HOLY COVENANT
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
-be the Church, everywhere



Unsplash Photo by Glodi Miessi

"Any community seriously concerned with its own freedom has to be concerned about other people's freedom as well."
~Assata Shakur

"If our dreams make the world better, we should never stop chasing them."
~Ellery Adams

"With our future ahead of us and the ancestors beside us, there's nothing we can't do."
~Courtney Taylor

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
WELCOME SUNDAY ~ UCC HIGHER EDUCATION SUNDAY

October 25, 2026, 10:55 am

Every voice matters: Hearing assistance devices are available.
See the ushers for a wireless transmitter and your personal ear buds.

∗ *Your whole self is welcome here. Please feel free to take care of your body during worship in ways that work for you.*

Prelude "Close to Thee" arr. Lloyd Larson
Patrick Washburn, piano

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

Chiming of the Hour

Introit "Let Us Build a House" ALL ARE WELCOME
Let us build a house where all are named,
Their songs and visions heard
And love and treasured,
Taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
Prayers of faith and songs of grace;
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome; all are welcome; all are welcome in this place.

∗ Call to the Heart Kristin Andes

Please take a comfortable posture that supports your reading and worshiping and singing…

One: We gather today still hoping for a world where...

Many: there is peace between nations, an end to gun violence, and schools where our children can learn without fear.

One: We gather today envisioning a world where…

Many: people live with dignity, having access to fair wages, affordable homes, quality healthcare, and enough food.

One: We gather today dreaming of places where...

Many: people of every race, religion, gender, sexuality, and ability are welcomed and know they belong.

One: We gather today hoping for a world where…

Many: where immigrants find welcome, the marginalized find justice, and the hurting find people who will stand with them.

One: We gather today envisioning a world where…

Many: we remember how deeply our lives are connected, and the importance of caring for this earth and all its creatures.

One: We gather today dreaming of what we might become…

Many: when we join our lives together, and help move this world closer to the justice, peace, and love God dreams for us all.

∗ Hymn 277 "Holy, Holy, Holy" NICAEA

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
Early in the morning we praise your majesty.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! Saints adore you truly,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim bow before you only,
From the beginning, God eternally.

Holy, holy, holy! Though we know but dimly,
Through the eyes of humankind your glory may not see,
You alone are holy, you alone are worthy,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Join us in welcoming our new members!
Sandy Henney – Chris Rodgers

Response of the Congregation

Pastor: Will the members of Holy Covenant United Church of Christ please take a comfortable posture and join in the mutual promise and welcome?

Congregation: We welcome each of you and celebrate your journey of faith. We promise to search with you for truth in Scripture, word and witness; to walk with you in life's joys and sorrows; to support you when life is shaken; to laugh with you when life lifts your spirit; to share silence, song and sacrament; and to grow in Christian love and mutual appreciation. We will rely on God's sustaining presence as we journey forward together.

Stories for All People — Martha Battles

Testimony to Jesus — Terrence Hayes

Let us reflect on the life and teachings of Jesus as they bear witness to our world in this time and place…

If you've ever read the gospels, you might observe that Jesus is really good at noticing things. He didn't just move through crowds, teach lessons, or perform miracles, he had this unique gift of paying attention to people. He seemed to notice what others missed, sometimes even what mattered most.

Pull out your Bible and you'll see Jesus noticed people that others overlooked. He noticed hidden pain and the difficult things people were wrestling with. He saw the Pharisees' motives, pointed out things the disciples didn't realize, and saw right through the intentions of those who tried to outwit him.

I like to believe Jesus noticed those kinds of things, not because he had a chip on his shoulder or something to prove, but because he cared about living in a world where he and his people could experience the kin-dom of God. And he wanted to move people ever so slightly to the reality of that dream.

I mean this was the guy who believed in what tiny mustard seeds could grow into, that a widow's two coins mattered more than wealthy pockets, and that when uncovered, lamps bright enough could light up entire houses. In a way, I think Jesus invites us to look, listen, and respond to a world in need with love.

