



Picture by Jacob Kelvin J. (Pexels)

“Water is sacred, because it gives life to everything
and without water there is no life.”

– Thunder Rain Woman, Anishinaabe Nation

“Once you carry your own water, you will learn the value of every drop.”

– African Proverb

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

October 1, 2023 10:55 am

Prelude "Christians, We Have Met to Worship" arr. F. Voltz
Kristin Andes, harp

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
One: May the peace of Christ be with you!
Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME
Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.

* Call to the Heart Gregg Walker
All those easily able and willing please take a comfortable posture that supports your worship...

One: Today we congregate around God's table from near and far...

Many: **we gather as a people of God!**

One: On this day, we are not a single congregation...

Many: **but part of worldwide community everywhere, in every place.**

One: Though we may differ in language, custom, and tradition...

Many: **we always remain siblings in Christ!**

One: On this day, from around the world we gather...

Many: **in house churches, rented rooms, sandy beaches, prison blocks,
and under the shade of towering trees.**

One: Although we may worship from distant places far apart...

Many: **we worship today as One.**

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

* Song

“Malo! Malo! Thanks Be to God”

J. Manibusan

*(This is a call and response song giving thanks in many languages.
Jon and Ed will sing first, then respond with bold phonetic spelling.)*

Refrain:

Tongan:

Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!

Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!

Portuguese:

Obrigado! Alleluia!

O-bree-ga-doh! Alleluia!

Spanish/Korean:

Gracias! Kam sa ham ni da!

Grah-seeahs! Kahm sah hahm nee dah!

Tongan:

Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!

Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!

Verse 1:

Chamoru:

Si Yu'us

maa'se!

See joos

mah-ah-sih!

Indonesian:

Terima

kasih!

Three-mah

kah-seeh!

Tagalog:

Maraming

salamat!

Mah-rah-meeng

sah-lah-maht!

German:

Danke schön!

Dahn-kuh shuh(r)n!

Polish:

Dziękuję!

Jehn-koo-yeh!

We thank you, Lord!

We thank you, Lord! (R)

Verse 2:

Creole:

Mési

bokou!

Meh-see

boh-koo!

Mandarin:

Xie xie!

Shee-eh shee-eh!

Japanese:

Arigatō!

Ah-ree-gah-toh!

Italian:

Grazie!

Grah-tsee-eh!

Vietnamese:

Cám ƠN!

Gahm urn!

We thank you, Lord!

We thank you, Lord! (R)

Prayer of Transformation

Gregg Walker

Please join me in this responsive prayer of personal transformation and new life...

One: Great Spirit, give us hearts to understand

Many: Never to take from creation's beauty more than we give,
Never to destroy want only for the furtherance of greed,
Never to deny giving our hands for the building of earth's beauty,
Never to take from her what we cannot use.

One: Give us hearts to understand

Many: That to destroy earth's music is to create confusion,
That to wreck her appearance is to blind us to beauty,
That to callously pollute her fragrance is to make a house of
stench,
That as we care for her, she will care for us.

One: Give us hearts to understand

Many: We have forgotten who we are.
We have sought only our own security.
We have exploited simply for our own ends.
We have distorted our knowledge.
We have abused our power.

One: Great Spirit,

Many: Whose dry lands thirst, help us to find the way to refresh your
lands.

One: Great Spirit,

Many: Whose waters are choked with debris and pollution, help us to find
the way to cleanse your waters.

One: Great Spirit,

Many: Whose beautiful earth grows ugly with misuse, help us to find the
way to restore beauty to your handiwork.

One: Great Spirit,

Many: Whose creatures are being destroyed, help us to find a way to
replenish them.

One: Great Spirit,

Many: whose gifts to us are being lost in selfishness and corruption, help
us to find the way to restore our humanity. Amen.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

In Asian cultures forgiveness is a sign of benevolence and concern for the well-being of others. In African culture forgiveness is displayed through a formal act, where a debt is paid for the hurt or damaged caused. Here in the U.S. and across Europe, forgiveness is viewed as the relief of a personal burden or to clear one's conscience. In South Africa they call it "ubuntu", which means "showing humanity towards others", and in Hawaii they call it "ho'oponopono" which means 'I am sorry, please forgive me.' Here in this place, with God in our hearts, may we too be assured that we are forgiven. Amen.

