



*Photo source: Kate Remmer on Unsplash*

“We all need to learn to feed on Christ, to take Him in,  
and to enjoy Him as our spiritual food.”

– Anonymous

“Our bodily food is changed into us,  
but our spiritual food changes us into it.”

– Meister Eckhart

“A recipe has no soul. You, as the cook,  
must bring soul to the recipe.”

– Thomas Keller

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**  
**TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**August 11, 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 "Wonderful Words of Life" 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 Diane Neese

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

One: We are hungering for hope.

Many: **Come, Lord Jesus, come.**

One: We are thirsting for peace and love.

Many: **Come, Lord Jesus, Come.**

One: Our hearts are longing for the nourishing presence of God.

Many: **Come, Lord Jesus, Come.**

One: Give to us the living bread so that we may hunger no more.

Many: **Open our hearts in this hour of worship to receive your life-sustaining love. Amen.**

\* Hymn

“All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly”

HOLY MANNA

All who hunger, gather gladly; holy manna is our bread.  
Come from wilderness and wandering. Here, in truth, we will be fed.  
You that yearn for days of fullness, all around us is our food.  
Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, never strangers, seeker, be a welcome guest.  
Come from restlessness and roaming. Here, in joy, we keep the feast.  
We that once were lost and scattered in communion's love have stood.  
Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

All who hunger, sing together; Jesus Christ is living bread.  
Come from loneliness and longing. Here, in peace, we have been led.  
Blest are those who from this table live their days in gratitude.  
Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: The life-giving power of Christ resides within me, and I use it for God's good.

Neighbor: The life-giving power of Christ resides within you, and you use it for God's good.

World: The life-giving power of Christ resides within us, and we use it for God's good.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Diane Neese

Merciful God, we confess at times the bread we feed on isn't always the kind of food that nourishes us. Admittedly, sometimes it's the food of life that drains and stagnates us. Instead of seeking the bread of life Jesus speaks of, we acknowledge how we've reached for what is tasteless and unfulfilling, seeking temporary relief or even instant gratification. Forgive us for filling our plates with that which leaves us empty and through your grace inspire us to fill it with God's delight and God's goodness. Amen.

Hymn 544

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

CAMACUA

If I have spoken words of cruelty;  
If I have left some suffering unrelieved;  
Condemn not my insensitivity; Forgive me, God.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

If you've ever bitten into a piece of fruit, you will have felt its sweetness hit your tastebuds. Eating the "bread of life" is a bit like that. Once consumed it stuns you and makes you wonder. It hits you and makes you imagine. You get a taste of it, and it gives you hope. The beautiful thing is there are all kinds of different breads that give life. There are breads of forgiveness, breads of justice, and breads of love. And once consumed they don't just fill you, they have the power to change you. The grace of God isn't just that we get to eat them, but we get to be transformed by them. And for this we give thanks.

Hymn

"In an Age of Twisted Values"

CHURCH UNITED

**We have built discrimination on our prejudice and fear.  
Hatred swiftly turns to cruelty if we hold resentments dear.  
For communities divided by the walls of class and race,  
Hear our cry and heal our nation; show us, Lord, your love and grace.**

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Alternative Version of The Lord's Prayer *(adapted by Jason Turner)*

**I cannot pray "our Creator,"  
if my faith has no room for others.  
I cannot pray "who art in heaven,"  
if all my interests and pursuits are in earthly things.  
I cannot pray "hallowed be thy name,"  
if I am not striving with God's help to be holy.  
I cannot pray "thy kin-dom come,"  
if I am unwilling to have it in my life.  
I cannot pray, "on earth as it is in heaven,"  
unless I am truly ready to give myself to God's service here and now.  
I cannot pray "forgive us our debts,"  
if I continue to harbor grudges against anyone.  
I cannot pray "lead us not into temptation,"  
if I continue to remain in situations where I am likely to be tempted.  
I cannot pray "deliver us from evil,"  
if I am not prepared to resist it through love and justice.  
I cannot pray "thine is the power and the glory,"  
if I am seeking power and glory for myself.  
I cannot pray "forever and ever,"  
if I am anxious about each day's affairs.  
I cannot pray "Amen,"  
unless I understand the cost of it  
and believe this is my prayer.**

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

Jeff Edwards-Knight

*Our Modern Lesson for today comes from the late Rahcel Held Evans, who was a progressive Christian author, blogger, columnist, and speaker. Among her prophetic work she once said...*

On the days when I am hungry - for community, for peace, for belief - I remember what it was like to feed people Jesus, and for people to feed Jesus to me. And those pieces of memory multiply, like the bread that fed the five thousand, spilling out their baskets and filling every hollow space. Communion doesn't answer every question, nor does it keep my stomach from rumbling from time to time, but I have found that it is enough.

