



HOLY COVENANT

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

-be the Church, everywhere



**“We gave the Future to the winds,
and slumbered tranquilly in the Present,
waving the dull world around us into dreams.”**

~Edgar Allan Poe

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
LAITY SUNDAY ~ DISABILITY AWARENESS / ADA ANNIVERSARY

July 26, 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 "Praise Him! Praise Him!" arr. Lloyd Larson
Patrick Washburn, piano

Welcome and Announcements Ed Vickery
One: May the peace of Christ be with you.
Many: And also with you.

Chiming of the Hour

Centering Prayer Ed Vickery
*Let us center ourselves in prayer as we gather for this time of worship...
Holy One, you call us to find your kin-dom already hidden in our world—
in tiny, transforming possibilities; in beauty that calls us to surrender all; in
complicated choices that call for wisdom. Reveal yourself here in this moment
and heighten our senses that we may find you and join you in building this kin-
dom of love, and hope, and peace. In the name of the One who calls us to seek,
Jesus, the Christ. Amen.*

Introit "There's a Spirit of Love in This Place" M. A. Miller
There's a spirit of love in this place. (2x)
You can't see it, but it's there, just as precious as the air.
There's a spirit of love in this place.

There's the presence of peace in this room. (2x)
In God's tenderness is found peace that passes human bounds.
There's the presence of peace in this room.

* Call to the Heart Jeffery Edwards-Knight
Please take a comfortable posture that supports your reading and worshiping...
One: The kin-dom of heaven is like:
Many: A tiny mustard seed that carries the life of a tree
One: The kin-dom of heaven is like:

Many: A tiny portion of yeast that makes bread rise

One: The kin-dom of heaven is like:

Many: A tiny pearl of great price that we would give all our “stuff” to have

One: The kin-dom of heaven is like:

Many: A fishing boat filled with catch—good and bad together—
With fisherfolk wise to recognize the good.

* Hymn 4

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You”

HYMN TO JOY

Ludwig van Beethoven

Joyful, joyful, we adore you, God of glory, God of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before you, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the storms of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All your works with joy surround you, earth and heaven reflect your rays,
Stars and angels sign around you, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, teach us what our praise should be.

You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed,
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother, all who love belong to you;
Teach us how to love each other, by that love our joy renew.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus which morning stars began;
Boundless love is reigning o’er us, reconciling race and clan.
Ever singing, move we forward, faithful in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us onward in the triumph song of life.

Monthly Affirmation

Ed Vickery

Ourselves: The light of Christ dwells within me. May it grow, shine, and bless the world.

Neighbor: The light of Christ dwells within you. May it grow, shine, and bless the world.

World: The light of Christ dwells within us. May it grow, shine, and bless the world.

Special Music

“We Are a Rainbow”

by Brent D. Holmes

Dorrie Hankins, vocals, Judah L. Jones, vocals & guitar

Stories for All People

“Disabled Clergy”

Laura Hankins

Special Music

“God Help the Outcasts”

by A. Menken/S. Schwartz (from The Hunchback of Notre Dame)

Dorrie Hankins, vocals, Patrick Washburn, piano

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Windy Allison

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.

Hebrew Lesson

1Kings 3:5-12

Pam Shimberg

Our Hebrew lesson for today comes from God's remarkable dream-visit to Solomon, where God offers him anything he desires, and Solomon humbly asks not for riches, but for great wisdom...

The Lord appeared to Solomon at Gibeon in a dream at night. God said, “Ask whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you.” Solomon responded, “You showed so much kindness to your servant, my father, David, when he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and with a heart true to you. You've kept this great loyalty and kindness for him and have now given him a son to sit on his throne. And now, Lord my God, you have made me, your servant, king in my father David's place. But I'm young and inexperienced. I know next to nothing. But I'm here, your servant, in the middle of the people you have chosen, a large population that can't be numbered or counted due to its vast size. Please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help.”

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had made this request. God said to him, “Because you have asked for this instead of requesting long life, wealth, or victory over your enemies—asking for discernment so as to acquire good judgment— I will now do just what you said. Look, I hereby give you a wise and understanding mind. There has been no one like you before now, nor will there be anyone like you afterward.

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

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

* Gospel Lesson Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 (CEB) Jeffery Edwards-Knight
*Please take a comfortable posture that supports your reading and worshiping...
Our Gospel lesson for today comes from Matthew 13, where it focuses on the
Nature of the Kingdom, both hidden and growing. Jesus tells these parables to
large crowds.*

Parable of the mustard seed

He told another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. It’s the smallest of all seeds. But when it’s grown, it’s the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds in the sky come and nest in its branches.”

Parable of the yeast

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in a bushel of wheat flour until the yeast had worked its way through all the dough.”

Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure that somebody hid in a field, which someone else found and covered up. Full of joy, the finder sold everything and bought that field.

Parable of the merchant

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls. When he found one very precious pearl, he went and sold all that he owned and bought it.