Response to God's Grace "Know That God Is Good"

MUNGU NI MWEMA

(Democratic Republic of Congo)

**Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.
Halle, hallelujah. (3x) Hallelujah, Hallelujah.
Mungu ni mwema. (3x) Ni mwema, ni mwema.
Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.**

Stories for All People

Laura Hankins

"We Are Water Protectors" by Carole Lindstrom

Song of Preparation

"Now"

R. Cooney

**Now is the moment, now is the time.
This very day there is salvation.**

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

CHEREPONI (Ghana)

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,
Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.**

Secondary Scripture Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 (CEB)

Tina Dickens

Our secondary scripture reading for today comes from the Book of Psalms 78: 1-4, 12-16, where there is praise for God's gracious goodness and provision...

Listen, my people, to my teaching; tilt your ears toward the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a proverb. I'll declare riddles from days long gone—ones that we've heard and learned about, ones that our ancestors told us. We won't hide them from their descendants; we'll tell the next generation all about the praise due the Lord and his strength— the wondrous works God has done. But God performed wonders in their ancestors' presence— in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. God split the sea and led them through, making the waters stand up like a wall. God led them with the cloud by day; by the lightning all through the night. God split rocks open in the wilderness, gave them plenty to drink— as if from the deep itself! God made streams flow from the rock, made water run like rivers.

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

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

Primary Scripture Exodus 17:1-7 (CEB)

Gregg Walker

Our primary scripture reading for today comes from the Book of Exodus 17:1-7, where the Israelite people cry out for water in the wilderness...

The whole Israelite community broke camp and set out from the Sin desert to continue their journey, as the Lord commanded. They set up their camp at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people argued with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why are you arguing with me? Why are you testing the Lord?" But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What should I do with this people? They are getting ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of Israel's elders with you. Take in your hand the shepherd's rod that you used to strike the Nile River, and go. I'll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Hit the rock. Water will come out of it, and the people will be able to drink." Moses did so while Israel's elders watched. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites argued with and tested the Lord, asking, "Is the Lord really with us or not?"

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.

The Good News

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

“Rock Legends, Flaky Biscuits, and the Need for Water”

Song of Response

“Now”

R. Cooney

Now is the moment, now is the time.

This very day there is salvation.

Invitation to Generosity

Gregg Walker

As you consider your offering, please remember today is the United Church of Christ’s *Neighbors in Need Offering*. This special mission offering of the United Church of Christ goes to support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The offering is used to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants offered by the UCC. A donation of any amount helps us remain a 5 for 5 church, meaning our church has contributed to each of the five annual offerings each year.

Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Gregg Walker

Please join me in a unison prayer of dedication for all we will receive...

We dedicate these gifts, freely given and gratefully received, to the work of this congregation: Building honest, caring relationships across all lines of difference; Growing in spirit and searching for meaning, together and apart; Promoting religious freedom, practicing compassion, and working for justice. May these gifts, and the work of our hands and hearts, give power to all we stand for as a community of faith. Amen.

* Doxology

BARUCH HASHEM ADONAI (Israel)

Baruch hashem Adonai. Baruch hashem Adonai.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Baruch hashem Adonai.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Today we celebrate World Communion Sunday, remembering our Christian siblings around the world who also celebrate this feast. Some will receive cubes of bread. Some will tear from a common loaf. Some will receive a wafer. Some will drink from a common chalice. Some will dip a piece of bread into the cup. Some will have individual glasses. Some will use wine, some juice. Some will offer both. Pastors will lead a variety of liturgies, in many languages. Clergy will dress traditionally, formally, and casually. Yet despite the differences in our denominations and traditions, we celebrate our unity in Jesus Christ. Today we remember this is Christ’s Table, and all are welcome.

