



## **ENEMIES**

*Photo source: [www.clipground.com](http://www.clipground.com)*

“Loving your enemy is manifest in putting your arms not around the [person] but around the social situation, to take power from those who misuse it at which they can become human too.”

- Bayard Rustin

“Love is never wasted, for its value does rest upon reciprocity.”

- C.S. Lewis

“When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you!”

-African Proverb

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  
ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**August 4, 2024, 10:55 am**

*\* Your whole self is welcome 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. D. Wyrzten

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 “We Are an Offering” D. Liles

**We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you.**

**We are an offering.**

**God, use our voices; God, use our hands;**

**God, use our lives; they are yours.**

**We are an offering. We are an offering.**

\* Call to the Heart Laura Hankins

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

One: Come and learn the ways of life.

Many: **We have come to follow Jesus.**

One: Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you.

Many: **We have come to follow Jesus.**

One: Bless those who curse you and pray for those who persecute you.

Many: **We have come to follow Jesus.**

One: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Many: **We have come to follow Jesus.**

One: Come and learn his ways.

Many: **His truth, life, and love.**

\* Hymn 575

“O for a World”

AZMON

O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,  
Where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,  
Where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice  
That opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.

The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the foolish ones are wise.  
Tell all who mourn: outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.

O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,  
Where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: My words have the power to heal and resolve conflict, and I use them for God's good.

Neighbor: Your words have the power to heal and resolve conflict, and you use them for God's good.

World: Our words have the power to heal and resolve conflict, and we use them for God's good.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Laura Hankins

Holy One, you call us, but we don't always answer you. We confess at times we go our own way, choosing not to follow Jesus, but our pride and anger. We allow our hearts to become hardened, passing judgment, creating enemies, and leaving no space for change or transformation. Help us not to push others away, but to learn patience, to release our need to be right, and to respond in love and understanding. Amen.

Hymn 544

“If I Have Been the Source of Pain, O God”

CAMACUA

If I have been the source of pain, O God;  
If to the weak I have refused my strength;  
If, in rebellion, I have strayed away; Forgive me, God.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

We are invited to emulate Christ. The one who had his perspective changed by the Syrophenician woman, had these late-night heart-to-heart conversations with Nicodemus, and forgave those who nailed him to a cross. All too often we separate ourselves from those with whom we disagree, we get discouraged and give up too soon, or bury ourselves in our hate. Help us to remember if we but ask for what we need, "it will be given to us. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into our lap; for the measure through which we give will be the measure we get back." Amen.

Hymn

"In an Age of Twisted Values"

CHURCH UNITED

**In an age of twisted values, we have lost the truth we need.**

**In sophisticated language we have justified our greed.**

**By our struggle for possessions, we have robbed the poor and weak.**

**Hear our cry and heal our nation; your forgiveness, Lord, we seek.**

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Alternative Lord's Prayer

**Spirit of Life and Love, Holy God, Eternal Source,  
in our midst yet still ever so elusive:**

**To breathe your sacred name is a blessing.**

**Your world become, your will be done here, on Earth,  
inspired by our aspirations to be better people.**

**May we have all that we need to survive, live, and thrive.**

**Remind us to be gentle; may we love mercy and kindness,  
recalling the times when we've fallen short ourselves.**

**Call us to be firm; may we not be tempted to follow our selfish motivations  
or reside in our narrow privileges, unexamined and uninterrogated; move  
us to counter and overcome evil and injustice in ourselves, our lives, and  
institutions.**

**Yours is the Beloved Community, the fire of commitment in our hearts,  
and the spirit of generosity and abundance, now and always.**

**Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination (sung)

SANCTUARY

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.**

**With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

Modern Lesson

Tina Dickens

*Our Modern Lesson for today comes Martin Luther King Jr., who was a minister, activist, and political philosopher. He says...*

“Now there is a final reason I think that Jesus says, ‘Love your enemies.’ It is this: that love has within it a redemptive power. And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals. Just keep being friendly to that person. Just keep loving them, and they can’t stand it too long. Oh, they react in many ways in the beginning. They react with guilt feelings, and sometimes they’ll hate you a little more in that transition period, but just keep loving them. And by the power of your love, they will break down under the load. That’s love, you see. It is redemptive, and this is why Jesus says love. There’s something about love that builds up and is creative. There is something about hate those tears down and is destructive. So, love your enemies.”

