



“Let us meditate until we perceive the Infinite Christ reigning in our own hearts. Let us learn to love those who love us not; and to forgive those who do ill against us. Let us break all our mental boundaries of color, creed, and nationality, and receive all – even our inanimate and animal brothers – in the endless, all-embracing arms of our Christ Consciousness.

This will be a true and fitting celebration of the coming of Jesus Christ to this earth.”

-Paramahansa Yogananda

#### OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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\* Hymn 304

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

CORONATION

All hail the power of Jesus’ name! Let an-gels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Christ servant of all.  
Attend the Savior’s sovereign claim, and crown Christ servant of all.

Adorn, O martyred saints of old, the coronation hall;  
Extol the wounded One foretold, and crown Christ bearer of all.  
Extol the wounded One foretold, and crown Christ bearer of all.

All heirs of Israel’s chosen race, now ransomed from the fall,  
Proclaim the wonders of God’s grace, and crown Christ healer of all.  
Proclaim the wonders of God’s grace, and crown Christ healer of all.

Before the cross, with heaven’s throng, we on our knees shall fall;  
We’ll join the everlasting song, and crown Christ Savior all.  
Proclaim the wonders of God’s grace, and crown Christ healer of all.

Prayer for Peace and Mercy

Suzanne Lamorey

*As war in the Middle East continues, we pause this morning as a faith community to be in prayer with those who are suffering...*

One: God of mercy, we lay before you the hearts, minds and bodies of all those suffering from violence in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. Shower upon all the people of this holy land the spirit of justice and reconciliation. And so, we pray:

**Many: Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.**

One: In you, Lord, all life is connected, and all the Earth and its land are to be cherished, not controlled. Your gifts are for all. Yet as we see the violence and hatred in the land called Holy, and see the signs of climate breakdown, help us all to work to live in communion. And so, we pray:

**Many: Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.**

One: As people of many religions remind us: All humanity is connected, no one is really free until all are free. Help us to pray for all in Israel and all in the Palestinian territories. We pray for those who live in fear of the other; for all who consider violence to be the way forward. We pray for all who by acting in hate dehumanize themselves. And so, we pray:

**Many: Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.**

Daily Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: The love of Christ reigns in my heart.

Neighbor: The love of Christ reigns in your heart.

World: The love of Christ reigns in our heart.

Prayer of Transformation (*unison*)

Suzanne Lamorey

*As the love of Christ reigns in our hearts I invite you to join me in this prayer of transformation and new life...*

**Loving God, we know your reign is a just and righteous one. Yet we admit the ways we live according to our own will, forgetting how you've called us to live with love and compassion in this world. As we seek to realign ourselves back to you, transform us in your image. Make us ambassadors of your kingdom. Let us represent you through our words and actions. And may we bear witness to the truth that we are all one. Amen.**

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

*Friends, hear these words of grace...*

Beloved, we are loved unconditionally by God. The kingdom here on earth is ours to embrace, and we enter it with full citizenship. Know that every move toward God in our life transforms us. Every confession of God's sovereignty fortifies and strengthens us. Every moment in the presence of God restores and renews us. And as we come to the ruler of the universe, we bow to the life-giving power of God's love to rule over us. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

CHEREPONI

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love,**

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

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.*

Special Music

"Holy Forever"

C. Tomlin

*Ed Vickery, soloist; Meg Houlihan, Eric Miner, Jon Weddell, vocalists*

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Lord's Prayer (*in unison*)

**Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Gospel Lesson      Matthew 25:31-46      Suzanne Lamorey & Tina Dickens  
*Our Gospel Lesson for today comes from Matthew 25:31-46, where Jesus speaks of a day of judgement and eternal life. There will be two readings of this scripture. The first reading will be from the First Nation Version, which is an Indigenous translation of the New Testament and the second reading will come from the Common English Bible translation.*

### First Nation Translation

“When the True Human Being comes in all of his power and shining-greatness, along with all of his spirit-messengers, he will sit down in his seat of honor. All nations will be gathered and come before him. He will choose between them like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right side and the goats to his left.

Then the Chief will say to the sheep on his right, ‘The blessing of my Father rests upon you. Come into the Land of Creator’s good road that has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was hungry and you fed me. I was a stranger and you gave me lodging. When I needed clothes, you gave me something to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in prison, you visited me.’

“When did we do all these things for you? The good-hearted ones asked.”

“I speak from my heart,’ he answered them, ‘whatever you did for the least important of my fellow human beings who needed help, you did for me.’

