



Welcoming the Children” Photo by Cara B. Hochhalter, from her book,
A Challenging Peace in the Life and Stories of Jesus

I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many
helpers – so many caring people in this world.

– Fred Rogers

Kindness is the light that dissolves all walls between souls, families,
and nations.” – Paramahansa Yogananda

“The higher purpose of my life is not the song and dance or the
acclaim, but to rise up, to pull up others and leave the world...a
better place.” – Viola Davis

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.

STEWARDSHIP 2025

Each October, Holy Covenant develops a spending plan for the coming year that supports our many ministries. You can help the Budget and Finance Team in this work by letting us know what financial resources you intend to contribute to the church in 2025.

Our annual stewardship campaign's goal began Sept. 29 and runs through Oct. 20 this year. Our goal is to raise \$140,000 for the General Fund (operating fund) and \$40,000 for the Building Fund (capital fund). We will update the congregation each week on our progress. As of Friday, Oct. 4, pledges totaled \$55,930 for the General Fund and \$16,620 for the Building Fund.

May God's spirit move within each of our lives as we discern how we can offer gifts of time, talent and treasure to strengthen Holy Covenant and God's ministry to our members, our community, and beyond.

Share your financial commitment with us by making your pledge through one of the following options as soon as possible:

1. Online through the church's website

<https://holycovenantucc.org/make-your-pledge-online>,

2. Email your pledge to the church office at office@holycovenantucc.org or

3. Mail the pledge card to:

Holy Covenant UCC, P.O. Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269

Because of you, our church changes lives.



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

For our congregation's ministries, I/we plan to give in 2025

\$ _____ General Fund (Annually)

\$ _____ Building Fund (Annually)

I understand that this commitment can be changed at any time by giving notice to the church office.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Thank you for using
the Digital
Pledge Card

Imagine
Together

HCUCC Stewardship
Planning for 2025

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 6, 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 "Thuma Mina/Siyahamba" arr. M. Sedio (S. Africa)

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Song "Everything Is Beautiful" R. Stevens
D Evans, Eric Miner, Benjamin Rudolph, Ed Vickery

Stewardship Campaign Moment Joy & Kevin Decker

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,

Where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;

Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.

* Call to the Heart Ed Vickery

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

One: Creator of all things,

Many: **we give praise!**

One: Of earth and sky, the seas and stars, and all living beings,

Many: **we give praise!**

One: Loving Mother and Father of all people, nations, and races,

Many: **we adore you!**

One: Divine presence whose arms hold Koreans and Bolivians, Rwandans and Brazilians,

Many: **we adore you!**

One: For the Baptist and Orthodox, Methodist and Moravian, Congregational and Coptic,

Many: **we give thanks!**

One: With all your Beloved we gather at your table to feast with our siblings in Christ, one in the Body of Christ, one in your love.

Many: We begin our worship, we receive your grace, and we give of ourselves, all for the sake of the world. Alleluia!

* Hymn 72

“Here, O God, Your Servants Gather”

TOKYO (Japan)

Here, O God, your servants gather, hand we link in hand;
Looking toward our Savior’s cross, joined in love we stand.
As we seek the realm of God, we unite to pray:
Jesus, Savior, guide our steps, for you are the Way.

Many are the tongues we speak, scattered are the lands,
Yet our hearts are one in God, one in love’s demands.
In despair our hope appears, calling age and youth:
Jesus, Teacher, dwell with us, for you are the Truth.

Nature’s secrets open wide, changes never cease;
Where, O where, can weary souls find the source of peace?
Unto all those sore distressed, torn by endless strife:
Jesus, Healer, bring your balm, for you are the Life.

Grant, O God, an age renewed, show us how love thrives,
Help us as we work and pray, send us for our lives
Truth and courage, faith and power needed in our strife:
Jesus, Leader, be our Way, be our Truth, our Life.

Affirmation

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Yourself: I am one with my neighbors and all of God’s creation.

Neighbor: You are one with your neighbors and all of God’s creation.

World: We are one with our neighbors and all of God’s creation.

Prayer for Transformation (*unison*)

Ed Vickery

Holy One, we come this day celebrating your ever-widening table and our human connectedness. Yet we confess our present reality lies far from the idea you vision of beloved community. You call us to remember the poor, the marginalized, and the outsider. Yet, we demonize difference rather than dignify diversity. You command us to love our neighbor, so that we may know them. Yet we place our desires and comforts over the good of others. We ask that you forgive us and propel us to new life, infusing our attitudes and actions with openness, love, and grace. Amen.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Jesus saw others through the eyes of God. He didn't look past difference but embraced it, knowing the differences that exist between us are all part of God. With God's grace, may we seek to honor the uniqueness of others. May we find ways to break down the barriers that exclude the ignored or disregarded. And may we welcome them to God's table, where they will be fully loved and accepted. Amen.

Response to God's Grace

Mungo Ni Mwema (DR Congo)

"Know That God Is Good"

**Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.
Halle, hallelujah. (3x) Hallelujah, hallelujah. (Hebrew)
Mungu ni mwema. (3x) Ni mwema, ni mwema. (Shona)
Know that God is good. (3x) God is good; God is good.**

Stories for All People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Song of Preparation

"Bless the Lord"

TAIZE (France)

**Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

Prayers of the People

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

Our Parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation. May your reign be a reality here on earth. May we become more interested in building your kingdom here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above. Let us share our bread with those who hunger. Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness. Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil. For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination (*sung*)

TAKE ME AS I AM (Iona)

**Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;
Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

Our Modern Lesson for today comes from the Dalai Lama, who is considered a living Buddha and the highest spiritual leader of Tibet.

As human beings, we each have a responsibility to care for humanity. Expressing concern for others brings inner strength and deep satisfaction. As social [beings, we] need friendship, but friendship doesn't come from wealth and power, but from showing compassion and concern for others.

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

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

* Gospel Lesson

Mark 10:2-16 (NRSV)

Ed Vickery

Our Scripture Lesson for today comes from Mark 10:2-16, where the religious authorities question Jesus about divorce...

Some, testing him, asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

People were bringing children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

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

"Little Kids and Divorce Decrees"

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Invitation to Generosity

Ed Vickery

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

On World Communion Sunday, we are mindful of our connection to the global church, and our call to work for peace and justice together. On this Sunday may our offerings of time, talent, and treasure be a symbol of the kin-dom here on earth we seek together. As we have received from God, let us now give in return, both joyfully and generously, in the hope of love, peace, and reconciliation...

* Doxology

BARUCH HASHEM ADONAI (Israel)

Baruch hashem Adonai. Baruch hashem Adonai.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Baruch hashem Adonai.

* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Ed Vickery

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

Blessed God, we have trusted in the provision of your love and the abundance of your grace. May the gifts we offer sow seeds of peace and justice. Enable us to use them according to your will, until each of your beloved children finds welcome, and all of creation is healed and reconciled to you. Amen.

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
THE MYSTIC SUPPER**

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.

Invitation to the Table

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Today we celebrate World Communion Sunday, remembering our Christian siblings around the world who also celebrate this feast. Some will receive cubes of bread. Some will tear from a common loaf. Some will receive a wafer. Some will drink from a common chalice. Some will dip a piece of bread into the cup. Some will have individual glasses. Some will use wine, some juice. Some will offer both. Pastors will lead a variety of liturgies, in many languages. Clergy will dress traditionally, formally, and casually. Yet despite the differences in our denominations and traditions, we celebrate our unity in Jesus Christ. Today we remember this is Christ’s Table, and all are welcome.

Pastor: Matzah is unleavened bread; it reminds us of all who eat their bread in haste. It symbolizes for us all the refugees who, like the ancient Israelites, leave their homes and flee from danger. May it remind us, too, of the unhoused in our own city and country.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church among those with no place to call home. May we learn from their searching faith, and may we be a place of welcome for all who seek safety.

Pastor: Vetkoek reminds us of Africa, the birthplace of humankind where Christianity continues to flourish. It also reminds us of a legacy of slavery, and of a people who endured.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church in places where it flourishes, and we confess the times and places when we have enslaved others. May we learn from the vibrant faith of our African siblings, and may we build a more just and peaceable world.

Pastor: Butter naan bread reminds us of Asia, where Christians are a minority among Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others. It represents for us the ways our faith calls us beyond our culture and reminds us of those who are persecuted for their beliefs.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church in places where Christianity is dangerous, politically or socially. May we learn from the steadfast faith of our Asian siblings and walk with Jesus through every trial.

Pastor: Tortillas remind us of Central and South America, where faith and culture is vibrant and beautiful; but also a place where Christians live among violence, drugs, and conflict as a daily reality.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church in places beset by violence and still colored by hope. May we learn from the persistent faith of our Latino siblings, and may we look upon them with compassion as our neighbors.

Pastor: The baguette reminds us of Europe, with its vast cathedrals that are often empty. It represents those who keep the faith alive in lean times and reminds us that the church is not a building, but a community of people.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church in places where its power is diminished, and its followers are few. May we learn from the age-old faith of our European siblings, and may we live our faith so that our faith might live.

Pastor: Cornbread reminds us of Native Americans who first recognized God in the rhythms of nature. It reminds us that the land we call home once belonged to others.

Many: We pray, O God, for your church as it exists in every land. May we learn from the earthy faith of our Native American siblings, and may we care for the land and all those who call it home.

Come, Holy Spirit, dwell in these breads and in this cup that they might be for us the body and blood of Christ. Come, dwell in your people of every land and language that we might be united with one another to be the body of Christ in every corner of the world today. **Amen.**

Words of Institution

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Today, Christ-followers meet in public worship and secret gatherings to break bread together. Today, in wealthy churches and hovels of poverty, wine is shared. In many different languages, by ordained clergy and volunteer pastors, these words of institution are given:

On the night he was betrayed, our Lord, Jesus, gathered for supper with twelve of his closest friends, his disciples. He took the unleavened bread of the Passover feast, and when he had given thanks to God for it, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way after supper Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This cup is the new covenant - a new relationship with God, marked by the forgiveness of your sins and fullness of life. Drink of it, all of you."

