



**“MAKING ROOM FOR CHRIST” COLLABORATIVE PAINTING  
DECEMBER 2014**

**"Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless  
until it finds its rest in thee."**

**-St. Augustine**

**"When the universe was young, it took a breath, then sighed with a  
longing so deep, so ancient, that it stole God's attention for a moment.  
The sigh brushed God's cheek and [God] recognized it as the breath of  
love. In that moment God wished for another. The yearning had begun."**

**-Kate Belle**

**"At the core of who we are, we crave the acceptance that comes from  
being loved. To satisfy this longing we will either be graspers of God's love  
or grabbers for people's love."**

**-Lysa TerKeurst**

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ JOY**

**December 11, 2022 10:55 am**

Prelude "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" arr. J. Purifoy

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Introit "Jesus Is Coming" FREEDOM IS COMING

Jesus is coming. (3x) Oh yes, I know.

\* Call to Worship Barb Schneller

*(Inspired by Luke 1:46b-55, The Magnificat)*

One: Our souls magnify the Lord. Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!

Many: We come today with eager hope, awaiting God's new revelation.

One: The mighty One has done great things! God's mercy covers generations.

Many: We come today with ready peace, trusting with anticipation.

One: The One who lifted up the lowly and filled the hungry, dwells with us.

All: We come today with fervent joy, we worship with great expectation.

Invocation *(unison)* Barb Schneller

God of Mary, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Rahab— God of us all, your children here and your children afar— We enter this moment of worship with eager anticipation. We know that even before a child would come to lead the way, you were leading our way. From the valleys of the shadows of death to the tables in the presence of enemies, you have never left us nor forsaken us. Your rod and your staff have guided us. Guide us now, O God. Make your presence known as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.

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

\* Hymn 127

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

ES IST EIN’ ROS

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem has sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming as saints of old have sung.  
It came a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah has foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright, she bore to us a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Glencie Rhedrick

One: We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty.

All: God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in people and things that can’t fulfill our every need. We have searched for peace in shallow places. We have mistaken joy for temporal pleasure and artificial exhilaration. We have put limits on the ways we love, excluding those who need our loving kindness the most. God, when we have lost our way, show us yours. Guide us to the hope in you that will renew our strength. Lead us to your peace that transcends all understanding. Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence. Remind us that you have always loved us with an everlasting love, so that we may share that love with others. Amen.

Song

“You Came Down”

CAMEROON

You came down that we may have joy (3x)  
Hallelujah forevermore.

Words of Assurance

Glencie Rhedrick

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it good to know that God’s love for us is sure—that God’s commitment to us is definite—that God is walking with us, guiding us, as the compassionate companion that we are called to be for each other. Let us live into this gift. Amen.



Song

“Joy Waits for Us at Advent”  
*Robert Shepherd, vocalist*

A. Udis-Kessler

*Joy waits for us at Advent. Joy waits for us to sing.  
Joy waits for our amazement at the grace in everything.  
In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation,  
For the birthing of a world where wonder is restored,  
Joy is born in us once more.*

Pastoral Prayer

Glencie Rhedrick

The Lord’s Prayer (*unison*)

Glencie Rhedrick

**Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, We pray that your good will be done, Let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, Give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, From each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence Beyond the evil of our days – Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One. Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

EMMANUEL

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel, your name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us, revealed in us, your name is called Emmanuel.**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
'Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;

the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;

the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,

and it shall be called the Holy Way;

the unclean shall not travel on it,

but it shall be for God's people;

no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

No lion shall be there,

nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;

they shall not be found there,

but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,

and come to Zion with singing;

everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

they shall obtain joy and gladness,

and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

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

Anthem

“When Mary Walked Through Woods of Thorn” arr. J. H. Sutcliffe  
*Meg Houlihan, tenor*

\* Gospel Lesson

Luke 1:46-56

Glencie Rhedrick

And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever.’

