



Photo by Hasan Almasi

“So these are the kinds of things that now when people are trying to move towards multiracial congregations that they’re stressing. They’re talking about these scriptures that say we ought to come together, and that at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit is said to have come upon the first Christians, they were given the ability to speak in different languages, and so that no matter who the people were, they could all worship together.”

- Michael Emerson

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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Founded in 1916, we are an Open & Affirming (LGBTQ+), anti-racist, and justice seeking church that is part of the greater United Church of Christ.

**HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
PENTECOST SUNDAY**

May 19, 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 “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” arr. J. Vogt

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 “There’s a Spirit of Love in This Place” arr. M. A. Miller

There’s a spirit of love in this place. (2x)

You can’t see it, but it’s there, just as precious as the air.

There’s a spirit of love in this place.

There’s the presence of peace in this room. (2x)

In God’s tenderness is found peace that passes human bounds.

There’s the presence of peace in this room.

* Call to the Heart Jeffrey Edwards-Knight

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

One: Come, Holy Spirit,

Many: **The wind of God, the breath of Life.**

One: Come, Holy Spirit,

Many: **Our Advocate, our Counselor.**

One: Come, Holy Spirit,

Many: **Teacher of Wisdom, Reminder of Christ.**

One: Come, Holy Spirit,

Many: **Granter of forgiveness, giver of peace.**

One: Come, Holy Spirit,

Many: **In the language of love and as the presence through which we worship.**

* Hymn 270 “Like the Murmur of the Dove’s Song” BRIDEGROOM
Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight,
Like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

To the members of Christ's body, to the branches of the Vine,
To the church in faith assembled, to our midst as gift and sign:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

With the healing of division, with the ceaseless voice of prayer,
With the power to love and witness, with the peace beyond compare:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Mental Health Sunday Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
On this Sunday, which is known as Pentecost Sunday, we not only celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the transforming ways in which the Holy Spirit continues to breathe new life into the church, but a time in the life of Church when we recognize the importance of Mental Health and those who experience mental illness.

Climate Change & Mental Health Meg Houlihan

Hymn 292 “Breathe on Me, Breath of God” TRENTHAM
Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew
That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, stir in me one desire;
That every earthly part of me may glow with holy fire.

Affirmation Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
Yourself: “My mental health is a priority and I nurture it with love.”
Neighbor: “Your mental health is a priority and you nurture it with love.”
World: “Our mental health is a priority and we nurture it with love.”

Response 286 “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness” SPIRIT
Spirit, spirit of gentleness,
Blow through the wilderness, calling and free,
Spirit, spirit of restlessness,
Stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.

Stories for All People

Laura Hankins

Special Music

“Sweet Delight, Most Lovely”
Eric Miner, Ed Vickery, vocalists

S. A. Morris

We Pray in Spirit

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

One: Holy Spirit, your breath fills the universe and makes it alive.

Many: **We give thanks for the gift of Spirit.**

One: Your love blows through all of creation and makes it one.

Many: **We give thanks for the gift of Spirit.**

One: Your presence fills every corner, your voice fills every silence, and your heartbeat lives within everything.

Many: **We give thanks for the gift of Spirit.**

One: But we fail at times to honor the gift of Spirit, devaluing the life of other people, other creatures, and the world You have entrusted to us.

Many: **Forgive us, Spirit of life.**

One: We neglect your connectedness to all things, bringing pain, division, and exclusion.

Many: **Forgive us, Spirit of life**

One: We deny your presence, ignore your voice, and forget the ways you encourage and guide us.

Many: **Forgive us, Spirit of life.**

One: We now take time to sit in silence, listening for your voice, your will, and your way...

Time of Silence

Song

“God Is Calling through the Voices”

W ZLOBIE LEZY

**God is calling through the voices of our neighbors’ urgent prayers,
Through their longing for redemption and for rescue from despair.**

Place of hurt or face of needing; strident cry or silent pleading:

God is calling—can you hear? God is calling—can you hear?

Many: Holy Spirit, ignite us with your passion, burn in us with your beauty. Enflame us with joy and delight, with courage and wisdom. Let no other energy or source drive us but you alone, so that our lives may shine with the light of your kindness, grace, mercy, and love. Amen.

New Zealand Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

**O most Compassionate Life-giver, may we honor and praise you;
May we work with you to establish your new order of justice, peace, and love;
Give us what we need for growth,
And help us, through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.
Strengthen us in the time of testing, that we may resist all evil,
For all tenderness, strength and love are yours, now and forever.
Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

IVERSON

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

New Testament Lesson

Acts 2:1-8 (CEB)

Terrence Hayes

Our Scripture reading for today comes from Acts 2:1-8, where the Holy Spirit descends upon a diverse group of Jesus followers praying together...

When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages. They were surprised and amazed, saying, "Look, aren't all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language?"

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

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

Our Scripture reading for today comes from Romans 8:18-27, where Paul speaks to is readers about suffering and hope...

I believe that the present suffering is nothing compared to the coming glory that is going to be revealed to us. The whole creation waits breathless with anticipation for the revelation of God's sons and daughters. Creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice—it was the choice of the one who subjected it—but in the hope that the creation itself will be set free from slavery to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of God's children. We know that the whole creation is groaning together and suffering labor pains up until now. And it's not only the creation. We ourselves who have the Spirit as the first crop of the harvest also groan inside as we wait to be adopted and for our bodies to be set free. We were saved in hope. If we see what we hope for, that isn't hope. Who hopes for what they already see? But if we hope for what we don't see, we wait for it with patience.