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

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

\* Gospel Lesson

John 6:35, 41-51 (CEB)

Diane Neese

*Our Scripture Lesson for today comes from the Gospel of John 6:35, 41-51, where Jesus tells those who are following him that he is "the bread of life".*

Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

The Jewish opposition grumbled about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They asked, "Isn't this Jesus, Joseph's son, whose mother and father we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus responded, "Don't grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless they are drawn to me by the Father who sent me, and I will raise them up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, and they *will all be taught by God*. Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned from him comes to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God. He has seen the Father. I assure you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that whoever eats from it will never die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

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

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

The Good News

"The Best Way to Eat Jesus"

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Diane Neese

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

In the spirit of Jesus, who invited us to come and experience the profound gift of the “bread of life,” we now prepare to offer our gifts to others. Just as he offered his life as being the true sustenance that satisfies our deepest hunger and thirsts, we too are called to offer unto others that which has provided sustenance to us. May we now share our gifts, and in the power of God through this church, hold to the hope of the life they will provide.

\* 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*)

Diane Neese

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

Loving God, we dedicate these gifts shared freely and openly to You. Multiple them for the benefit of your people. Use them to meet the needs of those who are hungry in body and spirit. Help us to purpose them in the ways of Your love, peace, and justice. May nothing go unused, and all that was given find a place in the beauty of building your kin-dom here on earth. Amen.

\* Hymn

“Fill My Cup, Lord”

FILL MY CUP

Like the woman at the well I was seeking  
For things that could not satisfy;  
And then I heard my Savior speaking:  
“Draw from my well that never shall run dry.”

*Refrain:* Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord!  
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul;  
Bread of Heaven, feed me ‘til I want no more-  
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!

There are millions in this world who are craving  
The pleasure earthly things afford;  
But none can match the wondrous treasure  
That I find in Jesus Christ my Lord. (R)

So, my friend, if all the things this world gave you  
Leave hungers that won’t pass away,  
My blessed Lord will come and save you,  
If you kneel to him and humbly pray. (R)

Poem

“I AM the Bread of Life”  
by *Preethi Alice Jacob*

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

I AM says the Lord  
I AM the Bread of life  
I AM the only One who can feed you  
The only One who can satisfy your hunger

As the world rushes on  
Along its many busy ways  
Do you long, do you hunger  
For someone to listen, to understand?

As people each day  
Are quick to blame and criticize  
Do you long, do you hunger  
For someone who accepts, without fault?

As the world and its many pressures  
Constantly remind, you are not good enough  
Do you long, do you hunger  
For someone who believes in you, your worth?

I AM says the Lord  
I AM the Bread of life  
I AM the only One who unconditionally  
Loves and accepts you, now and forever.

So come away, dear one, says He  
Spend time with Me, feed on Me  
Through My Word each day, that I may  
With My love and My truth, ever satisfy you.

\* 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

“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”

arr. A. M. David

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

*The liturgy for today's service was written or adapted by Jason Turner (MCC Melbourne), [www.ministrymatters.com](http://www.ministrymatters.com), 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

## 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/>

*Due to the recent spike in COVID cases within our congregation we have decided to temporarily pause our fellowship time after church in the Gathering Room out of concern for the well-being of all those attending. We also encourage those attending worship with us to consider wearing a mask should you feel more comfortable while worshipping with us. We know fellowship after worship is an important and meaningful time for our church community, so as soon as cases are down, we will resume our fellowship time.*

**CHARLOTTE PRIDE PARADE, SUNDAY, AUGUST 18 - 1:00-4:00 PM**

Let's show our Holy Covenant UCC Pride and march with us in the parade!  
Sign up in the gathering room! Questions? Contact Debbie Davis 678-358-8947

**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, READS & REVIEWS JARRELL'S "OUR TRESPASSES"**

We gather Sundays at 9:45am in the Conference Room, or via Zoom

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

### **COVENANT GROUP MEET UP - FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY, AUG 23**

The Bold & Beautiful Covenant Group will be gathering at the Armored Cow Brewery at University City for **Food Truck Friday** Friday, August 23 from 5:30-7:00pm. All are welcomed to join them. Contact Martha Bomely with questions. 704-804-0640

### **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>.



### **CHANGE TO ELECTRONIC OFFERINGS**

Beginning August 22, 2024, *Subsplash*, one of our online giving platforms, will change their default selection to charging the donor the processing fee assessed for each transaction. Right now, the donor can elect to cover the processing fee by clicking on the "cover fees" option in the payment box. Beginning August 22nd, the donor will need to elect to "not cover" the processing fee if desired and would need to make this change on the *Subsplash* dashboard before completing their transaction. While *Subsplash* offers a convenient way to make an electronic gift to the church, many banks offer free online banking to their customers, allowing them to send an electronic check to the church through their bill pay with no fees. We want to make sure all our *Subsplash* donors are aware of this upcoming change.

Questions? Please contact Dawn Simmons, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org), or Debbie Davis [debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com](mailto:debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com).

## YOUR OFFERING, YOUR WAY

Various methods are available for your convenience! Schedule offerings, one time or recurring, through your bank's online payment system. Many financial institutions offer free services to its customers. Mailing a check, from home or a financial institution? Please use this secure address:



**Holy Covenant UCC, PO Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269**

Donate online at [HolyCovenantUCC.org/give-2/](https://HolyCovenantUCC.org/give-2/) via PayPal or Subsplash Wallet. Look for the *Give Today* button. Questions can be directed to the church office, [office@holycovenantucc.org](mailto:office@holycovenantucc.org) or 704-599-9810.

## 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

### Family & Friends

Chris Mele-Wagner in the death of his husband Michael, and mother Mary Ann Wagner. (Dominic Ciciollo)

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**