



“Listen with your heart, you will understand.”

– Pocahontas

“Listening is an attitude of the heart,
a genuine desire to be with another
which both attracts and heals.”

– L.J. Isham

“The most useful asset of a person is not a head full of knowledge but a heart full of love, with ears open to listen, and hands willing to help.”

- Anonymous

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
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 18, 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 "It Is Well with My Soul" arr. J. Inness

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

A Protest and a Party by Hannah Roberts Villnave

People sometimes ask:

Is Pride a protest

Or a party?

And the answer is

Of course

Yes.

And why not?

Why not

Rejoice as we resist

Dance as we demand change

Celebrate as we create community that delights in

All of who we are?

So bring all of that

With you this morning.

Bring your policy demands

Bring your glitter

Bring your supreme court broken heart

Bring your rainbow socks

Bring the emptiness you feel

For our siblings gone too soon.

Bring your Gloria Estefan remix
Bring your tender hope for change
Bring your most garish eyeshadow
Bring your spirit, tattered and battered
By a world that seems insistent on
Choosing fear and hate.

Gather up all these things
And bring them here
To a place where we don't
Have to shoulder these burdens
Or celebrate these joys
Alone.

Come, let us worship
Together.

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 Lloyd Spencer

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

One: Vibrant God, creator of all things, you made this planet and all its variety. Let us celebrate the diversity of the colors of the world. With red, yellow, and orange, we praise and give thanks:

Many: **for the warmth of your love shared among all your children, for the energy of the Holy Spirit that powers us forward in service, and for the joy of being accepted by you, just as we are.**

One: With green, blue, and violet, we worship and honor you:

Many: **for the softness of your care and grace, for the stillness of prayer when we draw close to you, and for the peace of knowing you hold us in your loving embrace.**

One: Vibrant God, creator of each of us, you made us the way we are. Together, we are a diverse blend of all your colors.

Many: **Help us to love and celebrate each other, as a prideful part of your beloved creation. Amen.**

* Hymn

“Sing a New World into Being”

NETTLETON

Sing a new world into being. Sound a bold and hopeful theme.
Find a tune for silent yearnings. Lend your voice and dare to dream:
Dream a church where all who worship find their lives and loves belong.
Sing a new world into being: Sing as Christ inspires your song!

Sing a new world into being where each gender class and race
Brings its rainbow gifts and colors to God’s limitless embrace;
Where the lines that once divided form instead the ties that bind.
Sing a new world into being: risk transforming heart and mind!

Sing a new world into being where the homeless find a home.
Where no children ever hunger but are filled with God’s shalom;
Where all people work for justice, where all hate and vengeance cease.
Sing a new world into being: raise the harmonies of peace.

Sing a new world into being. Join an ancient prophets’ cry
For a time of health and plenty when all tears have been wiped dry;
When compassion flows like waters, pouring balm for all who grieve.
Sing a new world into being: live the promise you believe!

Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: God loves me for who I am, just as I am. And because of that I am enough.

Neighbor: God loves you for who you are, just as you are. And because of that you are enough.

World: God loves us for who we are, just as we are. And because of that we are enough.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (*unison*)

Lloyd Spencer

Creating God, today we acknowledge the diversity of this amazing world, and the underlying spirit of its mystery. But we also admit that, at times, we forget the wonders of that diversity. How we can long for the familiar and the same. How we have rejected and shunned those who are not like us. How our intolerance of difference can cause harm and pain. For this we are sorry and ask for your patience as we learn and strive for ways to be more inclusive, celebrating all in this wondrous world. Amen.

Hymn 544

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

CAMACUA

**If I've insisted on a peaceful life,
Far from the struggles that the gospel brings,
When you prefer to guide me to the strife, Forgive me, God.**

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Jesus said, “Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.” What if instead of being quick to judge or reject others, we listened to them. What if grace is the opportunity to hear someone’s story. To see all of them, not just what’s on the outside, but also the beauty inside them. What if grace is that second chance to understand someone or something we’ve not clearly understood. What if grace isn’t having wisdom, but the heart to learn or be open to something new. Could this be God’s grace for you?

Stories for All People

Laura Hankins

Hymn

“In an Age of Twisted Values”

CHURCH UNITED

**When our families are broken, when our homes are full of strife,
When our children are bewildered, when they lose their way in life,
When we fail to give the aged all the care we know they need,
Hear our cry and heal our nation; help us show more love, we plead.**

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

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

Caroline Utz

Our Modern Lesson for today comes from John Welwood, who is a teacher and author, known for his integration of psychological and spiritual concepts. Among his work he says...

Forget about enlightenment. Sit down wherever you are and listen to the wind that is singing in your veins. Feel the love, the longing and the fear in your bones. Open your heart to who you are, right now, not who you would like to be. Not the saint you're striving to become. But the being right here before you, inside you, around you. All of you is holy. You're already more and less than whatever you can know. Breathe out, look in, let go.

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

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

Our Scripture Lesson for today comes from 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14, where Solomon asks God for wisdom to govern his people...

Then David died and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. David had reigned over Israel for forty years, seven of them in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. Solomon became king and sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

Solomon loved the Lord and followed all the decrees of his father, David, except that Solomon, too, offered sacrifices and burned incense at the local places of worship. The most important of these places of worship was at Gibeon, so the king went there and sacrificed 1,000 burnt offerings. That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, “What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!”

Solomon replied, “You showed great and faithful love to your servant my father, David, because he was honest and true and faithful to you. And you have continued to show this great and faithful love to him today by giving him a son to sit on his throne.

“Now, O Lord my God, you have made me king instead of my father, David, but I am like a little child who doesn’t know his way around. And here I am in the midst of your own chosen people, a nation so great and numerous they cannot be counted! Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?”

The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom. So God replied, “Because you have asked for wisdom in governing my people with justice and have not asked for a long life or wealth or the death of your enemies— I will give you what you asked for! I will give you a wise and understanding heart such as no one else has had or ever will have! And I will also give you what you did not ask for—riches and fame! No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life! And if you follow me and obey my decrees and my commands as your father, David, did, I will give you a long life.”

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

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

The Good News

“Not with Wisdom, but with Heart”

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Lloyd Spencer

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

In the epistle to the Ephesians, we are encouraged to “be careful how you live. Don’t live like fools, but like those who are wise...and to give God thanks for everything...” (vv.15, 20). One of the ways we give thanks is by trusting God with our resources. We give thanks by using the gifts of God for the kin-dom of God. We give thanks by sharing our abundance for the mutual benefit of our community. Let us now give thanks, by sharing a portion of everything we have with God.

* 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*)

Lloyd Spencer

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

God of heart, you give freely, and we receive freely. Sow in us discernment, understanding, and the wisdom to be good stewards of the generous bounty we have received, and the resources now trusted in our care. Let us treat them all as gifts to be shared, so that none will be in want or need, so that all your children may live full and abundantly. Amen.

* Hymn

“God of Many Faces”

SLANE

**God of many faces, we offer our praise,
Singing your glory through all of our days.
Hear ever growing voices, once fragile, now strong,
Carrying melodies in expansive new songs.**

**God of many genders, our world reflects you,
Sunrise and sunset uniting our hues,
Woven into a city with jewels of all shades,
Houses of ruby and walls rowed with jade.**

**God of many names, we invite you to show,
Us the new names that reflect our true souls.
Breathe with your holy spirit to give us the Word
That will indwell dry bones, granting new life once heard.**

God of many bodies, abide within ours,
Shifting more each day through time and through scars.
Come sanctify our bodies, all fashioned by you,
Holier everyday, still becoming more true.

* 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

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

arr. J. Carraway

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The liturgy for today's service was written or adapted by Karen Chandler of St. Paul's United Church Scarborough, The United Church of Canada, UCC Worship Ways, 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

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/>

COVID cases within our congregation and community continue. We 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 we will resume our fellowship time.

CHARLOTTE PRIDE PARADE, TODAY - 1:00-4:00 PM

Let's show our Holy Covenant UCC Pride and march with us in the parade! We will gather at 11th Street and Tryon, 1:30pm - plenty of time to worship and gather after church. Look for Card 615. Questions? Contact Debbie Davis 678-358-8947

RSVP FOR SEPTEMBER 8! GUEST PREACHER AND AUTHOR GREG JARRELL

Join us Sunday, September 8, when our guest Greg Jarrell will preach during service and afterward give a talk on his new book. This will be an action-packed day, so we're planning a catered lunch. You can help by completing the RSVP form at your earliest convenience so we know how best to prepare.

RSVP: <https://forms.gle/Lq95dGEWYfXJe5xB8>

Greg Jarrell is an author and community organizer in Charlotte. His book [Our Trespasses: White Churches and the Taking of American Neighborhoods](#), examines the influence of white churches and Christians in planning, executing, and profiting from the federal Urban Renewal projects of the 1950s and 60s, in Charlotte and beyond. Greg is Senior Campaign Organizer for The Redress Movement, a national nonprofit organizing local communities for housing justice. He is one of the co-founders of QC Family Tree, a cultural organizing group in his neighborhood, and a founding organizer of Charlotte's West Side Community Land Trust. Greg will bring copies of book to sell and sign. You can get the book now at Park Road Books (reserve a copy by calling 704-525-0293), at publisher fortresspress.com, or at Amazon.

We could also use a few volunteers to help with set-up or clean-up. For questions, information, or to volunteer, contact Holly Middleton at hsmiddleton@gmail.com.



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, August 23 from 5:30-7:00pm. All are welcomed to join them. Contact Martha Bomely with questions. 704-804-0640

C.R.O.P. WALK FOR HUNGER, OCTOBER 6

Join the HCUCC hunger fighting team! All are welcome! On October 6, we will walk on church property after the worship service. If you would like a shirt for only \$3.00, let Tina Dickens know the size you want by August 24 (taichitina@gmail.com or 704.200.0089). Walkers are encouraged to ask friends and/or relatives for support.

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? Contact Dawn Simmons, office@holycovenantucc.org, or Debbie Davis 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://www.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 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); Beth, Michael & Julian Bliss (Robert Shepherd), Melissa Brown, Phillip Cherry (Anne Pigg), Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Debbie Coble (Cindy Coble), 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), George Miner (Eric Miner), Kyle Morre (Akeera Czarnecki), Joe Parks (Beth Sharp), Mike Santino (Melissa Noll), 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.

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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