



Picture by Philipp Deus (Unsplash)

“Remember that time spent with God is never wasted.
Always find time to talk to God wherever you go.”
– Anonymous

“God is always ready to listen
anytime you are ready to talk to talk.”
- Anonymous

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki, MDiv, MBA, Senior Pastor

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**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

October 22, 2023, 10:55 am

** Your whole self is welcomed here. Please feel free to take care of your body during worship in ways that work for you.*

Prelude "God's Care" B. Logan

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

One: May the peace of Christ be with you!

Many: And also with you.

Stewardship Moment Tom McGraw

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone

To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,

And live the Word they've known.

Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;

Let us bring an end to fear and danger:

All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.

* Call to Worship Kristin Andes

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

One: Eternal God, giver of life, you are our Creator; we are your creations.

Many: We come from you. We belong to you. We bear your image. Alleluia!

One: Loving Christ, sharer of life, you are our companion; we are your lovers.

Many: You accompany us. You heal and forgive us. You lead us. Alleluia!

One: Holy Spirit, power of life, you are our breath; we are your vessels.

Many: You sweep us away in your love, drown us in your grace, and birth us anew in the waters of your womb. Alleluia!

One: This is the sacred time of our week we have set aside to know you, worship you, and serve you.

Many: Alleluia!

* Hymn 459

“Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”

NETTLETON

Come, O Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing your grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of endless praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing love.

Here I pause in my sojourning; giving thanks for having come;
Come to trust at every turning, God will guide me safely home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
Came to rescue me from danger, blessed body, precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I am drawn anew!
Let that grace now like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to you.
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've known:
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your very own.

Daily Affirmation

Yourself: The presence of God surrounds me, loves me, and speaks to me.

Neighbor: The presence of God surrounds you, loves you, and speaks to you.

World: The presence of God surrounds us, loves us, and speaks to us.

Prayer of Transformation (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

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

Holy One, we confess the ways we have missed the mark this week. The ways we have denied your presence among us, seeking refuge and asylum in things which have ended up harming us. How we have substituted your promises for quick fixes or instant gratifications. The ways we have let our inner critic speak louder and above the voice of your Spirit. In this hour heal us, forgive us, and renew us in the radical forgiveness that is your love. Amen.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Divine companion, who is with us al-ways, we need to remember we can talk to you. To sit with you in prayer to tell you how much we have missed you and how we long at times to know you are right alongside us and with us. Your words are the words that free us and your presence is the presence that empowers us. Like a good friend, a best friend, you are there to receive us as we are, even when we are not at our best. Your eternal friendship sustains us and continually sees the best in us. It is You who sees the mark that is the Christ within. This is the grace through which we rise. Amen.

Response to God's Grace

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)

Stories for All People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

All children in attendance are welcome to remain where they are or come up to the chancel for a story or time with the pastor...

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

The Lord's Prayer

Adapted from Dr. Rocco A. Errico (translation from the Aramaic)

Our Creator who is throughout the universe.

Let your name be set apart.

Come your counsel.

Let your desire be, as in the universe, also on the earth.

Give us bread for our necessities this day.

And free us from our offenses, as also we have freed our offenders.

And do not let us enter our worldliness,

but set us free from error.

For belongs to you the kin-dom, power, and song, from ages to ages.

Sealed in faithfulness, let this be our way.

Amen.

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

CHEREPONI

Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,

Show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.

Our Hebrew Lesson for today comes from the Book of Job, where Elihu is arguing with Job that God will answer him...

You certainly said in my hearing; I heard the sound of your words:

“I’m pure, without sin; I’m innocent, without offense. Notice that he invents arguments against me; he considers me his enemy, ties up my feet, watches all my paths.” Now you’re wrong about this; I’ll answer you, for God is greater than anybody. Why do you contend with him, saying that he doesn’t answer all your words? God speaks in one way, in two ways, but no one perceives it. In the dream, a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon humans, during their slumber on a bed, then he opens people’s ears, scares them with warnings, to turn them from a deed and to smother human pride. He keeps one from the pit, a life from perishing by the sword.

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

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

Sermon Lesson Exodus 33:12-23 (NLT) Kristin Andes

Our Sermon Lesson for today comes from the Book of Exodus, where Moses speaks with God and the need of God’s presence among them...

One day Moses said to the Lord, “You have been telling me, ‘Take these people up to the Promised Land.’ But you haven’t told me whom you will send with me. You have told me, ‘I know you by name, and I look favorably on you.’ If it is true that you look favorably on me, let me know your ways so I may understand you more fully and continue to enjoy your favor. And remember that this nation is your very own people.” The Lord replied, “I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you.” Then Moses said, “If you don’t personally go with us, don’t make us leave this place. How will anyone know that you look favorably on me—on me and on your people—if you don’t go with us? For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.”

The Lord replied to Moses, “I will indeed do what you have asked, for I look favorably on you, and I know you by name.” Moses responded, “Then show me your glorious presence.” The Lord replied, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will call out my name, Yahweh, before you. For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose. But you may not look directly at my face, for no one may see me and live.” The Lord continued, “Look, stand near me on this rock. As my glorious presence passes by, I will hide you in the crevice of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and let you see me from behind. But my face will not be seen.”

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 “When Is the Last Time You Talked to God?”
Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Kristin Andes

Now is the time for our ministry of giving and sharing...

