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.**

**I love the Lord, who heard my cry, and chased my grief away.  
O let my heart no more despair while I have breath to pray.**

Prayer

Rev. M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed

God of love, God of peace,  
Come and comfort all who are grieving.  
Weep with those in sorrow.  
Gather round the circles of remembrance.  
Hear the choirs of gratitude,  
and make Holy all that pours from broken hearts.

May your eternal embrace,  
your forever love,  
your Divine Presence that is before death,  
companions through death,  
and rises after death,  
be the resting place -  
the place of return -  
where we can always find each other.  
Amen.

### GOD CALLS US TO RENEWAL

Scripture

Cheri Dennis

Isa 43:1-3a But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Isa 43:18-21 Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Ritual for Renewal

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 the 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.

GOD CALLS US TO DO GOD'S HOLY WORK

Litany "Walking and Working with our God" Holly Middleton

One: The God of strength moves within us;

**Many: the God of courage hears our distress.**

One: The God of hope reveals wholeness to us;

**Many: the God of healing touches us when we are broken.**

One: When the pain overwhelms us, when the burden is too heavy,

**Many: we turn to our God, who is sustaining and redeeming.**

One: When there is loneliness, when there is isolation,

**Many: we turn to our God, who is loving and present.**

One: When the darkness blinds us, when it seems that evil has won,

**Many: we turn to our God, who opens our eyes and ears to see the truth.**

One: Where there is injustice, when there is so little mercy,

**Many: we turn to our God, and seek to confess and live into our forgiveness.**

One: For God created us, redeemed us and sustains us, and we are not alone.

**All: Lead us in Your ways, O God, and bring us Your healing touch; fuel our hearts, voices and hands by Your Spirit. Mold us into Your people to do Your holy work as we seek to follow Jesus' example. Amen.**

Hymn 433

"In the Bulb There is a Flower"

PROMISE

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;

In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!

In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;

There's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.

From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last a victory,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

\* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

\* Benediction Response

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,  
Stay right here with us, filling us with Your love;  
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise.  
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived,  
When we shall leave this place.

Postlude

Kathi Smith

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*Gregg Walker & Mike Yonkovic designed/adapted the ritual using stones. The names of the writers of the poem and the prayer in the remembrance and the grief sections are listed beside the poems and the prayers. Call to Worship & Walking & Working with God adapted from Service of Lament Confession Grief and Hope, June/2020, Kingston Presbyterian Church, Kingston, NJ. The Confession and Words of Assurance are from the UCC Book of Worship.*

*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:

Keith Dennis, Brian Hankins, Laura Hankins, Henry Hankins,  
JoAnn Jellison, Dawn Schmitz, Shakti Subramanian

### 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

### IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Consistory voted to move to a "masks optional" designation for in-person activities at the church effective Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, and ask that a member's 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.

### STEWARDSHIP 2023

We need YOU and your transformational gifts of time, talent and treasure. Thank you for your prayers for God's continued life-giving work through Holy Covenant, for our Settled Pastoral Search team, and for God's spirit to move within each of our lives as we discern what gifts each of us can offer to God to strengthen God's ministry through Holy Covenant to our members, our community, and beyond. Our current pace for our pledges are at **71% for the General Fund** (operating fund), and **55% Building Fund** (capital fund)! Please turn in your pledge card today or send a confidential email to the church office, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org).

### UPDATES FROM YOUR PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM

See our weekly electronic newsletter for a chronological document of our weekly accomplishments. Keep us in prayer as we continue this most important work!

### WHAT IS NON-BINARY? WHAT IS GENDER IDENTITY? WHAT ARE THE CORRECT PRONOUNS? Join Holy Covenant on Sunday, Nov. 6th at 12:30 PM

to explore these questions and others with [Dr. Benjamin Simmons](#), a family physician and board member of [PFLAG Charlotte](#). A light lunch will be available.

PFLAG's mission is to support families, allies and people who are LGBTQ+, to educate ourselves and others about issues important to LGBTQ+ communities, and to advocate in our communities for a more equitable future for all. Our call at Holy Covenant includes continuing to educate ourselves around many issues, including the changing nature of LGBTQIA+ identity and language.

### **CROP HUNGER WALK 2022 TODAY**

Following worship today, come WALK with your church family and friends to help alleviate hunger in Mecklenburg County and the world. 25% of all donations will stay local and give assistance to three charitable agencies. Not able to join us? Please support our walkers! Tina Dickens, Linda Carver and Darline Warren. Checks should be payable to C.R.O.P.

### **SOJOURNERS CLASS SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM**

Everyone is welcome to join us both in-person or via Zoom at 9:45 Sunday mornings. Go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us). Meeting ID: 876 7340 9762 and Passcode: 523903. For more information, contact Cheri Dennis (704-519-6016, [cherid@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:cherid@holycovenantucc.org)).

### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

#### **Members**

Kristin Andes & Tom Magraw in the recent death of Kristin's mother, Kathy Andes; David & Patty McGuirt & family in the recent death of David's mother, Betty Sue McGuirt

Andrew & Brittany Bomely, Martha Bomely, Gary & Linda Clark, Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Hong, Helen Lambert, Sharon Landis, Irene Mikkelson, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reddy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Anita Taylor

#### **Friends & Family Members**

The family of Byron Lester (Dawn Simmons); Friends & family in the recent death of Bobby Vickery (Ed Vickery & Eric Miner);

Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), Alicia Gibson (Jim Hong), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Ann Johnson (Joy Johnson), 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), Christopher Sizemore (Tina Ettesen), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Joyce Ward (Ed Vickery), Tamber Watson (Jeff Edwards-Knight), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller)