



Photo by Peteris Gertners

“There is no passion to be found playing small –
in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.”
– Nelson Mandela

“This is a beautiful and hopeful time to be alive. We are at a turning
point, and your contribution to the world is needed more than ever.
All of your struggles, all the struggles of your ancestors, all the
struggles of all life have led to this moment right now. You are the
culmination of life's great yearning; you are the hope of the world.”
– Ilchi Lee

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
TRINITY SUNDAY

May 26, 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 "Holy, Holy, Holy" arr. M. Hayes

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 Ed Vickery

Please take a comfortable posture that supports your worship and reading...

One: Creator God, we praise you!

Many: **Risen Christ, we greet you!**

One: Holy Spirit, we are one body by your grace.

Many: **You are holy, and we worship you.**

One: We are your children, born of your Spirit.

Many: **What is within us is holy, for it is from you.**

One: Help us to give our lives so that we may receive life.

Many: **Alleluia! Come, Holy Spirit, and transform us by your grace.**

* Hymn 277

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

NICAEA

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
Early in the morning we praise your majesty.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! Saints adore you truly,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim bow before you only,
From the beginning, God eternally.

Holy, holy, holy! Though we know but dimly,
Though the eyes of humankind your glory may not see,
You alone are holy, you alone are worthy,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: “At every turn in my life, I let God direct my path.”

Neighbor: “At every turn in your life, you let God direct your path.”

World: “At every turn in our life, we let God direct our path.”

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

God of mercy, you come to us in loving compassion. You know both our shortcomings and our failings. Help us to turn away from our old habits or ways of being so we become the people you have called us to be. Help us not to be in bondage to our mistakes, but to live in union with you and according to your Spirit. Empower us to be the body of Christ, creating a world where life is shared abundantly by all. Amen.

Words of Grace

Ed Vickery

We are God’s beloved, continuously being invited to the will and ways of the Holy Spirit. When we have wondered or found ourselves lost or alone in what can feel like the wilderness, listen to the holiness of this source: the one we call our friend, our counselor, our divine collaborator. Listen for its grace and mercy as it points us to love, directs us to peace, and uses us to embody Christ and bend the arc of justice toward mercy. Amen.

Response to God's Grace

OH QUE BUENO (Puerto Rico)

Oh, how good is Christ the Lord! On the cross he died for me.

He has pardoned all my sin. Glory be to Jesus.

Glory be to Jesus! Glory be to Jesus!

In three days, he rose again. Glory be to Jesus!

Awarding the 2024-2025 Michael G. Brooks Scholarship

Jo Ann Jellison

Stories for All People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Handbell Choir

“How Can I Keep from Singing?”

arr. M. & S. Eithun

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

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.

Modern Lesson the Words of Christopher McCandless

Our modern lesson for today is from the book "Into the Wild," which tells the true-life story of a young man, who hiked across America into the Alaskan Wilderness in the early 1990's. This reading is an adapted version of the letter Chris had written to his friend Ron during his journey...

"I'd like to repeat the advice that I gave you before, in that I think you really should make a radical change in your lifestyle and begin to boldly do things which you may previously never have thought of doing or been too hesitant to attempt. So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservatism, all of which may appear to give one peace of mind, but in reality, nothing is more damaging to the adventurous spirit within a [person] than a secure future. The very basic core of [one's] living spirit is [their] passion for adventure. The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun. If you want to get more out of life...you must lose your inclination for monotonous security and adopt a helter-skelter style of life that will at first appear to you to be crazy. But once you become accustomed to such a life you will see its full meaning and its incredible beauty...Don't settle down and sit in one place. Move around, be nomadic, make each day a new horizon...it would be a shame if you did not take the opportunity to revolutionize your life and move into an entirely new realm of experience. You are wrong if you think joy emanates only or principally from human relationships. God has placed it all around us. It is in everything and anything we might experience. We just have to have the courage to turn against our habitual lifestyle and engage in unconventional living. My point is that you do not need me or anyone else around to bring this new kind of light in your life. It is simply waiting out there for you to grasp it, and all you have to do is reach for it. The only person you are fighting is yourself and your stubbornness to [turn] to new circumstances." - Christopher McCandless

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

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

Hebrew Lesson

Isaiah 6:1-8 (CEB)

Ed Vickery

Our Hebrew lesson for today comes from Isaiah 6:1-8, where King Uzziah dies and Isaiah is called to the prophetic task of ministry...

