



Unsplash Photo by Logan Weaver

**"If you are neutral in situations of injustice,
you have chosen the side of the oppressor."**

– Bishop Desmond Tutu

**"The beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to
be free of racism to be an anti-racist.**

**Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism
wherever you find it, including in yourself.**

And it's the only way forward."

– Ijeoma Oluo

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
TRANSFIGURATION ~ RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY**

February 11, 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 "Siyahamba/Thuma Mina" arr. M. Sedio

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

One: Ava DuVernay once said, "When we're talking about diversity, it's not a box to check. It is a reality that should be deeply felt and held and valued by all of us."

Many: **May we know our whole selves are loved and valued by God: Black and white. Transgender and non-binary. Young and mature. Faith and no faith.**

One: Harriet Tubman said, "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."

Many: **We are dreamers too. Like Christ, we possess the strength, patience, and passion to change the world and liberate others from the depths of oppression.**

One: Bob Marley said, "I don't stand for the Black man's side. I don't stand for the White man's side. I stand for God's side."

Many: **God's side is inclusive love, unmerited grace, gentle compassion, healing peace, and restorative justice.**

One: Nelson Mandela said, “For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”

Many: In our worship with God may we seek to be free today. Free from hurtful theology, free from the harm of past religious experiences, and free to be all that God has created us to be. And in our freedom may we seek to free others.

Invocation (*unison*)

Lloyd Spencer

Liberating God, you call to us. Just as you called the Israelites to rise from slavery, you call to us. Just as you called your people to break the chains of bondage, you call to us. Just as you called prophets to speak out against injustice, you call to us. And so, we now call to you: gather us as your people, in all our diversity, in all our beautiful difference, and in response to the mystery of your loving Spirit.

* Hymn

“Come, All You People”

UYAI MOSE (ZIMBABWE)

Come, all you people, come and praise the Most High. (3x)

Come now and worship the Lord.

Come, all you people, come and praise the Savior. (3x)

Come now and worship the Lord.

Come, all you people, come and praise the Spirit. (3x)

Come now and worship the Lord.

Prayer of Transformation (*unison*)

Lloyd Spencer

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

Give us the courage to stand up for racial justice. As individuals, as a church, and as a nation, help us to see when we have missed the mark and empower us to do better. Root up any violence or malice within our hearts and minds and transform it into love, a love of neighbor and a rightly ordered love of self. Amen.

Song of Response

LET US BREAK BREAD

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

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Although we don't always get it right and miss the mark at times, we are graciously given the opportunity to change. God gives us the chance to alter our thoughts, transform our thinking, and change our ways. For the sake of a more racially just world, may we be transfigured in the places of our own lives and society where hope and change is needed.

Song of Response

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.**

Black Christian History

Jeff Edwards-Knight

During each Sunday of Black History Month, we will recognize someone of African American descent who has contributed to the theology and breath of the Christian faith. Today we celebrate the contributions and achievements of Pauli Murray, The First Black Woman to be Ordained an Episcopal Priest.

Song

"I Love the Lord"

R. Smallwood

**I love the Lord, who heard my cry and pitied every groan.
Long as I live and troubles rise, I'll hasten to God's throne.**

**I love the Lord, who heard my cry and chased my grief away.
O let my heart no more despair while I have breath to pray.**

Stories for All People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Song

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

K. Medema

**Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your Spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying.
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

Prayers of the People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

NENO LAKE MUNGU (Tanzania)

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

* Christian Lesson

Mark 9:2-9 (NRSV)

Sally McLester

Our Christian lesson for today comes from the Gospel of Mark 9:2-9, where Jesus is transfigured before the disciples...

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

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

"We Can't Stay Here"

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Lloyd Spencer

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

Racial justice demands Christians actively, boldly, and without reservation participate in dismantling racism within systems and structures that oppress people. As we reflect on the transfiguration of Jesus and his call to the disciples to ready themselves for the sacrifices that would be needed to fulfill God's kingdom, what might we have to offer to help create systemic change, to eliminate disparities, and to advance racial equity? Let us now give our gifts in response.

Anthem

"Lord, Light a Flame in My Heart"

J. Carter

Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Lloyd Spencer

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

God of justice may all that was shared this day be sustenance for the church and help it in its mission to thrive and grow. As we celebrate Black History may the gifts shared find their way in our ministries and become part of the work of reconciling our own racist history. Leading to courageous conversations, anti-racist learning, social activism, and reparations for God's people. Amen.

If the night sky wasn't inky
Could the stars shine so bright?
And if there wasn't darkness,
Tell me, how could light be light?
No dark depths of earth -
How would the flora grow?
Black is essential, don't you know.

You tell me black is no good -
The shade of evil, shade of sin;
How do I then make sense
Of the blackness of my skin?
The skin I didn't choose
No more than you could choose your own;
The skin that I was gifted -
Only skin I've ever known.

Black is what I am; it's who I am;
It is my pride.
It's the strength on which I stand -
Where I refuse to be denied.
Black speaks of where I'm going -
How the world relates to me;
Black speaks of where I've come from -
Heritage and history.
But it's hard not to internalize
The message all around -
Before a word is spoken
That in Black offence is found;
Explicit or implied.
Yet from your view you cannot see
The shackles to be broken
Until Black lives are full and free.

* Hymn 526 “Siyahamba” SIZOHAMBA NAYE (Swaziland)

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’ . (2x)

Siyahamba *hamba, siyahamba*

Ooo *hamba,*

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’ . (2x)

We are marching in the light of God,

We are marching in the light of God. (2x)

We are marching *marching, we are marching,*

Ooo *marching,*

We are marching in the light of God. (2x)

We are singing in the light of God...

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’ . (2x)

Siyahamba *hamba, siyahamba*

Ooo *hamba,*

Siyahamb’ ekukhanyen’ kwenkhos’ . (2x)

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Benediction Response “We Will Walk with God” 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.

Postlude

“Siyahamba”

arr. M. Sedio

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, Kevin Edwards-Knight, Jo Ann Jellison, Pam Shimberg, 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>



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/>

ROOM IN THE INN, TODAY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

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. Text Suzanne at 7046547267 for “dinner reservations”!

CONFRONTING WHITENESS UPDATES

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

Please join us following worship from 12:30-2pm in the Conference Room for a conversation about your experience with this process and this material.

Cohort 3 of Confronting Whiteness-Registration Now Available

The next session of classes for **Confronting Whiteness** is planned to begin March 3rd, with the 9 weekly classes held by Zoom on Sunday afternoons, 3-4:30pm. **Cost:** \$150 per person. Financial scholarships available-don't let cost keep you from signing up. Members of color participate at no cost. Signup at <https://forms.gle/XR7Anu9GGic2oHDv8>

NEW MEMBER / INQUIRER CLASS FEB. 18, 2024

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

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP

Volunteers needed including Ash Wednesday (02/14/24) and Maundy Thursday (03/28/24) evening worship services!

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

Download the app to make signing up even easier:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/mobileapp>

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

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

Mary (Bill & Kim Tyler), Melissa Brown, Sharon Chevrior (Kathleen Wagner), Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Chuck Ferreal (Kathleen Wagner), 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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