And so today, every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, we remember the sacrifices of Christ, those he sought to liberate, and the relationship that continually endures with him.

Distribution of Elements

Anthem

"At the Table of the World"
Meg Houlihan, Ed Vickery, vocalists

C. Johengen

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

You have met us at the table, Lord Jesus, to unite us with you and with our siblings around the world. Go with us now into that world, that we might be a living sign of welcome among refugees, of freedom among the oppressed, of hope amid persecution, of peace amid violence, of living faith amid a culture of skepticism, and of loving kindness toward the earth and all her inhabitants. For this we pray in the name of Jesus, his truth, light, and love. **Amen.**

* Song

“Malo! Malo! Thanks Be to God”

J. Manibusan

*(This is a call and response song giving thanks in many languages.
Ed and Jon will sing first, then respond with bold phonetic spelling.)*

Refrain:

Tongan: Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!
Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!

Portuguese: Obrigado! Alleluia!
O-bree-ga-doh! Alleluia!

Spanish/Korean: Gracias! Kam sa ham ni da!
Grah-seeahs! Kahm sah hahm nee dah!

Tongan: Malo! Malo! Thanks be to God!
Mah-loh! Mah-loh! Thanks be to God!

Verse 1:

<i>Chamoru:</i>	Si Yu'us maa'se!	See joos mah-ah-sih!
<i>Indonesian:</i>	Terima kasih!	Three-mah kah-seeh!
<i>Tagalog:</i>	Maraming salamat!	Mah-rah-meeng sah-lah-maht!
<i>German:</i>	Danke schön!	Dahn-kuh shuh(r)n!
<i>Polish:</i>	Dziękuję!	Jehn-koo-yeh!
	We thank you, Lord! We thank you, Lord! (R)	

Verse 2:

<i>Creole:</i>	Mési bokou!	Meh-see boh-koo!
<i>Mandarin:</i>	Xie xie!	Shee-eh shee-eh!
<i>Japanese:</i>	Arigatō!	Ah-ree-gah-toh!
<i>Italian:</i>	Grazie!	Grah-tsee-eh!
<i>Vietnamese:</i>	Cám ƠN!	Gahm urn!
	We thank you, Lord! We thank you, Lord! (R)	

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response

“Song of Hope”

Argentina

D Evans, Jon Weddell leading in Spanish

Dios de la esperanza, danos gozo y paz!
Al mundo en crisis habla tu verdad.
Dios de la justicia, mandanos tu luz,
Luz y esperanza an la oscuridad.

Oremos por la paz, cantemos de tu amor.
Luchemos por la paz, fieles a ti, Señor.

**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

“Chereponi”

arr. M. Sedio (Ghana)

*Songs in this service are used by permission.
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*The liturgy for today's service was written or adapted by
Steve Garnaas-Holmes, Presbyterian Outlook, Rev Abi on
<http://revgalprayerpals.blogspot.ca/>, 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.*

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 COVID cases within our congregation and community, those attending worship are welcomed to wear a mask should you feel more comfortable while worshipping with us.

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, Laura Hankins, Jo Ann Jellison, Robert Shepherd, Keith Dennis; Ushers: Shakti Subramanian; Greeters:

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>.**



CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE CALENDAR AT <https://holycovenantucc.org/events/10/13> Sandwich build following worship. All are welcomed!

C.R.O.P. HUNGER WALK, TODAY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

We have 7 walkers! Linda Carver, Tina Dickens, Tom Magraw, Cheryl Milam, Melissa Noll, Darline Warren, and Deborah Winston. It's not too late to join us on October 6. If you can't do the walk with us on church property, please support a walker with either cash or a check made payable to CROP.

If you prefer to give online, please use this link:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/team/holy-covenant-ucc-4>

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

OUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE HELENE

Members

Linda Carver, Liz Colton, Kevin Decker, Linn Finger, Jeff Edwards-Knight, Jim & Faye Humphrey, Sharon Landis, Melissa & Von McQueen-Simmons, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Ed & Beth Sharp, Anita Taylor, Ed Vickery & Eric Miner, Cathy & Jay Whitley

Friends & Family Members

Beth, Michael & Julian Bliss (Robert Shepherd), Melissa Brown, Tinnie & Craig Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Ryan Condon (Tina Dickens), Pam Culp & Pam McGill (Melissa Noll), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Ruth Hirsch (Martha Bomely), Pat Keegan, George Miner (Eric Miner), Francesca Czarnecki (Christopher Czarnecki), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charles Jernigan (Lee Brigman), Dave Johnson, Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Joe Parks (Beth Sharp), Larry & Karen Roark (Ed Vickery), Mike Santino (Melissa Noll), Michelle Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Henry & Ramona Spencer (Sara Green), 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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