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

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

\* Gospel Lesson

Luke 6:27-38 (NRSV)

Laura Hankins

*Our Scripture Lesson for today comes from the Gospel of Luke 6:27-38, where Jesus teaches love includes caring for enemies...*

But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your [Creator] is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

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

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

The Good News

“Love Your Enemies...But Do I Have To?”

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Laura Hankins

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

Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you." Rarely do we think in such terms, where to receive something, we must first give it. As we imagine our church, its ministries, and its call to be a place of radical inclusivity and love for all, move us to share the gifts we must give to receive. The gifts, we must share to see them. Let us now share our gifts in gratitude, not for what we will receive, but in gratitude for what we can share...

\* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Laura Hankins

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

**Generous God, with these gifts help us live out your call more closely. Inspire us to resist the injustice that spreads cruelty and pain. Encourage us to speak out against prejudice that fosters hostility and violence. Urge us to love more courageously, so we may manifest your kin-dom here and now. May these gifts show our commitment to your merciful love and healing, shared for all your children. 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**

The Invitation

**One: God is with you.**

**Many: And also with you.**

**One: Lift-up your hearts.**

**Many: We lift them up to God.**

**One: Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.**

**Many: It is good and beautiful to give God our praise.**

On their own, the bread and wine are nothing.  
They are both a foretaste and a promise  
of love made real and a world made whole,  
however, they need a story and a blessing  
and a people who believe...

It would not have been God's table  
if they hadn't all been gathered around it:  
the betrayer and the friend  
the power-hungry and the justice seeker  
the faithful and the fickle.

When Jesus broke the bread,  
and the wine was poured,  
everyone was able to eat:  
the outcast and the insider  
the arrogant and the humble  
the wrong-doer and the offended  
the table became a foretaste  
of love made real  
and a world made whole.

Your company at the table  
will include the outcast and the insider  
the wrong-doer and the offended,  
the healed and the hurt,  
the ally and the enemy,  
the privileged and the oppressed,  
the forsaken and the loved.  
It would not be God's table without them.

And the promise is  
that when you are all together,  
gathered around this table,  
having eaten the bread and drank the wine,  
having heard the story and received the blessing,  
you will discover a foretaste of God's kin-dom,  
of love made real  
and of a world made whole.

Words of Institution

## Sharing of the Elements

Music during Communion

COME, SHARE THE LORD

“We Gather Here in Jesus’ Name”

We gather here in Jesus’ name;  
Christ’s love is burning in our hearts like living flame;  
For through Christ’s sacrifice, the whole wide world unites.  
Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here; everyone belongs.  
Finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

Christ joins us here; and breaks the bread;  
Our God who pours the cup is risen from the dead;  
The one we love the most is now our gracious host:  
Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

We are now a family, of which our God is head.  
Though unseen, Christ meets us here in the breaking of the bread.

We’ll gather soon in glory rise;  
We’ll see the wonder of our God and of our Christ.  
Now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:  
Come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Gracious God, for this meal and the ways it renews us and energizes us we give thanks. May it be the sustenance which draws us closer together, erasing categories and divisions, breaking down walls and barriers, widening circles and revealing the meaning of beloved community. Help us to know through this meal we are all intertwined, caught in a network of mutuality and tied together in destiny. Amen.



\* Hymn 433

“In the Bulb There Is a Flower”

PROMISE

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;  
There's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

\* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

\* Benediction Response

NEW DIMENSIONS

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,  
We your people, ours the journey now and ever,  
Now and ever, now and evermore.

