



Picture by Chris Lawton on Unsplash

"You never change your life
until you step out of your comfort zone;
change begins at the end of your comfort zone."
Roy T Bennett

"I can't change the wind,
but I can adjust my sails to always
reach my destination."
Jimmy Dean

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki, MDiv, MBA, Senior Pastor
RevChris@holycovenantucc.org, 314-402-8167

Jon Weddell, MDiv, 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

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

November 12, 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 "We Are an Offering" D. Liles

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

One: May the peace of Christ be with you!

Many: **And also with you.**

Introit "As We Gather" M. Fay/T. Coomes

As we gather, may your Spirit work within us.

As we gather, may we glorify your name.

Knowing well that as our hearts begin to worship,

We'll be blessed because we came, O Lord;

We'll be blessed because we came.

* Call to the Heart Barbara Schneller

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

One: We are pulled in many directions.

Many: **Many duties and tasks seek to lay claim on our lives.**

One: This day, in this place, let service to God be our choice.

Many: **This day, in this place, we open our hearts and spirits to God.**

One: Blessed be the God of creation who has called us here.

Many: **Praise be to God who sustains and nurtures our lives.**

Praise to the living God, the God of love and light,
Whose word brought forth the myriad suns and set the worlds in flight
Whose infinite design, which we but dimly see,
Pervades all nature, making all a cosmic unity

Praise to the living God, from whom all things derive,
Whose Spirit formed upon this sphere the first faint seeds of life;
Who caused them to evolve, unwitting, toward God’s goal,
Till humankind stood on the earth, as living thinking souls.

Praise to the living God, who knows our joy and pain,
Who shares with us our common life, the sacred and profane.
God toils where’re we toil, in home and mart and mill;
And deep within the human heart God leads us forward still.

Praise to the living God, around within, above,
Beyond the grasp of human mind, but whom we know as love.
In these tumultuous days, so full of hope and strife,
May we bear witness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

Invocation (*unison*)

Barbara Schneller

Divine Spirit, Creator, Sustainer, we come with thanksgiving for these moments when we can ease the pace of our lives and listen for your voice. Create a spirit within us that truly draws us toward you and toward our brothers and sisters; a spirit deep, perceptive, gentle and bold. Clear our minds, open our hearts and touch us with your presence and your power. Amen.

Stories for All People

Laura Hankins

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

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

CHEREPONI

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

Hebrew Lesson

Joshua 24: 1-7 (NRSV)

Darline Warren

Our Hebrew lesson for today comes from Joshua 24, where Joshua invites all of Israel to the town of Shechem where he reminds them of the long history of all that God had done for the people.

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac; and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in its midst; and afterwards I brought you out. When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. When they cried out to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did to Egypt. Afterwards you lived in the wilderness for a long time.

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.

Old Testament Lesson

Jeremiah 29:11 (NRSV)

Barbara Schneller

Our scripture lesson for today comes from Jeremiah 29.

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

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

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

Sermon

“What Now?”

Rev. Lloyd Spencer

Invitation to Generosity

Barbara Schneller

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

All good things come from God, the giver of life. We are called as stewards of God’s gifts to share in fulfillment of God’s purposes for creation. As stewards of the kin-dom, let us give from our abundance with thanksgiving.

Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Barbara Schneller

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

Generous One, our lives are renewed as we remember your goodness. You have made us in your image and placed in our hearts the memory of your love made flesh in Jesus Christ. That memory calls us to give and to embrace your world as we offer these gifts. May our lives invested through these offerings create a new reality and extend your grace in remembrance of Jesus, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Praise God, all creatures here below!

Praise God, above, you heavenly host,

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

* Hymn 76

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”

THE ASH GROVE

Sent forth by God’s blessing, our true faith confessing,

The people of God from this dwelling take leave.

The Service is ended, O now be extended

The fruits of our worship in all who believe.

The seed of the teaching, receptive hearts reaching,

Shall blossom in action for God and for all.

God’s grace did invite us, and love shall unite us

To work for God’s realm and to answer the call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,

The tasks of our everyday life we will face.

Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,

Embracing God’s children of each tribe and race.

With your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us,

Unite us as one in this life that we share.

Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving

Give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

* Benediction

Rev. Lloyd Spencer

* Benediction Response

HALLE, HALLE

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

Postlude

“You Are My Hiding Place”

M. Ledner

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The liturgy for today's service were used in part from ministrymatters.com.

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian,
Deborah Winston, Laurence Winston

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>



Nov 19 - Annual Meeting & All Church Pot Luck

Join us in worship on November 19 at 10:55am in the sanctuary or via live stream where we will integrate reports of the many ministries of the church during the service. **Then join us at noon (on November 19th) in the sanctuary or via Zoom** for business reports and voting on 2024 Proposed Budget and Class of 2026 Consistory. Votes that are cast in person and via Zoom will be included in the tally.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-45284953-annual#/>

Potluck following - bring a favorite dish to share!