So, what might we see if we slowed down enough to really notice the people around us? To notice what they're going through? What systems have them feeling harmed or crushed? What might they need right now to live more easily and thrive in a world that has them feeling little or no hope?

I say all this because Jesus didn't just notice what was wrong, he realized he had the power do something about it.

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.
Many: Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Hebrew Scripture Deuteronomy 34:1-9 (CEB) Kristin Andes
Our Hebrew lesson for today comes from Deuteronomy 34:1-9, where Moses dies before reaching the Promised Land and passes the role of leadership onto Joshua…

Then Moses hiked up from the Moabite plains to Mount Nebo, the peak of the Pisgah slope, which faces Jericho. The Lord showed him the whole land: the Gilead region as far as Dan's territory; all the parts belonging to Naphtali along with the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, as well as the entirety of Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea; also the arid southern plain, and the plain—including the Jericho Valley, Palm City—as far as Zoar.
Then the Lord said to Moses: "This is the land that I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I promised: 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have shown it to you with your own eyes; however, you will not cross over into it." Then Moses, the Lord's servant, died—right there in the land of Moab, according to the Lord's command. The Lord buried him in a valley in Moabite country across from Beth-peor. Even now, no one knows where Moses' grave is. Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eyesight wasn't impaired, and his vigor hadn't diminished a bit. Back down in the Moabite plains, the Israelites mourned Moses' death for thirty days. At that point, the time for weeping and for mourning Moses was over. Joshua, Nun's son, was filled with wisdom because Moses had placed his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to Joshua, and they did exactly what the Lord commanded Moses.

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

"A Little Closer than We Are Today"

Gift in Song — "Wake Up Everybody"
Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes
Angela Allison, D Evans, vocals

Offertory — "Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart" — arr. Darcy Stanley
Patrick Washburn, piano

Invitation to Generosity — Kristin Andes

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

The hopes of those who came before us were often larger than what they were able to see fulfilled in their own lifetimes. Through the gifts we give, we can help carry those hopes forward, making room for healing, justice, and new possibilities for those who come after us. Let us now share our gifts, trusting that what we offer today can help move us a little closer to God's dream for the world.

∗ Doxology — OLD HUNDREDTH

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)* — Kristin Andes

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

Loving God, receive these gifts and use them through this church, its people, and its ministries. May they help us build beloved community, seek justice, and create spaces where all people can know dignity and belonging. Through what we give and how we live, help us to participate in creating your kin-dom here on earth. Amen.

* Hymn 503 "O Savior, Let Me Walk with You" MARYTON

O Savior, let me walk with you in the early paths of service true;
Tell me your secret, help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear winning word of love.
Teach me the wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me your patience; let me be in closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray far down the future's broadening way,
In peace that only you can give, with you, O Savior, let me live.

* Benediction Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response HALLE, HALLE
Halle, halle, hallelujah! *(3x)* **Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

Postlude " Great Is Thy Faithfulness" arr. Sandra Eithun
Patrick Washburn, piano

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The liturgy for this service was written by 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
Ushers: Shakti Subramanian, Roxie McMillon, David Shimberg
Greeters: Pam Shimberg, Anne Hayes
Refreshments: Southside Covenant Group

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

CHECK OUT OUR ONLINE CALENDAR AT
holycovenantucc.org/event-listings/
and holycovenantucc.org/news-listings/



Your generosity builds a more inclusive church!
Explore secure options available online
https://holycovenantucc.org/giving/
UCC Special Offering Christmas Fund (Our Christmas in July)

Join us in thanking Patrick Washburn for being our accompanist while Jon Weddell takes his vacation!

3rd Quarter Giving Statements Distributed
Thank you to all who have made financial contributions this year. On Tuesday, October 20, your quarterly statement was sent via email. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to the church office, or speak to our church Treasurer, Martha Bomely. We are grateful for every one of you, including those sharing of your time and talents. Together, we are a strong faith family!

All-Saints Sunday Worship Service; Nov. 1st - Bring Photos!
We will give thanks for the lives of those who have shaped us in faith and love and who now rest in God's eternal care. Bring a photograph of saint from your own life whom you would like to remember during worship. We hope you will join us for this meaningful and sacred time of remembrance.

