



Unsplash Photo by David Jackson

“Christ has no body on earth but yours. No hands but yours. No feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ’s compassion for the world is to look out.

Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.”

-St. Teresa of Avila

“Our deepest, most painful wounds not only leave us with scars that we bear forever, but also, if we make our peace with them, leave us wiser, stronger, more sensitive than we otherwise would have been had we not been afflicted with them.”

-Renita J. Weems

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY ~ BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

February 4, 2024, 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 “Let Us Break Bread Together” arr. J. Carter

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 “Salaam” M. Samir (Egypt)

Salaam, salaam, the peace of God to every race.

Salaam, salaam, the peace of God in every place.

* Call to the Heart Kristin Andes

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

One: God of all people, all races and nationalities, all bodies, all people who breathe your sweet air of life.

Many: We give thanks that you have made us in your image.

One: Today we are called to give thanks for the great gifts of our Black American siblings that make our lives richer and fuller.

Many: Thanks be to God!

One: For the writers: WEB DuBois, Audre Lorde, Langston Hughes

Many: Thank you, God, for their words!

One: For the healers: Harriet Tubman, Dr. Charles Richard Drew, Dr. David J. Peck

Many: Thank you, Jesus, for their healing!

One: For the peacemakers and justice seekers: Sojourner Truth, Fredrick Douglass, Coretta Scott King

Many: Thank you, Spirit, for their passion!

One: For the scientists: Percy Julian, Patricia Bath, George Washington Carver

Many: Thank you, God, for their ingenuity!

One: For the government officials: Thurgood Marshall, Barack Obama, Carol Mosely-Braun,

Many: Thank you, Jesus, for their persistence!

One: For the professors and educators: Cornell West, Ruth Simmons, Charles L. Reason

Many: Thank you, Spirit, for their intellect!

One: For the musicians: Marian Anderson, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday

Many: Thank you, God, for their creativity!

One: For the athletes: Jackie Joyner Kersee, Jackie Robinson, Arthur Ashe

Many: Thank you, Jesus, for their agility and strength!

One: For these and all our African American siblings who surround us this day we give thanks.

Many: Amen. And Amen!

**Some of these names are likely very familiar to you. Some you may not recognize. As a response to our celebration of Black History, take time this month to learn about some about these Black Americans that you are less familiar with.*

Invocation (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

The following invocation is a poem titled "Invocation" and was written 1917 by Claude McKay, who was a Jamaican-American writer and poet who was a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance...

**Ancestral Spirit, hidden from my sight
By modern Time's unnumbered works and ways
On which in awe and wonderment I gaze,
Where hid'st thou in the deepness of the night?
What evil powers thy healing presence blight?
Thou who from out the dark and dust didst raise
The Ethiop standard in the curtained days,
Before the white God said: Let there be light!
Bring ancient music to my modern heart,
Let fall the light upon my sable face
That once gleamed on the Ethiopian's art;**

**Listen, listen, God is calling through the Word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.**

* Christian Scripture Mark 1:29-31 (CEB) Tina Dickens
The Slave Bible was published in 1807. It was commissioned on behalf of the Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves in England. The bible was to be used by missionaries and slave owners to teach slaves about the Christian faith and to evangelize slaves. The goal of the Bible was to tend to the spiritual needs of the slaves in the way the missionaries and slave owners saw fit. In their attempt to eliminate all scripture verses that could plant the seed of rebellion in the minds of slaves, about 90 percent of the Old Testament and 50 percent of the New Testament were deleted. In fact, the entire Gospel of Mark, which our scripture for today comes from, was eliminated. Hear these words from the Gospel of Mark 1:29-31, where Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law...

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus, James, and John went home with Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed, sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she served them.

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 "The Touch of Jesus"
Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Touched by Love Rev. Glencie Rhedrick &
Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity Kristin Andes
Now is the time for our ministry of giving and sharing...

A spirit of generosity has always been a part of the Black Church tradition. The custom of providing mutual aid to bolster community and social solidarity lays deep within African heritage. These customs which were a natural part of Black philanthropy have allowed the Black Church to be a staple of hope and support within Black communities despite the systemic exclusion of Black people from opportunities to build wealth and attain

economic mobility. As we share our gifts on this day, let us do so as a symbol of shaping and defining what it means to be part of a loving and inclusive community.

* Doxology “Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me” GLORY TO GOD
Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Christ, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end, Amen. (3x)
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Kristin Andes

Please join me in a unison prayer of dedication for the gifts we have received...

Loving God, may these gifts work through the spirit and people of this church to put food on the table of the hungry, break the chains of bondage for the oppressed, create equity where inequity lies, and alleviate the pains of systemic injustice. Through our giving and sharing may we touch be the gift of Jesus’s touch. Amen.

Song of Preparation “Jesus Is Here Right Now”

JESUS IS HERE

Jesus is here right now. Jesus is here.
With this bread and wine true peace you’ll find;
Christ Jesus is here right now.

