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“The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God’s eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love.”
- Meister Eckhart

“Once we deeply trust that we ourselves are precious in God’s eyes, we are able to recognize the preciousness of others and their unique places in God’s heart.”
- Henri Nouwen

“Before becoming a Muslim, a Hindu, a Sikh or a Christian, let’s become a Human first.”
- Guru Nanak

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
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 8, 2026 | 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 "The Old Rugged Cross" arr. L. Bergquist
Mary Tarr, violin

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: **And also with you.**

Chiming of the Hour

Centering Prayer Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
Let us center ourselves in prayer as we gather for this time of worship...
Ever-present God, help us to be mindful of you as we breathe. And let our breathing be the practice of releasing whatever we carried through the doors of church today—our worries, our frustrations, the feelings that plague us. And as those come to our mind, help us to know we can set them down, even if it's just for now. Know here in this space you don't have to have it all together, or be someone other than who you are, all you have to do is be present to yourself and the God within you. The presence within that has never left you and has been waiting for you to return. Not to escape the world, but to be rooted deeply enough in the divine that we breathe in and live from the love of God. And from this place of stillness, remember we are inherently and forever tethered to the divine. Amen.

Introit "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley" LONESOME VALLEY
**Jesus walked this lonesome valley. He had to walk it by himself.
Oh, nobody else could walk it for him. He had to walk it by himself.**

* Call to the Heart

Patrick Washburn

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

One: We live in a world that divides us into categories: citizen and stranger, insider and outsider, higher and lower class.

Many: Yet we gather to see with different eyes, the eyes of God who beholds the sacred in all.

One: We see the immigrant and refugee, those far from home, those navigating an unfamiliar world.

Many: We behold a beloved child of God, made in the divine image, worthy of dignity and welcome.

One: We see those who live and love differently than us, living authentically in a world that questions their worth.

Many: We behold a beloved child of God, whose identity is known and cherished by the One who created them.

One: We see the poor, the hungry, the unhoused, people pushed to the margins of our society.

Many: We behold beloved children of God, in whose faces we see the Christ, calling us into compassion and action.

One: We see those whose politics, whose faith, whose way of life looks nothing like our own.

Many: We behold beloved children of God, carrying the same divine spark that burns within us, reminding us we belong to one another.

One: We are all drawing from the same well, all thirsting for the same belonging, the same dignity, the same love.

Many: Let us now worship the God who sees us fully, so that we might learn to truly see each other. Amen.

* Hymn 459 "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"

NETTLETON

**Come, O Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing your grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of endless praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing love.**

**Here I pause in my sojourning; giving thanks for having come;
Come to trust at every turning, God will guide me safely home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
Came to rescue me from danger, blessed body, precious blood.**

**O to grace how great a debtor daily I am drawn anew!
Let that grace now like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to you.
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've known:
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your very own.**

Monthly Affirmation

Ourselves: I open my heart to a new path, trusting the light of God to guide my way.

Neighbor: You open your heart to a new path, trusting the light of God to guide your way.

World: We open our heart to a new path, trusting the light of God to guide our way.

Song of Preparation “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive”

DETROIT

“Forgive our sins as we forgive,” you taught us, Lord, to pray,
But you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.

Prayer of Transformation (*unison*)

Patrick Washburn

Join me in prayer as we confess the ways in which we separate ourselves from God...

God of love and justice, we confess that we do not always see others as you see them. We can look past the divine image in those who are different from us, and allow the categories of this world such as race, class, nationality, religion to determine who is worthy of our care and compassion. Transform us, O God, that we might see with your eyes, love with your heart, and recognize the sacred worth in every person we encounter. Amen.

Song of Transformation “God, Be Merciful to Me”

REDHEAD 76

God be merciful to me; on your grace I rest my plea.

My transgressions I confess; grief and guilt my soul oppress.

Wash me, make me pure within; cleanse, O cleanse me from my sin.

Gracious God, my heart renew, make my spirit right and true.

Do not cast me from your sight nor remove your Spirit’s light.

Your salvation’s joy restore, make me steadfast evermore.

Words of Grace

Patrick Washburn

Friends, hear this good news...

We may not see others in the way God does, but God has never stopped seeing us. Not through the lens of our failures or our limitations, but as a beloved child made in the divine image. May the same grace that moved Jesus to sit with the Samaritan woman at the well and see God in her be the same the grace that meets us here today, exactly as we are. Know whoever you are, you are seen, you are known, and you are loved by God. Go now and offer that same grace and love to others in the world. Amen.

* Gospel Lesson

John 4:1-15 (CEB)

Patrick Washburn

Our Gospel reading for today comes John 4:1-15, where Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well and asks her for a drink of water...

Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was making more disciples and baptizing more than John (although Jesus' disciples were baptizing, not Jesus himself). Therefore, he left Judea and went back to Galilee.