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/>

WELCOME BACK REV. J. LLOYD SPENCER

Lloyd Spencer is originally from the Appalachian coal fields of West Virginia. He attended West Virginia Wesleyan College where he met his wife, Gussie. They married just a few days before graduation at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, 1974. After graduation they moved to North Carolina, serving in Currituck, NC. In 1989, he moved his ordination to the United Church of Christ and served churches in Louisville, KY, Lexington, NC, and Whitsett, NC near Greensboro. Lloyd and Gussie are the parents of two grown adults and the proud grandparents of two fantastic grandkids. We are delighted to have them among us! They have both been very involved in the life of Holy Covenant UCC since joining. Thank you both for your many ministries served!

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DRIVE DURING NOVEMBER

During the month of November, we will be holding a food drive for non-perishable food items. While we have regularly supported food drives for David Cox's Backpack Program and UNC Charlotte's Student Food Pantry, we were recently notified that many of the food programs in our area are having trouble keeping up with the demand. We will hold a general food drive throughout November.

At the end of the month, we will divide up all we have collected at Holy Covenant and donate the food items to David Cox Elementary, UNC Charlotte Student Pantry and Loaves & Fishes. Some of the items that are most in need right now include:

- Canned Meat: Tuna, chicken, etc.
- Canned Fruit: low sugar or in juice
- Pastas - Canned or dry boxed
- Canned Vegetables, including low-sodium options
- Peanut Butter
- Ready to eat food items for children (pop-top canned goods)

Bring in your donated food items and place them on the table we have placed in the sanctuary for the food drive.

"I was hungry and you gave me food to eat." - Matthew 25:35

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING MEAL, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Thanksgiving Day at 5:00pm we will be having a community Thanksgiving meal at the church in the gathering room. Turkey, desert, and drinks will be provided and those attending are welcome to bring a side dish to share with others. This meal is open to anyone, especially those who are without family or don't feel like making a big meal for just the few folks in their family. A sign-up sheet is available in the gathering room on the buffet. For questions, please contact the church office at 704-599-9810.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP

Do you like talking to interesting people and being helpful? **Greeters and ushers are needed** starting at 10:30 every Sunday. **Please sign up in the Gathering Room or at**

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

We welcome all in our congregation to participate in worship leadership.

SOJOURNERS CLASS

The Sojourners gather Sunday mornings at 9:45am in the Conference Room, or via Zoom. We discussing a wide variety of books, films, documentaries. Join us in person or via Zoom, no preparation necessary. Contact Cheryl Milam for more information, docmilam@hotmail.com.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING MEAL

On Thursday, November 23rd at 5:00pm we will be having a community Thanksgiving meal at the church in the gathering room. Turkey, desert, and drinks will be provided and those attending are welcome to bring a side dish to share with others. This meal is open to anyone, especially those who are without family or don't feel like making a big meal for just the few folks in their family. A sign-up sheet is available in the gathering room on the buffet. For questions, please contact the church office at 704-599-9810.

Carolina Voices.org presents FESTIVAL SINGERS CONCERT

“Courageous Hope” Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 4:00 pm

Unitarian Universalist Community of CLT, 234 N. Sharon-Amity Road, 28211

Information and tickets: carolinavoices.org/happenings/courageous-hope

(Friends & Family Discount Code - Thanks, Judah Jones!)

CVFRIENDSFAMILY2023

**Yap Yè Iswà [Day of the Catawba] Saturday, November 18, 10 am - 4 pm
Catawba Cultural Center**

The ancestral lands of the Catawba, Cheraw, Sugeree, Wateree, and Waxhaw Peoples include what is now described as 3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd. (Hope that address sounds familiar!) Catawbas have been in the Carolinas for over 6,000 years. The Catawba Nation, alive and thriving, is hosting a cultural festival at the Catawba Cultural Center, 1536



Tom Steven Rd., in Rock Hill on Saturday, Nov. 18, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., free and open to the public. The Yap Yè Iswà [Day of the Catawba] Festival celebrates the Catawba heritage and culture and includes drumming, traditional dances, kids' activities, demonstration tables, speakers, Catawba craft vendors, and food for purchase. Attending it would be a neat and fun way to learn more about some of the people whose ancestral lands include where Holy Covenant is situated.

**Meck Min's 48th Annual Community-Wide Radical Inclusion Interfaith
Thanksgiving Service, Tuesday, November 21, 2023, 6:45 pm
Trinity Presbyterian Church
3115 Providence Rd, Charlotte, NC 28211**

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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

Friends & Family Members

Bishop Tonyia Rawls in the death of her wife, Gwendolyn Iris Woodard Rawls
Ketisha Daley in the recent death of her husband, Roger Daley (Robert Shepherd)
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), Dave & Pam Shimberg,
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.