



Photo by Simon Berger on Unsplash

Silent Meditation

“Forced conversion is **NOT** making disciples!”

- anonymous

“Authority without wisdom is like a heavy axe without an edge, fitter to bruise than polish.”

— Anne Bradstreet

“But it doesn’t take a thousand men to open a door, my lord. It might to keep it open.”

— Ursula K. Le Guin

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
TRINITY SUNDAY ~ PRIDE MONTH**

June 4, 2023 10:55 am

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

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Cheri Dennis

One: May the peace of Christ be with you!

Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "Enter, Rejoice, and Come In" ENTER, REJOICE

Enter, rejoice, and come in. Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Today will be a joyful day: enter, rejoice, and come in.

* Call to Worship Kevin Decker

One: After Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus called the eleven to a mountaintop in Galilee and they went.

Many: **Let us be attentive to the voice of Jesus and bravely go when called.**

One: Once the eleven saw Jesus they doubted but still worshipped Him.

Many: **Let us forgive ourselves when we doubt and remain open to understanding as we encounter Jesus.**

One: As they worshiped, Jesus declared his authority and charged the eleven to GO to ALL people. He instructed them to build community with ALL people, be willing to touch ALL people, and be willing to minister to ALL people.

Many: **Let us bravely GO to ALL people especially those society often tries to ignore.**

One: Jesus instructed the eleven to use their voice, their stories, and their authentic truth as a witness to those to whom they ministered.

Many: **Let us stand in authenticity empowered by the Holy Spirit as we bravely share our story to help others find the love of Jesus.**

One: Jesus assured the eleven to remember that he would always be with them.

All: **Let us bravely live, work, and GO in authenticity as we do the work of connecting people with the Love of Jesus. Let us remember that his love, peace, and hope is always with us. Amen.**

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

* Hymn

“The Play of the Godhead”

PERICHORESIS

The play of the Godhead, the Trinity’s dance,
Embraces the earth in a sacred romance:
With God the Creator and Christ the true Son,
Entwined with the Spirit, a web daily spun
In spangles of mystery, the great Three-in-One.

The warm mists of summer, cool waters that flow,
Turn crystal as ice when the wintry winds blow.
The taproot that nurtures, the shoot growing free,
The lifegiving fruit, full and ripe on the tree:
More mystic and wondrous, the great One-in Three.

In God’s gracious image of coequal parts,
We gather as dancers, uniting our hearts.
Men, women, and children, and all living things,
We join in the round of bright nature that rings
With rapture and rhythm: creation now sings!

Prayer for Transformation & New Life (*unison*)

Cheri Dennis

Loving God, often in our quest to do the work that we are called to do we miss the mark. We doubt even as we worship. We forget that the peace, love, hope, and joy of the Divine extends beyond the walls of our church. We forget how you show up in our lives. For all our doubt and forgetfulness, we ask your forgiveness. Transform our hearts to love you and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Cheri Dennis

God forgives our doubt and forgetfulness. We are set free to take God’s love to the world. Amen.

Song of Preparation

“Rain Down”

J. Cortez

Rain down, rain down, rain down your love on your people.
Rain down, rain down, rain down your love, God of life.

Pastoral Prayer

Cheri Dennis

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

OPEN MY EYES

Open our ears, that we may hear voices of truth you send so clear
And while the wave notes fall on our ears, everything false will disappear
Silently now we wait for you, ready, our God, your will to do.
Open our hearts; illumine us, Spirit divine!

O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church;
Many: **Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.**

* Gospel Lesson

Matthew 28:16-20

Kevin Decker

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

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

"What if no one responds?"

Cheri Dennis

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving

Kevin Decker

One: As Jesus gathered the eleven and sent them into the world to share their witness and wisdom— Christ calls us to gather our gifts and dedicate them to the work of bringing God’s love to the world. Let us together now dedicate those gifts.

Many: Loving God, we offer those gifts Holy Covenant has received to the work of bringing love, peace, hope, joy, justice, and healing to those who are hurting. May these gifts be blessed and used to provide ministry for those who are too often forgotten in our society. Amen.

* Doxology

“Confitemini Domino”

TAIZÉ

(translation: Give thanks to the Lord for God is good, Psalm 118:1)

Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus.

Confitemini Domino alleluia!

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion Liturgy for PIE* Day

Cheri Dennis

*(Public, Intentional, Explicit)

One: The Holy One be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Open your hearts to the One who is Love.

Many: We open our hearts to you, O God.

One: Let us give thanks to God, our Creator.

Many: For the courage of the Holy that lives in us, we give thanks.

One: Bold and Beloved One, throughout history you have revealed yourself to us in ways that surprise and disrupt. You shocked the world when you came to be with us as a vulnerable baby born into a family fleeing political persecution. Though the scandal of your embodiment in Jesus led to crucifixion, still your Spirit of New Life is birthed anew among the marginalized.

You live among us today:

Many: In the lives of black trans women whose experiences of violence are dismissed and ignored.

One: Among bisexual people living with HIV/AIDS.

Many: As babies born into the care of lesbian women.

One: You wander school halls as trans children and navigate the streets as queer couples walking hand-in-hand.

Many: You come to us as LGBTQIA+ and Two-Spirit youth with no home. You are embodied by Two-Spirit people, still fighting against the

impacts of colonization, erasure, and stolen land. At times, we are offended by your self-expression. You take on flesh in people, places, and ideas we have been taught to fear or despise. And so we struggle. Our hearts harden. Our hospitality recoils. But still, your love persists. Through beauty, compassion, and truth, you lure us into laying down our need to control. You move us. Free us. Embrace us. By your grace, we are brought into the sacred labors of justice and transformation. We become free in Christ to reject all evil and oppression.