THE MYSTIC SUPPER
ALL ARE WELCOME AT CHRIST'S TABLE

Invitation

This is my body. Broken. This is my blood. Drained. Eat. Drink. Do this in remembrance of me. It is queer and beautiful that some of us belong to a God who tells us to consume his body and blood in remembrance. What do the body and blood have to do with memory? How do they connect us to the story of liberation? It means something that the Eucharist, this lasting ritual of the presence and memory of God, is a physical nourishment as much as it is spiritual. I once went to a church that gave everyone a whole slice of bread and they actually, buttered it. It felt wrong, but they had something so right. I love that we don't just bow to the bread, we eat it—the body of God entering our bodies.

Many: And I think God's supposed to taste good.

One: That we have managed to regurgitate a Christian spirituality that is anything less than bodily glory, agony, healing, and restoration is our tragedy. I don't think it an accident that we are made to remember God through an act that nourishes us in our own bodies. I've heard much of bodily sacrifice, of taking up a cross, of dying and dying again. But I need to hear of resurrection—of the bodily love of receiving the Eucharist. You want to tell me to love God?

Many: Ask me when I've last eaten.

One: Come now, you want me to tell you a prayer?

Many: You'll find it in the blood beating from heart to head to toe and home again.

One: Don't ask me of salvation, listen to the hum of my chest as I now fall asleep.

Many: I cannot see the face of God by rejecting my own. So, eat and drink from the body of Christ and remember in this God I am loved, fed, freed, and known.

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Elements

Music during Communion

LET US BREAK BREAD

Let us break bread together on our knees. (2x)

Refrain: When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
My God, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees (2x) (R)

Let us praise God together on our knees (2x) (R)

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Bountiful God, moved by this sacred meal. Heartened, we were given spiritual food and nourished. Warmed that the person in front of us and behind us wasn't asked questions but was simply fed...that's the touch of Jesus we need. To sit as an equal, to be given the same portion of God's goodness, to be fully included and cared for. This body and blood now run through every part of me and in God I'll always be whole. Renewed again in risen life, now let us seek to serve the world through your goodness and love. Amen.

* Hymn

SIZOHAMBA NAYE (Swaziland)

We will walk with God, my brothers; we will walk with God.

We will walk with God, my sisters; we will walk with God.

We will go rejoicing till the kingdom has come.

We will go rejoicing till the kingdom has come

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Postlude

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

arr. D. Wyrzten

Songs in this service are used by permission.

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Parts of the liturgy for today's service were written and adapted by Carrie Eikler, Claude McKay, from Cole Arthur Riley's book There Here Flesh, and Rev. Christopher Czarnecki.

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, Kevin Edwards-Knight, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

We welcome all in our congregation to participate! Do you like talking to interesting people and being helpful? **Greeters and ushers, liturgists and readers are needed** starting at 10:30 every Sunday. 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! 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/>

FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS

Crafter's circle meets Mondays at 1:30pm in the Gathering Room.

NEW MEMBER / INQUIRER CLASSES FEB. 4 & FEB. 18, 2024

Please contact the church office if interested, office@holycovenantuc.org.

ROOM IN THE INN, FEB. 11

Everyone is invited to join our guests for a family-style pizza dinner. Room In The Inn is a program through A Roof Above, that matches individuals and families who need shelter during the winter months with faith communities offering an overnight welcome. There is a sign-up sheet in the gathering room with ways you can help. Text Suzanne at 7046547267 for "dinner reservations"!

CONFRONTING WHITENESS UPDATES

Confronting Whiteness discussion/debrief for Cohorts 1 and 2, Feb. 11

Please join us on Sunday, Feb. 11 from 12:30-2 in the Conference Room for a conversation about your experience with this process and this material.

Coming soon--Cohort 3 of Confronting Whiteness.

We're planning for our next group to start in early March (specific date TBA), with the 9 weekly classes held by Zoom on Sunday afternoon/evenings. For further information or to add your name to a list of participants, contact Meg Houlihan (megmhoulihan@gmail.com).

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE, FEB. 14, 7PM

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Patti Key & Pam Zinkann in the death of Patti's father, James Key
Linda Carver, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Humphrey, Sharon Landis, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Alice Phelan & Sally Young, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry Rhyne, Ed & Beth Sharp, Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Shakti Subramanian, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

Larry Campbell and family in the recent death of his wife, Pat (Ed Vickery)
Mary (Bill & Kim Tyler), Melissa Brown, Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Darin Jellison (Jo Ann Jellison), Judah L. Jones & Bill Englebreth, Matty & Simone McKinnon (Joy Decker), Roxanne & Moose Meyer (Dana Endsley & Mike Yonkovig), Suzie & John Robinson (Dana Endsley & Mike Yonkovig), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Joyce Tyler (Bill Tyler), 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.

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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