Moses had a close and intimate relationship with God, and there was nothing Moses could not share with God. Along his journey he shared his doubts, his anger, his concerns...and God not only listened, but still used him for great good. Let it be known the gift you are and the gifts you give are not small or insignificant, but great. And they both were meant to serve a mighty purpose. We now share our gifts in this devotion...

Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

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

Gracious God, we thank you for the mystery in which you give yourself to us. We are not only your treasure, but we are your precious coins, bearing your image, upheld by your worth. Spend us, and all we have shared, generously for the purposes of your desire and for the sake of the healing of the world. In the name of Christ, and through the power of your Spirit we pray. Amen.

* Doxology

BARUCH HASHEM ADONAI

Baruch hashem Adonai. Baruch hashem Adonai.

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

* Hymn 596

“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

TOPLADY

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide; my shelter be!

Let the water and the blood, from your wounded side which flowed,

Be of sin the double cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands can fulfill your law's demands;

Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,

All for sin could not atone; you must save, and you alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to your cross I cling;

Naked, come to you for dress; helpless, look to you for grace;

Stained, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath, when my eyes shall close in death,

When I soar to worlds unknown, meet you at your judgment throne,

Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide; my shelter be!

Poetry Reading

“More than Enough”
by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Kristin Andes

You,
more present than I can see or feel,
more gracious than I can understand,
more loving than makes sense.

I rest from needing to know,
I rest from having to believe,
I rest even from faith and from wisdom.

I see enough.
I receive enough.
You are here, more than enough,
pure goodness, more than enough.

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response

HALLE, HALLE

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

Postlude

“Wonderful Words of Life”
Songs in this service are used by permission.
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arr. D. Wyrzten

Portions of this service have been adapted by Unfolding Light.

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, 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>



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: Daytime Saints; 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/>

STEWARDSHIP 2024

In the month of October, we develop our church spending plan for the coming year that feeds our many ministries. Help us in that planning by letting us know what you intend to contribute to the church. Sending your pledge soon through one of the three options below between now and October 29. Thank you for your prayers for God's continued transformational work through Holy Covenant, for our new Settled Pastor Rev. Christopher Czarnecki, 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.

We are currently at 45% of our pledge goal of \$140,000.00 for the General Fund (operating fund), and 44% of the goal of \$40,000.00 for the Building Fund (capital fund).

Submit your pledge by one of the following methods:

1. Online through the church's website
<https://holycovenantucc.org/make-your-pledge-online/>,
2. E-mail your pledge to the church office at office@holycovenantucc.org or
3. Mail the pledge card to:

Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269

Because of you our church changes lives.

LITURGIST TRAINING, TODAY 12:30- 1:30PM IN THE SANCTUARY

Hip hip hooray! Today is the day! Learn the ins and outs of reading scripture or serving as liturgist during a Holy Covenant worship service. Experienced readers/liturgists will answer your questions. All ages welcome. Attending does not commit you to serve; it just means you are considering it. You really are welcome to come whether you RSVPed previously or not. Come on now!

CROP WALK, TODAY at 1:30PM

Walk with us today to join the cause to fight hunger and poverty locally and globally! At HCUCC or at American Legion Memorial Stadium. If interested in joining the walk, please see Tina Dickens- taichitina@gmail.com.

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

HOLIDAY GREENERY SUPPORTING BST 58

Liam and Lachlan Sullivan, Boy Scouts in Troop 58 of Davidson are selling holiday greenery for their annual fundraiser. This supports troop activities and helps pay individual fees for trips, camps & dues. Additionally, it boosts scouts' confidence, communication skills, networking and relationship-building in the community. **They will be taking orders and payments until Monday October 23.** The boys will unload the trailers as soon as they arrive on Saturday, November 25 (right after Thanksgiving), and delivery will begin immediately after. This will also include distribution after worship service on Sunday, November 26th. See examples and pricing at www.troop58greenery.org. Payments should be made at the time of your order, and can be made on the website with credit card, or in person with cash, check, Venmo & Zelle. All products (wreaths, garlands, bows & pine cone clusters) come from NC farms. Thank you from Liam & Lachlan!

GAME NIGHT, OCTOBER 28 6:30-8:30PM

Join us in the church Gathering Room and have some fun! Game "fanatics" as well as newbies are welcome! New games and puzzles available! RSVP Suzanne Lamorey, slamorey@uncc.edu.

HYGIENE KITS AND SANDWICH BUILD, OCTOBER 29

The Youth contingent and Missions and Justice is planning to prepare meal bags to be distributed at the Greyhound station for migrant travelers and the families while the rest of us are planning to prepare 400 sandwiches for the Men's Shelter. The Young and Not-So, the Regulars as well as our New Folks...please join us in the camaraderie that these events inspire!!!

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!

Save The Dates!

Oct 29 – All Souls-All Saints Observed, bring photos of your loved ones

Nov 5 - Installation, The Reverend Christopher Czarnecki, reception following

Nov 12 – Rev. Lloyd Spencer brings the message

Nov 19 - Annual Meeting & All Church Pot Luck

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 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

Jimmy & Dawn Simmons in the death of Jimmy's father, James W. Simmons
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, Shakti Subramanian, Anita
Taylor, Bill & Kim Tyler

Friends & Family Members

Karen & Billy (Kim Tyler), Melissa Brown, Erika Eckel and family (Dawn Simmons),
David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand),
Darin Jellison and family (Jo Ann Jellison), 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.