In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and exalted throne, the edges of his robe filling the temple. Winged creatures were stationed around him. Each had six wings: with two they veiled their faces, with two their feet, and with two they flew about. They shouted to each other, saying:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of heavenly forces! All the earth is filled with God's glory!" The doorframe shook at the sound of their shouting, and the house was filled with smoke. I said, "Mourn for me; I'm ruined! I'm a man with unclean lips, and I live among a people with unclean lips. Yet I've seen the king, the Lord of heavenly forces!" Then one of the winged creatures flew to me, holding a glowing coal that he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips. Your guilt has departed, and your sin is removed."

Then I heard the Lord's voice saying, "Whom should I send, and who will go for us?" I said, "I'm here; send me."

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

"Turning Points"

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Ed Vickery

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

God gives with an abundance and graciousness that allows for the flourishing of community. Gifts that, when received and shared, widen tables, open doors, and puts a new spin or twist on the ever-growing list of who we are being called to include in our circles. Let us now bring our gifts forward in the gratitude and honor of participating in God's liberating and redemptive activity in the world.

* 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*)

Ed Vickery

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

Generous God may these gifts be a part of providing to your creation all that is needed to thrive and flourish. May they turn the fear of scarcity to the joy of sharing, and concerns of lack to the assurance that there will be more. Magnify these resources we bring forth, as well as cultivate generosity within us, so that all your people may be whole, well, and one. Amen.

* Hymn

“Here I Am, Lord”

SCHUTTE

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Refrain:

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them; they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? (R)

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them; my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? (R)

* 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

“I Hear Angels”

G. Gustafson

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*Parts of the liturgy for today's service were adapted by UCC Worship Ways,
Steve Garnaas-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

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>

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Cynthia Simpson, Scott Simpson and family in the death of Cynthia's husband,
Rev. 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/>

THE MICHAEL G. BROOKS SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2024-2025

Congratulations to Tayler Curlee, Daveyion Czarnecki, and Amelia Sexton!

HCUCC MAKES DONATION TO WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN

In the wake of the immense humanitarian crisis Palestinians are facing in Gaza, the Mission & Justice Team at Holy Covenant UCC have decided to extend their work to international efforts and donate \$1000 to World Central Kitchen. World Central Kitchen's mission is to provide emergency food relief to people experiencing disasters and humanitarian crises across the world. 100% of donations to World Central Kitchen go to providing food, and currently they are providing aid in places such as Ukraine, Japan, Chile, Texas, and people being impacted by the Middle East conflict in areas such as Gaza, Egypt, and Lebanon. You also might recall that early last month, 7 World Central Kitchen workers lost their lives trying to deliver food in the Gaza strip. This donation also comes on the back of a delegation of UCC Members who delivered a ceasefire statement to congresspeople on Capitol Hill last week. We want to thank the Missions & Justice Team for their prayerful consideration in making this donation and all those who continue to support this ministry's important work.

NEW MEMBER/INQUIRER CLASSES, JUNE 7 & 23

Are you interested in becoming a member of Holy Covenant or interested in exploring what membership at Holy Covenant means? Our next set of new member classes will take place on **June 9 & 23**, following worship at 12:30pm in the conference room. The following Sunday, June 30th, we will welcome our new members into the church. If you are interested, please reach out to Pastor Chris, RevChris@holycovenantucc.org, or contact the church office.

59th ANNUAL GATHERING of the SOUTHERN CONFERENCE, JUNE 20-22

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/> See our electronic newsletter for more information if you wish to attend this virtual event.

GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE RHINELAND COMES TO GREENSBORO

On Saturday, June 1st the UCC's Southern Conference will be hosting The Rev. Frauke Laaser, Officer for Ecumenical Affairs, of the German Evangelical Church of the Rhineland and offering a panel discussion on the five strands of the United Church of Christ that make up the Southern Conference. I have been asked by our conference minister, Rev. Dr. Edward Davis, to serve on the panel discussion, representing the Congregationalist branch of our denomination, which our church historically derives from. The panel discussion will take place from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Peace UCC in Greensboro, NC. An invitation has been extended to our wider church for folks to attend this event. At this event lunch will be served and there will be a time of meet and greet following the panel and lunch with Rev. Frauke, along with other clergy and lay leaders from around the North Carolina area. If you would like to attend this event with Pastor Chris, please let him know as soon as possible so we can get a headcount to the conference for lunch. Carpooling available. For more information about this event, please see HCUC's electronic newsletter.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING DURING MAY

Many thanks to all for supporting this special offering! Holy Covenant UCC has collected over \$600 for the Strengthen the Church offering which 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!

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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