Church World Service Presentation; Nov. 1st after Worship
Kevin McCoy of Church World Service (CWS) will share about the life-changing work and opportunities available to our church to partner in this global ecumenical ministry. Kevin will offer an overview of the many ways CWS responds to human needs around the world. **We hope you'll stay after worship for this informative and inspiring opportunity to learn how people of faith are making a difference around the world and how we can continue to be part of that work.**
Special Movie Screening; Saturday, Nov. 7th | 7:00 PM at HCUCC
Holy Covenant UCC will host a special film screening of **How to Stop the Sunrise - A Short Film** at 7:00 PM. Doors open at 6:30 PM. See the Loop newsletter for details.

CROP Hunger Walk; Nov. 8th at Holy Covenant
Let's alleviate hunger both locally and worldwide! Church World Service is operating worldwide to share resources and educate the hungry and victims of natural disasters. Join the walk! Contact Tina Dickens at **taichitina@gmail.com** or 704-200-0089. **https://tinyurl.com/HC-Crop-Walk**

HCUCC Annual Meeting and All-Church Potluck: Sunday, Nov. 15
Like every year, our meeting will take place in two parts. The first part will take place in worship as various ministry teams of the church share their submitted reports about the work they've been engaged in over the last year. The second part will be our more formal business meeting immediately following worship at approximately 12:15 PM. More information to come next week.

Creek ReLeaf; Help reforest Meck County! Nov. 21| 9AM-Noon
Every fall, the Charlotte Public Tree Fund sponsors Creek ReLeaf, a major planting effort at a predetermined Mecklenburg County location in need of reforestation. This year's event will take place at the Long Creek Greenway on Trotter Road. For more information, see the Loop newsletter or speak with Tom Lannin. Registration is required to participate.

Charleston Trip in April 2027; Register by Nov. 30th!
A Journey of History, Reflection, and Renewal
The Racial Justice & Equity team is planning a meaningful, community-building three-day journey to Charleston to explore history, hear stories, reflect together, and renew our commitment to justice and equity. Reserve your spot for April 5–7, 2027. **A group of 30 is required for the team to book this trip, and sign-ups and deposits will need to be submitted by November 30th.** See the table in the gathering room for more information.

Church Office Update: Remote Work Schedule on Mondays
Our Office Administrator, Dawn Simmons, is currently working from home on Mondays and will continue to assist the congregation as usual. All calls made to the church office will be automatically routed to Dawn so that inquiries can be handled. The church office is generally open Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. However, we strongly encourage anyone planning to visit the church office to call ahead or contact the church before coming to ensure that someone is available to assist you. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we continue to serve our church family and community.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

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

Members

Mel Andersen, Darline Warren Batton, Jeffery & Kevin Edwards-Knight, Kathy Habel, Faye Humphrey, Wiley & Marlowe Morris, Anita Taylor,
Alice & Sally Phelan-Young

Friends & Family Members

Dale & Nancy Allison in the recent death of their daughter, Laura Allison
Farug Brown Bey (Jeffery Edwards-Knight), Joan Bowling (Kristen Fuchs), Randy & Tina Buie (Diane Neese), Don & Wanda Carver and the people of Panama, Kim Chamberlain (Kevin Decker), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dom Ciciollo), April Dawson, Mario Gaetani and family (Kristen Fuchs), Ann Garret (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Ivory Garvin and family (Von McQueen-Simmons), Samuel Head (Benjamin Rudolph), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Charlie Holt (Autumn Holt), Jeremy Hong (Jim Hong), Dean Horning (Melissa Noll), Judson Hulsey (Kristen Fuchs), 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), Connie Stidham (Ed Vickery), Brenchia Thomas, Steve Thomas (Jeffery Edwards-Knight) Dave, Jennifer Ward (Jay & Cathy Whitley), Scott Whitley (Jay Whitley), Tara Washburn (Patrick Washburn)

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

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