Pastor: Matzah is unleavened bread; it reminds us of all who eat their bread in haste. It symbolizes for us all the refugees who, like the ancient Israelites, leave their homes and flee from danger. May it remind us, too, of the unhoused in our own city and country.

Many: **We pray, O God, for your church among those with no place to call home. May we learn from their searching faith, and may we be a place of welcome for all who seek safety.**

Pastor: Frybread reminds us of Africa, the birthplace of humankind where Christianity continues to flourish. It also reminds us of a legacy of slavery, and of a people who endured.

Many: **We pray, O God, for your church in places where it flourishes, and we confess the times and places when we have enslaved others. May we learn from the vibrant faith of our African siblings, and may we build a more just and peaceable world.**

Pastor: Butter naan and tandoori roti bread reminds us of Asia, where Christians are a minority among Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others. It represents for us the ways our faith calls us beyond our culture and reminds us of those who are persecuted for their beliefs.

Many: **We pray, O God, for your church in places where Christianity is dangerous, politically or socially. May we learn from the steadfast faith of our Asian siblings and walk with Jesus through every trial.**

Pastor: Tortillas remind us of Central and South America, where faith and culture is vibrant and beautiful; but also a place where Christians live among violence, drugs, and conflict as a daily reality.

Many: **We pray, O God, for your church in places beset by violence and still colored by hope. May we learn from the persistent faith of our Latino siblings, and may we look upon them with compassion as our neighbors.**

Pastor: The baguette and Eastern European dark bread reminds us of Europe, with its vast cathedrals that are often empty. It represents those who keep the faith alive in lean times and reminds us that the church is not a building, but a community of people.

Many: **We pray, O God, for your church in places where its power is diminished, and its followers are few. May we learn from the age-old faith of our European siblings, and may we live our faith so that our faith might live.**

Pastor: Cornbread reminds us of Native Americans who first recognized God in the rhythms of nature. It reminds us that the land we call home once belonged to others.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church as it exists in every land. May we learn from the earthy faith of our Native American siblings, and may we care for the land and all those who call it home.

Come, Holy Spirit, dwell in these breads and in this cup that they might be for us the body and blood of Christ. Come, dwell in your people of every land and language that we might be united with one another to be the body of Christ in every corner of the world today. Amen.

Words of Institution

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Today, Christ-followers meet in public worship and secret gatherings to break bread together. Today, in wealthy churches and hovels of poverty, wine is shared. In many different languages, by ordained clergy and volunteer pastors, these words of institution are given:

On the night he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus, gathered for supper with twelve of his closest friends, his disciples. He took the unleavened bread of the Passover feast, and when he had given thanks to God for it, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples, saying, “This cup is the new covenant - a new relationship with God, marked by the forgiveness of your sins and fullness of life. Drink of it, all of you.”

And so today, every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, we remember the sacrifices of Christ, those he sought to liberate, and the relationship that continually endures with him.

Distribution of Elements

Music during Communion

“Roll Down, Justice”
Meg Houlihan, vocalist

M. A. Miller

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

You have met us at the table, Lord Jesus, to unite us with you and with our siblings around the world. Go with us now into that world, that we might be a living sign of welcome among refugees, of freedom among the oppressed, of hope amid persecution, of peace amid violence, of living faith amid a culture of skepticism, and of loving kindness toward the earth and all her inhabitants. For this we pray in the name of Jesus, His truth, light, and love. Amen.

Good caring presence within us, around us, and above us;
Hold us in a sense of mystery and wonder.
Let the fullness of your goodness be recognized around us;
May all the world know your ways of caring and generosity.
May we find we have all we need
to meet each day without undue anxiety.
Help us to overlook our faults, and help us
to release others from their faults as well.
May we all know we are accepted.
Strengthen us so we will reach out, always with faith,
to rise above the unpleasant realities of our existence.
And we celebrate the gifts you have given us -
the rich kingdom of life's possibilities,
the power to do good and the triumph over evil,
and the moments when we have seen
the mystery and wonder of You everything.
You are life's richness.
You are life's power.
You are the force and life within us.
Amen.