And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

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

Hymn 119

“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”

MORNING SONG

**My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.  
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.**

**My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is God’s name.  
All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.**

**From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,  
Dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.**

**Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,  
Leaves hungry spirits satisfied, the rich seem suddenly poor.**

**Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,  
Remembering past promises with present faithfulness.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Dedication

Barb Schneller

**One: As recipients of the generosity of God, let us together dedicate our offerings we’ve received for the building of God’s kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.**

**All: For the wondrous ways this offering will bless this community, we dedicate these gifts. For the ways it will help us live out God’s mission, we dedicate these gifts. May they strengthen our call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Amen**

\* Doxology

VENI EMMANUEL

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, you heavenly host.  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to you, O Israel.**



\* Hymn

“Canticle of the Turning”

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
That the God of my heart is great,  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
That you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
And my weakness you did not spurn,  
So from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?

*Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
And the world is about to turn.*

Though I am small, my God, my all,  
You work great things in me,  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
To the end of the age to be.  
Your very name put the proud to shame,  
And to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,  
For the world is about to turn. (R)

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,  
Not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
Every tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
For the food they can never earn;  
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed,  
For the world is about to turn. (R)

Though the nations rage from age to age,  
We remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
From the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard  
Is the promise which holds us bound,  
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,  
Who is turning the world around. (R)

\* Benediction

Glencie Rhedrick

\* Benediction Response

DONA NOBIS PACEM

*Translation: Grant us peace.*

**Dona nobis pacem, pacem. Dona nobis pacem.**

Postlude

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

arr. J. Carter

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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:**

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

ADVENT 2022

Dec 18 \* Love

Celebrate the Music of the Season

Dec 24 \* Christ

7pm candlelight service

5:30-6:30pm chili supper

Dec 25 \* Christmas Morning

We will not worship in-person Christmas morning



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

### IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Holy Covenant UCC has returned to hosting all in-person activities with face masks being optional, including Sunday worship services which will also be live-streamed.

### WELCOME BACK REV. 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!

**USHERS, GREETERS, LITURGIST, COMMUNION SERVERS AND ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS!** Please sign up on SignUpGenius  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-ushers>



### CHILDREN'S CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENT

The Christian Education Team will be filling in while we look for a new Children's Church Teacher. Would any of you like to go on the list to teach or be a helper? Call or email or speak to Jo Ann Jellison, if you would like to talk about it. [joannjellison@yahoo.com](mailto:joannjellison@yahoo.com); (804)937-1180 Thank you!

### SANDWICHES & BAGGED LUNCHES, DECEMBER 11

Join us following worship! We'll assemble sandwiches and bagged lunches to be delivered to Roof Above early December 12th.

## **ANGEL TREE GIVING**

Thank you to all who have generously responded! Bring your unwrapped gifts to the church by December 18. If you have questions, please contact Suzanne Lamorey at 704-654-7267 or [slamorey@uncc.edu](mailto:slamorey@uncc.edu).

## **UPDATES FROM YOUR PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM**

We're busy at work and want to share what we are up to! See our weekly electronic newsletter for a chronological document of our weekly accomplishments. Keep us in prayer as we continue this most important work!

### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

#### **Members**

Jean & Terry Raley-Dennis and family in the death of Jean's father, Jerry Raley Sr. Andrew & Britany Bomely, Martha Bomely, Gary & Linda Clark, Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, 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 Arthur Sizemore (Tina Ettesen); The family of Bill Dodson (Joy Decker); The family of Richard Pearce (Ed Vickery)  
Nikki Arrigo (Kathleen Wagner), Tom Chevrier & Rob Lux (Kathleen Wagner), Laura Christian, Matthew Christian (Beth Sharp), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Ann Johnson (Joy Johnson), Geraldine Mobley (Jeff Edwards-Knight), Joe Parks (Beth Christian Sharp), 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)

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to [prayers@holycovenantucc.org](mailto: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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