In the same way, the Spirit comes to help our weakness. We don't know what we should pray, but the Spirit himself pleads our case with unexpressed groans. The one who searches hearts knows how the Spirit thinks, because he pleads for the saints, consistent with God's will.

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 “What If These Were Pentecost Moments Too?”

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Jeffrey Edwards-Knight

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

Today is the UCC's *Strengthen the Church Offering*, which is one of the five annual offerings collected each year. The Strengthen the Church offering reflects our shared commitment to people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up our denomination. The funds raised from this offering go to support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. A donation of any amount to this offering helps keep us a 5 for 5 church, meaning we our recognized as having contributed to each of the 5 annual offerings. If you are tithing to this ministry today, please write on the front of your envelope or memo line: *Strengthen the Church*. Let us now share our gifts with God.

* Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Jeffrey Edwards-Knight

Please join me in our unison prayer of dedication...

God of wind and fire, breathe your Holy Spirit over us again this day. Help us to better hear one another and untangle the differences we have allowed to divide us. May your Spirit give us the power to be the church you had hoped we would be, one body, one people seeking to build your beloved community of justice, mercy, and hope. As we dedicate our tithes and offerings to you this day, set us on fire once again. Fill us with your power; in Christ, we pray. Amen.

* Hymn

“Though I May Speak”

GIFT OF LOVE

Though I may speak with bravest fire
And have the gift to all inspire
And have not love, my words are vain,
As sounding brass and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control;
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
By this we worship and are freed.

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response

"Song of Hope"

ARGENTINA

May the God of hope go with us every day,
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.

Praying, let us work for peace; singing, share our joy with all;
Working for a world that's new, faithful when we hear Christ's call.

Postlude

“Breathe on Me, Breath of God”

arr. J. Innes

*Songs in this service are used by permission.
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Parts of the liturgy for today's service were adapted by Joanna Harader at <https://spaciousfaith.com/>, Rev. Lisa Ann Moss Degrenia, Steve Garnass-Holmes, 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, Laura Hankins, Jo Ann Jellison
Ushers: Shakti Subramanian; Greeters: Anne Hayes

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Cynthia Simpson and family in the death of her husband, Tommy Simpson
Linda Carver, Kevin Decker, Kevin & Jeff Edwards-Knight, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Humphrey, Jeff Hughes, Kat Kerce, Sharon Landis, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Alice Phelan & Sally Young, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry Rhyne, Ed & Beth Sharp, Anita Taylor

Friends & Family Members

Melissa Brown, Phillip Cherry (Anne Pigg), Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Gregg Clare (Kathleen Wagner), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), the Jeffreys family (Kathleen Wagner), Charles Jernigan (Lee Brigman), Dave Johnson, Judah L. Jones & Bill Englebreth, Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Matty & Simone McKinnon (Joy Decker), Joe Parks (Beth Sharp), Tom Schneller (Barb Schneller), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Joyce Ward (Ed Vickery), Janet Wakefield (Linda Burby), Nelly Webb and parents (Kristin Andes), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller)

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to

prayers@holycovenantucc.org.

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/>

MISSIONS AND JUSTICE INVITES YOU...

Sandwich ministry for A Roof Above Day Center today! Join us in making 400 sandwiches after worship for our yet-to-be housed neighbors!

UCC4CEASEFIRE PENTECOST WORSHIP SERVICE, TODAY at 7pm (EST),

The United Church of Christ will be hosting an online Pentecost worship service to celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit, to dedicate its [public statement](#) calling for a ceasefire, humanitarian aid, and divestment from genocide, and bless the UCC delegation who will be delivering the statement to congress people the following day. The preacher for this worship service will be Rev. Naomi Washington-Leaphart, who is the professor for Theology and Religious Studies at Villanova University. To register for this worship service: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlf-6hrDguG9cpdzgGcApETlIWl0k21xQ3#/registration>

CALL LETTER FOR 59th ANNUAL GATHERING of the SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

June 20-22, 2024, all of the members of the Southern Conference - the Delegates, Pastors, Laity, Youth, and Institutions of the Southern Conference are welcome to participate in the virtual gathering. More information available at <https://www.soc-ucc.org/>

JRVC YOUTH SUMMER EVENTS

Johns River Valley Camp is an outdoor ministry site of Southern Conference, United Church of Christ located in Collettsville, NC. Various camp dates and events are available to youth of Grades 3-12. <https://www.jrvc.org/>

SOJOURNERS CLASS, SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM

We gather Sundays at 9:45am in the Conference Room, or via Zoom Today, we began discussing *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, & Politics in the Book of Revelation* by Elaine Pagels, Chapter 1.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89561758099?pwd=d1gvUmh3K2hCNmdidm1QdjllNkF5QT09>

CRAFTER'S CIRCLE MEETS MONDAYS AT 1:30PM

Bring a craft, learn a craft. Join us in the Gathering Room. All are welcome!

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING DURING MAY

The United Church of Christ has 5 yearly special offerings. The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill on its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. HCUCC will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 2024. Notate your donation as "STC". No need to wait! You can make your offering on the church website anytime in the month of May. Look for the Give button.

We welcome all in our congregation to participate in **worship leadership, ushering, greeting, and fellowship time**. Sign up in the gathering room, or download the app to make signing up even easier!

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