* Hymn 347 "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ" LINSTEAD (Jamaica)

Let us talents and tongues employ,
Reaching out with a shout of joy:
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Refrain: Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,
Pass the Word around: loaves abound! (2x)

Christ is able to make us one,
At his table he set the tone,
Teaching people to live to bless,
Love in word and in deed express. (R)

Jesus calls us in, sends us out
Bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
Gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Immanuel) everywhere! (R)

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response

HALLE, HALLE (Caribbean)

Halle, halle, hallelujah! (3x) Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Postlude

“Canto de Esperanza” A. Schutmaat (Argentina)

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Portions of this service have been adapted by Thom Shuman, DesperatePreacher.com, Native American Prayers, Rev. Heather Prince Doss, Francis Macnab, Worship Ways and Life in Liturgy.

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:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, JoAnn Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

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>



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/>

COFFEE & CAKE WITH CHRISTOPHER, TODAY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

You are invited to an informal gathering after worship at 12:30pm in the conference room called "Coffee & Cake with Christopher". This is an opportunity to meet Pastor Chris, hear what he's been up to, ask questions, and get to know him better.

CROP WALK, OCTOBER 22nd at 1:30PM

Join the cause to fight hunger and poverty locally and globally! Let's walk together at American Legion Memorial Stadium, Sunday, October 22. Registration starts at 1:30pm. The walk is 6k (about 4 miles), but if you need to rest there is plenty of seating available. If interested in joining the walk, please connect with Tina Dickens- taichitina@gmail.com.

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/team/holy-covenant-ucc-4>

LITURGIST TRAINING, OCTOBER 22nd at 12:30PM

They were on regular duty to serve God according to their assignment.

(1 Chronicles 23:31 MSG)

Whether it's regular, occasional, sporadic, or special event, claim yourself some worship leadership time and serve God, get to know the congregation and newcomers better, and feel the joy! **Greeters and ushers are needed** starting at 10:30 every Sunday, and a **liturgist and a scripture reader** are needed during each service. **Please sign up in the Gathering Room or at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-ushers>.**

Save Sunday, Oct. 22, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., to explore what serving as a liturgist/reader would be like. Attending the training does not commit you to serve; it just means you're thinking about it. RSVP about the training to Kristin Andes at Kjandes@aol.com.

NEW MEMBER/INQUIRER CLASS, OCTOBER 29 at 12:30PM

Are you interested in learning more about our denomination, Holy Covenant UCC, and the United Church of Christ? Do you wonder why we do what we do? Let's get together and talk about! Please RSVP, church office, 704-599-9810 or office@holycovenantuc.org. All are welcome!

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING, OCTOBER 2023

This year's Neighbors In Need (NIN) collection will be shared- one-third of support to benefit the [Council for American Indian Ministry \(CAIM\)](#). Two-thirds are used by [Justice and Witness Ministries](#) to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. We will accept this offering on October 1, 2023, as part of World Communion Sunday, and throughout the month of October. We thank you for your support and generosity!

Various methods are available for your convenience! Schedule offerings, one time or recurring, through your bank's online payment system. Mailing a check, from home or a financial institution? Please use this secure address:

Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269

Donate online at HolyCovenantUCC.org/give-2/. Look for the Give Today button. Questions can be directed to the church office, office@holycovenantucc.org or 704-599-9810.



PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Linda Carver, Gary & Linda Clark, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Humphrey, Sharon Landis, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry Rhyne, Ed & Beth Sharp, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Bill Seaman, Shakti Subramanian, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

Karen & Billy (Kim Tyler), Melissa Brown, David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Matty & Simone McKinnon (Joy Decker), Roxanne & Moose Meyer (Dana Endsley & Mike Yonkovig), Sue Parrish (Terry Raley-Dennis), Marie Raley (Jean Raley-Dennis), Susan Rayfield (Martha Bomely), Suzie & John Robinson (Dana Endsley & Mike Yonkovig), Barbara Rutelonis (Eric Miner), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Christopher Sizemore (Tina Ettesen), Eulene Shepherd (Robert Shepherd), Joyce Ward (Ed Vickery), Janet Wakefield (Linda Burby), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller)

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