



Unsplash Photo by Artem Maltsev

"Church administration is not about building an organization;
it's about building the beloved community."

– Unknown

"The work of the church is holy,
not because of what we do,
but because of whom we do it for."

– Unknown

"The church is not just called to keep the lights on.
We are called to keep the light of Christ shining."

– Unknown

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
2024 ANNUAL MEETING**

November 17, 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 "Come Build a Church" K. Medema

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
One: May the grace of our God, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of Christ be with you!
Many: **And also with you.**

Chiming of the Hour

Introit GG726 "The Summons" KELVINGROVE
Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my name be known?
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Worship Team Report Ed Vickery

* Call to the Heart Jeff Edwards-Knight
Please take a comfortable posture that supports your worshiping, reading, and singing...
One: We gather this day as a community of faith, to celebrate the work we are called to do together.
Many: **We come with open hearts, ready to listen, share, and serve.**
One: As we prepare to conduct the business of the church, may we remember that we do so not for ourselves alone but for the good of all and the glory of God.
Many: **We commit ourselves to love, justice, and the work of building God's kin-dom here and now.**
One: Let us seek wisdom in our decisions, grace in our conversations, and courage to move forward together.
Many: **With grateful hearts, we are ready to discern, decide, and dream for the future of our church. God, lead us in your way. Spirit, guide us in your truth. Christ, inspire us in your love. Amen.**

Prayer for Transgender Awareness Week

Laura Hankins, Kathy Habel, Stephanie Herrin, Martha Bomely

Reader 1: God of boundless love, we come to you with open hearts and minds, lifting up our transgender and gender-nonconforming siblings. You have knit each person together in your image, created uniquely and wonderfully in their true identity. We recognize the prejudice, discrimination, and violence they too often face, and we repent for any ways we have remained silent in the face of their suffering. Help us, O God, to see and honor each person as they are, a beloved creation of your divine love.

Reader 2: Loving God, we ask for your courage as we stand as allies in this world. You call us to follow Christ, the one who crossed boundaries, lifted up the marginalized, and spoke truth to power. May we, too, speak truth boldly against hatred, speak love against rejection, and lift up those who feel cast aside. Lead us in the work of advocacy, that we may challenge systems and policies that deny the dignity and safety of transgender people. Let us be a voice in this world proclaiming that everyone deserves to live fully, safely, and freely.

Reader 3: God of justice, make us restless when we see injustice. Strengthen our resolve to dismantle prejudice, to confront our own biases, and to create spaces where all are welcome. Teach us to listen and learn from our transgender siblings, honoring their journeys and believing their experiences. We pray for all who suffer from violence and oppression because of their gender identity. Be present with them, O God, in their pain, and move our hands and hearts to work for their safety and peace.

Reader 4: Holy One, may our lives reflect your love and justice. Let us walk in solidarity, empowered by your Spirit, so that our church and community become places of true welcome and belonging. We pray that, together, we may build a world where all transgender and gender-nonconforming people can live without fear, expressing their full selves. Remind us, every day, that they are made in your image, that their worth is sacred, and that our faith calls us to stand beside them in love and advocacy. Amen.

Hymn 181

“You Are Salt for the Earth, O People”

**You are the salt for the earth, O people: salt for the reign of God!
Share the flavor of life, O people: life in the City of God!**

**Bring forth the reign of mercy, bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice, bring forth the City of God!**

Christian Education

JoAnn Jellison

Prayer of Transformation (*unison*)

Jeff Edwards-Knight

Please join me in a unison prayer of transformation...

Holy One, we confess that, in the busyness of life, we often neglect the important things that nurture and sustain us. We put off caring for our health, our homes, and our finances, letting them fall to the side as we get caught up in society’s endless demands and pressures. Forgive us for placing urgency over true importance and help us to tend to the gifts and responsibilities you have entrusted to us. May we find balance and wisdom to care for our lives with intention and love. Amen.

Words of Grace

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

God meets us in our imperfection, with grace that overflows. Even when we fall short or lose our way in the grind of daily life, God’s love remains constant, drawing us back to what truly matters. Know that we are forgiven, and that God is inviting us, gently and persistently, to find rest, renewal, and balance. May this grace free us to care for ourselves and the life God has given us with peace and purpose. Amen.