Jesus had to go through Samaria. He came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, so he sat down at the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." His disciples had gone into the city to buy him some food. The Samaritan woman asked, "Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.) Jesus responded, "If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you don't have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave this well to us, and he drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will never be thirsty and will never need to come here to draw water!"

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

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

"Seeing with God's Eyes "

Invitation to Generosity

Patrick Washburn

Jesus didn't go to the well to take, he went to see, give, and transform someone. And in that same spirit, we are invited to bring what we have and offer it in service to God's kin-dom. May our gifts today, including our support of One Great Hour of Sharing, be an act of seeing, a declaration that the Spirit of God dwells in every person, that their need is our need, and their thirst is our thirst. Let us now give generously, as those who have been seen and loved by God.

* Doxology

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

* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Patrick Washburn

Please join me in a prayer of dedication for the gifts we have received...

Good and giving God, receive these gifts as an extension of our seeing. May they reach the hands of those who are hungry, help to house the displaced, and comfort the afflicted. May what has been offered here multiply, bringing life to those in our world who are all too often pushed to the margins. May we be transformed in our giving, reminded that we are all beloved and all bound to one another in you as one. 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)

* Benediction

Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response

WORLD PEACE PRAYER

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust,
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe.

Postlude

“If You But Suffer God to Guide You”
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arr. M. Sedio

*Parts of the liturgy were written by 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
Children’s Church: Jo Ann Jellison Youth Group: Tammie Holt
Ushers: Shakti Subramanian Greeters:
Refreshments: Southside Covenant Group

Holy Week Services & Events

Mar. 29 – Palm/Passion Sunday 11:00am
Installation of New Members

Apr. 2 – Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm
Soup & Bread Dinner 5:30-6:30pm
SignUpGenius is available

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ACAD23A2FE3-56198146-maundy>

Apr. 5 – Easter Worship 11:00am
Egg Hunt for Children following Worship

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

GET ALL THE DETAILS FOR NEWS AND EVENTS AT
<https://holycovenantucc.org/>

- Mar. 08 - New Member / Inquirer Class I - 12:30pm; RITI 3:30pm
- Mar. 14 - Project Linus Blanketeers 10:00am- 4:00pm
- Mar. 15 - Consistory - 12:30pm
- Mar. 18 - Children & Youth Programming Meeting - 7:00pm Zoom
- Mar. 22 - New Member Class II; Sandwich Build 12:30pm
- Mar. 22 - New Member / Inquirer Class II - 12:30pm
- Mar. 28 - Game Night - 6:30-8:30pm
- Mar. 29 - Welcome Sunday for New Members; Palm/Passion Sunday

Your generosity builds a more inclusive church!

Explore secure options available online

<https://holycovenantucc.org/giving/>



At Holy Covenant, we celebrate the many ways you share your gifts: through pledged support, spontaneous generosity, and acts of love in our shared life. If you'd like to give today, you can scan the QR code to access our secure online giving options. Thank you for sustaining the ministries of love, welcome, and justice we are creating together.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: OUR LOVE OFFERING TO THE WORLD

We will be receiving this special offering through March/Lent.



NEW MEMBER / INQUIRER CLASS TODAY

If you are interested in becoming a member at Holy Covenant or would like to explore what becoming a member means, please reach out to Pastor Chris, or contact the church office, office@holycovenantucc.org.

Please Remember in Prayer

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to
prayers@holycovenantucc.org.

Members

Mel Andersen, Martha Bomely, Liz Colton, Kevin Decker, Markus Fuchs, Kathy Habel, Laura Hankins, Eileen Howe, Jim & Faye Humphrey, Roxie McMillon, Linda Miller, Benjamin Rudolph, Kathleen Smith & Lisa Cloninger, Anita Taylor, Tommy Tomlinson, Sally Phelan-Young

Friends & Family Members

Joan Bowling (Kristen Fuchs), Lester Brigman (Lee Parrish), Kim Chamberlain (Kevin Decker), Gayle Clay (Jay Whitley), Erica Echeverri, Gloria Echeverri (Melissa Noll), Jason Field (Benjamin Rudolph), Ann Garret (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Samuel Head (Benjamin Rudolph), Jack Hillard (Barbara Schneller), Jeanne Hord (Diane Neese), Cindy Hedrick (Barb Schneller), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charlie Holt (Autumn Holt), Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Sakhi Naushad (Stephanie Herrin), Rhiannon Pacewicz (Dom Ciciollo), Frank Roach (Kristen Fuchs), Tom, Beth and Ariel Rudolph (Benjamin Rudolph), Michelle Sharp (Beth Sharp), Tiffany Turner (Terry Raley-Dennis), Dave & Jennifer Ward (Jay & Cathy Whitley), Tara Washburn (Patrick Washburn), Scott Whitley (Jay Whitley)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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Jon Weddell, Minister of Music

Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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