“Then the Chief will say to the goats on his left, ‘Go away from me, you who have bad hearts, into the fire that burns everything up, made for the evil trickster snake and his messengers. For when I was hungry, you gave me nothing to eat. When I was thirsty, you gave me no drink, and when I was a stranger, you turned me away. When I needed clothes, you gave me nothing to wear, and when I was sick and in prison, you failed to visit me.’

“Honored One,’ they questioned, ‘when was it that we saw you like this and did nothing?’

“I speak from my heart,’ he answered back, ‘when you did not help the ones who needed it most, you failed to help me.’

“Then the goats will go away to the punishment of the world to come that never fades away, and the sheep will enter the life of the world to come that never fades away, full of beauty and harmony.”

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

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

## Common English Bible Translation

“Now when the Human One comes in his majesty and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his majestic throne. All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will separate them from each other, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right side. But the goats he will put on his left.

“Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’

“Then those who are righteous will reply to him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

“Then the king will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.’

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Get away from me, you who will receive terrible things. Go into the unending fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels. I was hungry and you didn’t give me food to eat. I was thirsty and you didn’t give me anything to drink. I was a stranger and you didn’t welcome me. I was naked and you didn’t give me clothes to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’

“Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn’t do anything to help you?’ Then he will answer, ‘I assure you that when you haven’t done it for one of the least of these, you haven’t done it for me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment. But the righteous ones will go into eternal life.”

**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

“Saving the Souls of Sheep and Goats”  
Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Suzanne Lamorey

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

If our offering enables us to feed the hungry, give a drink of water to the thirsty, welcome a stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, then Christ himself is blessed by that offering. Hear the words of our Lord when he says, "The blessing of my Father rests upon you. Come into the Land of Creator's good road that has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world...whatever you did for the least important of my fellow human beings who needed help, you did for me." Let us now share our gifts and offerings for Christ.

\* 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.**

\* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Suzanne Lamorey

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

**Gracious God, we thank you for this mystery in which you have given yourself to us. In gratitude we give you our lives, symbolized in our gifts. Receive them with love, bless them with grace and use them according to your will. By your Spirit in us form us as citizens of your Realm, obedient to your grace and eager to work for justice in this world. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**





## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

**Stay connected!** There are many new events in our future! 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/>

### NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DRIVE DURING NOVEMBER

Many thanks to all who have shared non-perishable food items, to benefit our local neighbors of David Cox Elementary's Backpack Program, UNC Charlotte's Student Food Pantry, and Loaves & Fishes. Likely, this will be an ongoing need in our wider community. We are grateful for the blessings you share with others in need!

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

### HOLIDAY LOVE OFFERING FOR OUR STAFF

During this joyful time of year, we ask you to consider contributing to a holiday love offering to be divided among our dedicated staff members who work hard to make Holy Covenant a place of welcome, warmth, & spiritual renewal. No gift is too small and all are appreciated. If you choose to give **by December 12**, offerings can be made to Martha Bomely with the following methods:

**Zelle:** [Martha.bomely@gmail.com](mailto:Martha.bomely@gmail.com), 7048040640;

**PayPal:** [Martha.bomely@gmail.com](mailto:Martha.bomely@gmail.com);

**Venmo:** @mbbomely

Checks should be payable to Martha Bomely.

### TODAY AFTER WORSHIP

**We plan to decorate the church for Advent/Christmas after worship.** All are welcomed to participate. Ed Vickery & Eric Miner will lead us again this year, and they would love to have others enjoy this experience! They are providing Tony's pizza for those who stay and help. **Choir rehearses after worship; handbells rehearse at 1pm.**

## 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 Karen & Billy (Kim Tyler), Melissa Brown, Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Jim & Janet Chittick (Stephanie Herrin), Erika Eckel and family (Dawn Simmons), David & Cecelia Griffin (JP Griffin), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Darin Jellison (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](mailto:prayers@holycovenantucc.org).

*season of advent  
at holy covenant ucc*



**12/3 - HOPE**

Guest Preacher Rev Barbara Thomas;  
Workshop following worship  
"With Grace and a Smile:  
Impactful Conversations"

**12/10 - PEACE**

Cookie Exchange 1pm;  
Room In The Inn (RITI)

**12/17 - JOY**

Music Sunday, Consistory

**12/24 - LOVE**

11am service  
Chili Supper 5:30pm  
Candlelight Worship 7pm service