Postlude

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

arr. D. Wyrzten

*Songs in this service are used by permission.  
CCLI License #11439355; CSPL164710*

*The liturgy for today's service was written or adapted by B.J. Beu at  
[www.ministrymatters.com](http://www.ministrymatters.com), UCC Worship Ways, Alex Jensen, Gil Le Fevre,  
Cheryl Lawrie at <http://holdthinspace.org.au/>, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,  
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, JoAnn Jellison**

## 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/>*

### FUNDRAISING TOTALS

We are happy to announce the fundraising totals for two offerings we've had during the month of July. We raised a total of \$1,941.70 for World Central Kitchen, which will be earmarked for efforts to assist those in Gaza. And we raised a total of **\$935.00 for the United Church of Christ's Christmas Fund** (a.k.a.) Veterans of the Cross, which goes to support retired clergy or lay leaders of our denomination who are experiencing a financial need. We want to thank each and every one of you for your generosity and support of these worthy causes which will end up impacting and making a difference in the lives of so many people.

### CHARLOTTE PRIDE PARADE, AUGUST 18

Let's show our Holy Covenant UCC Pride and march with us in the parade! Sign up in the gathering room!

### SUMMER ALL-CHURCH READ: "OUR TRESPASSES"

All are invited to join Holy Covenant's All-Church Read this summer, which will culminate in an author visit Sept. 8.

"Our Trespases: White Churches and the Taking of American Neighborhoods" tells the story of Charlotte's Brooklyn neighborhood through the North family, displaced by urban renewal, and the white congregation of the First Baptist Charlotte that purchased their land from the city. This local history examines how race, geography, policy and religion haunt landscapes in Charlotte, as they do in cities across the country. Understanding this history is a vital step in Holy Covenant's journey to creating a more just and equitable community. **Author Greg Jarrell, an ordained minister, will preach at Holy Covenant during worship Sept. 8.** Following worship and a break for light refreshments, Jarrell will discuss what he learned about the values and biases that are woven into Charlotte's development patterns. See the church newsletter for more data.

## **SOJOURNERS CLASS SUNDAYS AT 9:45AM**

The Sojourners are reviewing *Our Trespasses: White Churches and the Taking of American Neighborhoods* by Greg Jarrell. We gather Sundays at 9:45am in the Conference Room, or via Zoom. All are welcome.

## **WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Greeters and ushers are needed starting at 10:30am every Sunday. Liturgists and readers roles are also available. Please sign up in the Gathering Room or at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-ushers>.

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**

Lee Brigman, Linda Carver, Joy & Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Tom & Kathy Habel, Jim Humphrey, Kat Kerce, Sharon Landis, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Alice Phelan & Sally Young, Cynthia Simpson, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Jerry Rhyne, Ed & Beth Sharp, Anita Taylor, Cathy & Jay Whitley

### **Friends & Family Members**

Prayers for the life and memory of Alma Gordon, Joy Decker's mother Beth, Michael & Julian Bliss (Robert Shepherd), Melissa Brown, Phillip Cherry (Anne Pigg), Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Pam Culp & Pam McGill (Melissa Noll), George Miner (Eric Miner), Dominica Haegele & Francesca Czarnecki (Chris Czarnecki), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charles Jernigan (Lee Brigman), Dave Johnson, Judah L. Jones & Bill Englebreth, Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Michael & Chris Mele-Wagner (Dom Ciciollo), Kyle Morre (Akeera Czarnecki), Joe Parks (Beth Sharp), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), 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).

## **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Rev. Christopher Czarnecki, MDiv, MBA, Senior Pastor**

**RevChris@holycovenantucc.org, 314-402-8167**

**Jon Weddell, MDiv, MSW, Minister of Music**

**Dawn Simmons, BSBF, Executive Assistant**

*Mailing address: PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269*

**3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510**

**www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810**