Response to God’s Grace GG750

GOODNESS IS STRONGER (South Africa)

**Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.**

Victory is ours; victory is ours through God who loves us. (2x)

Racial Justice & Equity Team Report

Meg Houlihan

Epistle Lesson

3 John 1:2 (NRSV)

Meg Houlihan

Our Epistle Lesson for today comes from 3 John 1:2, where a follower of John prays that the physical health of an elder named Gaius will be as good as his spiritual health...

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church;

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

Christian Lesson

Mark 13:1-8 (NIV)

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Our Christian Lesson for today comes from the Gospel of Mark 13:1-8, where Jesus speaks of the destruction of the temple and the future...

As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!" "Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?" Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

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.

Hymn 438 v1

"It Is Well"

VILLE DU HAVRE

**When peace, like a river, upholds me each day,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
Whatever my lot, you have taught me to say,
"It is well; it is well with my soul."**

**It is well (*it is well*) with my soul, (*with my soul*) it is well,
It is well with my soul.**

Pastor's Report

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

Mission & Justice Team Report

Suzanne Lamorey

Buildings and Grounds Report

Suzanne Lamorey

Invitation to Generosity

Jeff Edwards-Knight

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

As we gather today to celebrate and plan for the future of our church, we remember that this work—our mission, our ministry, and our vision—are all sustained by the gifts of this community. In giving, we not only support the practical needs of the church but also make an offering of commitment to the shared life we hold dear. May our gifts be a symbol of our faith in what we can accomplish together and a seed for all the ways God’s Spirit will lead us forward. Let us give in gratitude and generosity, knowing that each offering brings us closer to the beloved community God calls us to be.

* 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*)

Jeff Edwards-Knight

Please join me in a unison prayer of dedication for all we will receive...

Loving God, we offer these gifts as signs of our commitment to the work you call us to do together. Bless and multiply them, that they may nourish our church, serve our community, and bring forth your vision of justice and compassion. May these offerings be used to build a future rooted in love, hope, and possibility. Amen.

* Hymn 391

“In the Midst of New Dimensions”

J. Rush

**In the midst of new dimensions / In the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples / Wandering in their separate ways?**

Refrain: **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.

**Through the flood of starving people / Warring factions and despair,
Who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care? (R)**

**As we stand a world divided / By our own self-seeking schemes,
Grant that we, your global village / Might envision wider dreams. (R)**

**Should the threats of dire predictions / Cause us to withdraw in pain,
May your blazing phoenix spirit / Resurrect the church again. (R)**

*** FOLLOWING A SHORT BREAK, PLEASE JOIN US ON ZOOM FOR THE BUSINESS PART OF OUR MEETING. MEMBERS, YOUR VIRTUAL PRESENCE ARE NEEDED TO ESTABLISH A QUORUM, AND REMEMBER --- YOUR VOTE COUNTS! ***

Join Zoom Meeting at 12:15PM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88199869583?pwd=sOio4aRJajaMHYkwbzOiJSZIDSIe48.1>

Meeting ID: 881 9986 9858

Passcode 731969

Dial by location: 1-305-224-1968 US



The Proposed Budget Summary and Budget Detail:

<https://qrco.de/bfZLsv>

Call to Order	Consistory President, Jeffery Edwards Knight
Establishment of Quorum - Quorum requirement of 49	
Approval of 2023 Minutes	
President's Report	Jeffery Edwards Knight
Endowment Report	Cheri Lovell
Nominations for Consistory Class of 2027	JoAnn Jellison
Elder Nominees: Tom Magraw, Dawn Robinson	
Deacon Nominees: Martha Bomely, Tom Lannin, Lee Parrish	
Nominations for Endowment Team	
Endowment Nominees: Mel Andersen, Gregg Walker	
Endowment Chair Extension: Cheri Lovell	
Budget & Finance Report	Jeff Hughes
2024 Highlights, Stewardship, Capital Report and 2025 Proposed Budget	
Acknowledgement of Ministry Teams	Terry Raley-Dennis
Adjournment	

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response 236

HALLE, HALLE

Halle, halle, hallelujah! (3x) Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Postlude

“Gather Us In”

M. Haugen

All Church Potluck today! Plan to join us following worship!

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

Parts of the liturgy for today's service were written by Rev. Christopher Czarnecki and adapted from the United Church of Christ's Worship Ways.

WE PROVIDE OUR EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME WITH HELP FROM:

D Evans, Brian Hankins, Jo Ann Jellison, Shakti Subramanian

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Stay connected! 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/>

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>.