Parable of the net

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that people threw into the lake and gathered all kinds of fish. When it was full, they pulled it to the shore, where they sat down and put the good fish together into containers. But the bad fish they threw away. That’s the way it will be at the end of the present age. The angels will go out and separate the evil people from the righteous people, and will throw the evil ones into a burning furnace. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.

Treasures new and old

“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked. They said to him, “Yes.” Then he said to them, “Therefore, every legal expert who has been trained as a disciple for the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings old and new things out of their treasure chest.”

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.

Meditation

Brian Hankins

Meditation

Anne Hayes

Meditation

Kevin Edwards-Knight

Song

“Oh, Seek First”

SEEK YE FIRST

lyrics by Karen Lafferty

Dorrie Hankins, vocals Judah L. Jones, vocals & guitar

Oh, seek first the realm of our God,
And true righteousness,
And all good things will be added unto you.
Allelu -, Alleluia

Ask, and it will be given unto you;
Seek and you will find.
Knock, and the door will be opened up for you.
Allelu -, Alleluia

We can not live by bread alone,
But by every word
That proceeds from the goodness of our God.
Allelu -, Alleluia

Invitation to Generosity

Jeffery Edwards-Knight

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

Our God calls us to seek and find the hints of the Kin-dom in our world,
and to nurture its growth among us. We will use our gifts, tithes and offerings to
rebuild the body of Christ.

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH, words by M. Luti

Praise God whose mercies never cease;
Whose justice raises up the least;
And sits all creatures down to feast;
God's mercy is our hope and peace! Amen.

* Prayer of Dedication (*unison*) Jeffery Edwards-Knight
Please join me in a prayer of dedication for the gifts we have received...
Grow these gifts in your love. Bless our offerings, our hearts and our hopes
in your love to make us worthy of your work for your Kin-dom in heaven, and
among us here, even now. Fill these gifts and each of us with your goodness.
Amen.

* Hymn 473 "Blessed Assurance" ASSURANCE
Fanny Crosby

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of the Spirit, washed in Christ's blood.

Refrain: This is my story, this is my song
Praising my Savior all the day long (2x)

Perfect submission, perfect delight!
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. (R)

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blessed;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with God's goodness, lost in Christ's love. (R)

* Benediction Ed Vickery

* Benediction Response "Send Us Out" J. M. Talbot
Send us out to proclaim the reign of your kin-dom,
Send us out to proclaim and to heal,
Send us out with your power and your authority
To overcome and to heal the world.

Postlude "To God Be the Glory" arr. John Carter
Patrick Washburn, piano

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*Parts of the liturgy for today's service were adapted from
UCC Worship Ways.*

*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
Ushers: Dave Shimberg, Shakti Subramanian
Greeters: Terry Raley-Dennis
Refreshments: Joy Decker, Kathy Gorman

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT UCC



*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.*

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Sept 18 & 19: Congregational Strategic Planning Weekend**
Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

A SIMPLER WAY TO SERVE!

To sign up, visit our website www.holycovenantucc.org and click
Volunteer | SignUpGenius
Join our Ministries! <https://tinyurl.com/HCUCCSundays>

SOJOURNERS CLASS - ENGAGING ADULT EDUCATION

All are welcome and no preparation is required.

Join us Sunday mornings in the Conference Room or online via Zoom,
9:45am Meeting ID: 895 6175 8099 Passcode: 986788

Please Remember in Prayer Members

Terrence & Anne Hayes in the recent death of Anne's mother, Claire Hurst.
Mel Andersen, Darline Batton, Kathy Habel, Jim & Faye Humphrey, Melissa Noll,
Lee Parrish, Anita Taylor, Alice & Sally Phelan-Young

Friends & Family Members

Ashley Hedrick & Skip Yeager in the recent death of Ashley's mother, Cindy Hedrick (Barbara Schneller)
Chris Calder & family in the recent death of his father, Jeff Calder (Martha Bomely)
Farug Brown Bey (Jeffery Edwards-Knight), Joan Bowling (Kristen Fuchs), Lester Brigman (Lee Parrish), Kim Chamberlain (Kevin Decker), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dom Ciciollo), April Dawson, Mario Gaetani and family (Kristen Fuchs), Ann Garret (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Samuel Head (Benjamin Rudolph), Jack Hillard (Barbara Schneller), Jeanne Hord (Diane Neese), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charlie Holt (Autumn Holt), Judson Hulsey (Kristen Fuchs), Janet & Lon Kominski (Dawn Simmons), Renee Lewis (Martha Battles), Richard Lease (Barb Schneller), Matty McKinnon (Joy Decker), Geraldine Mobley (Jeffery Edwards-Knight), Tom, Beth and Ariel Rudolph (Benjamin Rudolph), Brenchia Thomas, Steve Thomas (Jeffery Edwards-Knight) Dave & Jennifer Ward (Jay & Cathy Whitley), June Washburn (Patrick Washburn), Scott Whitley (Jay Whitley)

If you wish to add someone to the list, please send a note to prayers@holycovenantucc.org. We periodically adjust our prayer list. If you would like to have someone added back, please contact the office.

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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Jon Weddell, MDiv, MSW, Minister of Music

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