Words of Institution

One: Like those who gathered with Jesus on the night of his arrest, we come in need of grace. After feasting with his companions, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to all of them and said: “This is my body which is given for you. Take, eat, and remember me.” After the supper, he did the same with the cup, saying: “This is a symbol of the new covenant. Drink in remembrance of me.” In remembering the life of Jesus, we remember what he showed us:

Many: **The love of God is public. The love of God is intentional. The love of God is explicit.**

One: And so we pray, pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup, O God. Through these gifts, open our hearts to encounters with Christ in the strange and the ordinary. May the bread of life and the cup of blessing strengthen us in our courage to live as Jesus lived. Amen.

Sharing of Bread and Cup

Hymn 337

“Draw Us in the Spirit’s Tether”

UNION SEMINARY

**Draw us in the Spirit's tether, for when humbly in your name,
Two or three are met together, you are in the midst of them;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Touch we now your garment's hem.**

**As disciples used to gather in the name of Christ to sup,
Then with thanks to God the Giver, break the bread and bless the cup,
Alleluia! Alleluia! So now bind our friendship up.**

**All our meals and all our living make as sacraments of you,
That by caring, helping, giving, we may be disciples true. Alleluia!
Alleluia! We may serve with faith anew.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion (*unison*)

Nourishing One, your gifts renew us in body, spirit, and mind. Through this taste of love, may the Spirit send us with a faith that is brave. Let no institution or narrow thinking hold us back; make us people who boldly pursue collective justice and tend gently to the world's pain. Amen.

* Hymn "Light Dawns on a Weary World" TEMPLE OF PEACE

Light dawns on a weary world
When eyes begin to see all people's dignity.
Light dawns on a weary world:
The promised day of justice comes.

Refrain: The trees shall clap their hands,
The dry lands gush with springs;
The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace,
As all the world in wonder echoes *shalom*.

Love grows in a weary world
When hungry hearts find bread and children's dreams are fed.
Love grows in a weary world:
The promised feast of plenty comes. (*R*)

Hope blooms in a weary world
When creatures once forlorn, find wilderness reborn.
Hope blooms in a weary world:
The promised green of Eden comes. (*R*)

* Benediction Cheri Dennis

* Benediction Response "Send Us Out" J.M. Talbot

Send us out to proclaim the reign of your kin-dom,
Send us out to proclaim and to heal,
Send us out with your power and your authority
To overcome and to heal the world.

Postlude "Nicaea" arr. M. Hayes

*Songs in this service are used by permission.
CCLI License #11439355; CSPL164710*

*Portions of this service adapted from **Authority: Service Prayers for Trinity Sunday Year A** written by Rev. Derek Terry, pastor of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Cincinnati, OH and a member of the leadership team of the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ.*

The communion liturgy is adapted from the Affirming PIE Day 2020 worship service commissioned by AU/SE and Affirming Connections of the United Church of Canada and written by enfleshed.com.

**PIE = Public, Intentional, and Explicit welcome of gender and sexual-diverse people into the sacred space of community 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:

Joy Decker, Keith Dennis, D Evans, Brian Hankins, Anne Hayes
We welcome all in our congregation to participate! Please sign up in the Gathering Room or on the SignUpGenius link:



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

Many thanks to the **Bold & Beautiful Covenant Group** for providing today's refreshments following worship. Covenant Groups are a way for you to stay connected with people in your area, neighborhood or zip code. Contact Ed Vickery, ed.vickery@att.net, if you'd like to be a part of any of our Covenant Groups: Saints & Sunners; EastSiders; Southside; Bold & Beautiful; Plaza Midwood; Mountain Island, and Unstructured.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Stay connected! Check out all the current happenings in the weekly newsletter via Constant Contact. Not seeing it in your inbox? Sign-up here: <https://holycovenantucc.org/newsletters/>

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

Today's special offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. This offering will be taken for the next few weeks, including online at HolyCovenantUCC.org/give-2/.



THE HORN SOCIETY OF THE CAROLINAS, JUNE 11TH AT 1PM, AT HCUCC

Members and friends of Holy Covenant UCC are invited to a horn concert on **Sunday afternoon, June 11th at 1pm**. This concert is their way of saying "Thank You" to Holy Covenant for the use of our space for rehearsals during COVID. Our very own Bill Tyler is a member of this group. So come enjoy the music!

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

David & Patty McGuirt in the sudden death of David's brother, Rick McGuirt
Linda Carver, Gary & Linda Clark, Cindy Coble, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Humphrey, Sharon Landis, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry & Marion Rhyne, Bill Seaman, Ed & Beth Sharp, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Shakti Subramanian, Anita Taylor, Kathleen Wagner

Friends & Family Members

Linda Burby, Laura Christian (Beth Sharp), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Matty & Simone McKinnon (Joy Decker), Sue Parrish (Terry Raley-Dennis), Marie Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Suzie & John Robinson (Dana Endsley & Mike Yonkovig), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Christopher Sizemore (Tina Ettesen), Tom & Silvia Smith (Laura Hankins), Eulene Shepherd (Robert Shepherd), Kathryn Vickery (Ed Vickery), Joyce Ward (Ed Vickery), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller)

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

Mailing address: PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269

3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510

www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810