Post-Election Check-in Meeting November 20th at 3:30pm

Following last week's election, we had a post-election prayer service at Holy Covenant, which was a time for people to openly share how they're doing following the results of the election. We had more than 20 people attend the prayer service, many expressing gratitude for the space and time they were given to openly share. If you attended this prayer service or maybe didn't get the chance to, we will be hosting a follow-up meeting to check-in with everyone and see how they're doing. What are you hearing? What is giving you hope? What strategies are helping you move forward? Come let's discuss. The

meeting will be led by Eileen Howe and take place on Wednesday, November 20th at 3:30pm via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86973227153?pwd=hgMBPi78mk9aT4myau9mQ3tUmQJTUU.1>

Meeting ID: 869 7322 7153 Passcode: 977319

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING MEAL, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

On Thanksgiving Day at 5:00pm we will be having a community Thanksgiving meal at the church in the gathering room. Turkey, ham, and drinks will be provided and those attending are welcome to bring a side dish or desert to share with others. This meal is open to anyone, especially those who are without family or don't feel like making a big meal for just the few folks in their family. A sign-up sheet is available in the gathering room on the buffet. For questions, please contact the church office at 704-599-9810.

Mecklenburg County HOMES Program

Mecklenburg County's HOMES property tax relief program, aka **Helping Out Mecklenburg homeowners with Economic Support**, provides up to \$648 to qualifying Mecklenburg County homeowners, and more if they live in Charlotte or Davidson. Already this year, more than \$3 million in funding has been awarded to homeowners! New applicants and previous grant recipients are encouraged to complete and submit the easy, one-page application online, by email, or by mail. **The deadline is Friday, Nov. 22 for homeowners to apply.** The application can be found at MeckNC.gov/4HOMES.

MECKMIN'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY-WIDE INTERFAITH FRIENDSGIVING SERVICE

Thursday, November 21, 2024, 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm, hosted by Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1000 E Morehead St. Charlotte, NC 28204

HOLIDAY LOVE OFFERING FOR OUR STAFF

During this joyful time of year, we ask you to consider contributing to a holiday love offering to be divided among our dedicated staff members who work hard to make Holy Covenant a place of welcome, warmth, & spiritual renewal. No gift is too small and all are appreciated. If you choose to give, electronic offerings can be made to Terry Raley-Dennis via Venmo: @Terry-Raley-Dennis Or Zelle: tldennis2@hotmail.com; or to Martha Bomely via PayPal: Martha.bomely@gmail.com

**CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE CALENDAR AT <https://holycovenantucc.org/events/>
11/24/24 Advent Decorating Party following worship
11/28/24 Community Thanksgiving at HCUCC**

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Dr. Lee Parrish and family in the recent death of his aunt, Dianne Goins
Linn Finger and family in the death of his brother, Michael Neil Finger
Eric Miner & Ed Vickery and family in the death of Eric's father, George Miner
Linda Carver, Liz Colton, Kevin Decker, Alix Felsing & Joann Felsing, Linn Finger,
Jeff Edwards-Knight, Laura Hankins, Jim & Faye Humphrey, Sharon Landis, Melissa
& Von McQueen-Simmons, Sue & Bill Pascucci, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Ed & Beth
Sharp, Anita Taylor, Ed Vickery & Eric Miner, Darline Warren, Cathy & Jay Whitley

Friends & Family Members

Ramona Spencer & Family in the recent death of her husband, Henry (Sara Green)
Rick Andersen and family in the recent death of his son, Dana (Mel Andersen)
Beth, Michael & Julian Bliss (Robert Shepherd), Melissa Brown, Tinnie & Craig
Chrismon (Melissa Noll), Jeanne Hord (Diane Neese), Pam Culp & Pam McGill (Melissa
Noll), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Ruth Hirsch (Martha Bomely), Pat Keegan,
Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charles Jernigan (Lee Parrish), Dave
Johnson, Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Earl & Susie Morgan (Ed Vickery), Joe Parks
(Beth Sharp), Larry & Karen Roark (Ed Vickery), Mike Santino (Melissa Noll), Michelle
Sharp (Beth & Ed Sharp), Janet Wakefield (Linda Burby), Brian Weddell (Jon
Weddell), John Zastrow (Barb Schneller)

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to
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: P.O. Box 481285, Charlotte NC 28269
3501 West W.T. Harris Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28269-8510
www.holycovenantucc.org 704-599-9810