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



Unsplash Photo by Alex Shute

"When you have a decision to make,
it is good to try to make it from that place of stillness.
Come to stillness and wait for an answer that feels good."
— Francis Lucille

"Wisdom does not live in our minds; it lives in our souls."
— Anthony Douglas Williams

"At the end of the day,
you can either focus on what's tearing you apart,
or you can focus on what's keeping you together."
— Anonymous

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
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

November 08, 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 "The Christ Child's Lullaby" arr. K. Blackwell-Plank
Kristin Andes, harp

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 "Take, O Take Me as I Am" TAKE ME AS I AM
Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;
Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

. . .

Words of Wisdom — Suzanne Lamorey

Holy Wisdom persists—
wrests a word in edgewise,
interrupting the din and confusion:

"Tell the truth in all the ways you know how–
news reports, stories, parables:
don't hide the pain or the struggle.

Take the long view,
pore over stories the ancestors have told:
You will find me at work among the people,
deep in all you have heard and known.
Remember the 'Ways made out of no way….'
Search recent days for signs of my presence:
Justice-longing, hope-empowering, peace-planting."

Generations yet to come will need these stories,
how God's glory may be sought
in depths of struggle.

Our children and their children and those yet unborn
must know the faithfulness of our God,
whose law, long established,
is new every day.

Bequeath Wisdom to the children:
Let them set their hope in her,
and recognize her works for what they are:
community built and hospitality practiced;
injustices named and overcome;
Love flowing from the Holy returned to the Holy,
and poured out for each other—neighbor and stranger.

One: Have you heard these words from our God this morning?
Many: We have, and may we worship together in such wisdom.

We now invite take a comfortable posture for our opening hymn that supports your reading, worshiping and singing…

∗ Hymn 451 "Be Now My Vision" SLANE

Be now my vision, O God of my heart;
Nothing surpasses the love you impart –
You my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.

Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;
Ever within me, my soul is assured;
Mother and Father, you are both to me,
Now and forever your child will I be.

Riches I need not, nor life's empty praise,
You, my inheritance, now and always;
You and you only are first in my heart,
Great God, my treasure, may we never part.

Sovereign of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Recognition of Veterans Martha Battles

Stories for All People Ed Vickery

Silent Meditation Rev. Christopher Czarnecki
The singing bowl will be rung three times to begin our meditation and three times to conclude it. During these few minutes of silence, you are invited to rest in God's presence through prayer, reflection, or quiet awareness. As thoughts arise, simply notice them and gently return your attention to the present moment.

Alternative 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 kin-dom 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.

Modern Lesson

Our modern lesson today is an adapted quote from Marcus Borg's website: A Portrait of Jesus: From Galilean Jew to the Face of God. Borg was a New Testament scholar, theologian, and is known as one of the most influential voices in modern Christianity…

Jesus invites his hearers to leave conventional wisdom behind and to live by an alternative wisdom. His teachings came through memorable one-liners, vivid parables, and provocative sayings that challenged people to see the world differently. Again and again, Jesus opened a new way of seeing and, therefore, a new way of living. His wisdom stood in contrast to the conventional wisdom of his day and, when we encounter similar realities, it still challenges us to do the same. This alternative wisdom was radically centered on life in God rather than the status quo or the norms of culture. The teachings of Jesus are not just ancient wisdom preserved for an old world; they are living wisdom, the very breath by which we can live today.

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

Hebrew Scripture Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-20 (CEB) Suzanne Lamorey

Our Hebrew Scripture for today comes from Wisdom of Solomon, where wisdom is personified as a beautiful and radiant woman, whose eternal presence is easily perceived by those who love her and found by those who seek her…

Wisdom is bright and unfading. She readily appears to those who love her. She's found by those who keep seeking after her. She makes herself known even in advance to those who desire her with all their hearts. Someone who awakens before dawn to look for her will find her already sitting at the door. Taking wisdom to heart is the way to bring your thinking to maturity. The one who can't sleep at night because he's consumed with thinking about her will soon be free from worry.

She herself goes about looking for those who are worthy of her. She graciously makes herself known to them as they travel. She comes to them in each of the ideas that they think. The real beginning of wisdom is to desire instruction with all your heart. Love for instruction expresses itself in careful reflection. If you love Wisdom, you will keep her laws. If you are attentive to her laws, you can be assured that you will live forever. If you live forever, you will be near to God. If you desire wisdom with all your heart, you will know what good leadership is.

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

"What If You Could Steward Wisdom Too?"

Invitation to Generosity — Suzanne Lamorey

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

God has given us good and generous gifts out of abundant love. People do not face need or lack because God's creation is insufficient. When we share the resources of God's creation, we proclaim our faith and trust that God provides more than enough for all of us to flourish. Let us now give in such faith and hope.

∗ 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)* — Suzanne Lamorey

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

Loving God, accept our offerings as a testament to our love, faith, and hope. Magnify and multiply them to meet the needs of this community and our greater world. Expand our reach as your reach, our ministry as Jesus's ministry, and the kin-dom of God here on earth as being within our reach. Amen.

∗ Hymn 456 "More Love to You, O Christ" — MORE LOVE TO YOU

More love to you, O Christ, more love to you!
Hear now the prayer I make faith to renew.

Refrain: **In all I say and do, more love, O Christ to you,**
More love to you, more love to you!

Once earthly joy I craved, sought peace and rest;
Now you alone I seek, give what is best: *(R)*

Then shall my latest breath whisper your praise;
This be the parting cry my heart shall raise: *(R)*

∗ Benediction — Rev. Christopher Czarnecki

* Benediction Response HALLE, HALLE

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

Postlude "More Love to You, O Christ" arr. M. Hayes

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

Today's worship service includes liturgy from UCC Worship Ways (11/8/2026).

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, Dave Shimberg, Laurence Winston
Greeters: Pam Shimberg
Refreshments: Suzanne Lamorey, Kathy Gorman

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

Your generosity builds a more inclusive church!
Explore secure options available online
https://holycovenantucc.org/giving/

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- **Nov. 08: CROP Hunger Walk at HCUCC following Worship Choir after worship; Consistory, 1:00pm**
- **Nov. 15: HCUCC Annual Meeting & Potluck**
- **Nov. 21: Meck County Creek ReLeaf 2026**
- **Nov. 22: Let's Decorate for Advent after Worship**
- **Nov. 26: Thanksgiving with friends at HCUCC, 5:00pm**
- **Nov. 29: Sandwich Build after Worship**
- **Nov. 30: Deadline to register for Charleston 2027**

CROP Hunger Walk; Nov. 8th at Holy Covenant
Let's alleviate hunger both locally and worldwide! Join the walk happening today! See Tina Dickens. Donations welcomed at **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. Watch for emails with more information to come next week.

Advent Decorating Party | Nov. 22
It's time to transform our sanctuary for the Advent season! Known in many churches as "The Hanging of the Greens," this beloved tradition invites the entire congregation to help adorn the space for the coming of Christ. Coordinated by Ed Vickery and Eric Miner. There will be pizza for all volunteers! So come for the decorating and stay for the fellowship.

Thanksgiving meal with friends at HCUCC | Nov. 26 5:00 PM
At Holy Covenant, Thanksgiving is more than just a turkey. It's about belonging, connection and radical welcome. You can bring a main, a side or a dessert or simply show up with a grateful heart. Your presence is our blessing! Come hungry and, hopefully, joyful. We will start serving at 5:00 PM. Please RSVP **https://tinyurl.com/Help-With-HC-Thanksgiving-Meal**

Charleston Trip in April 2027; Register by Nov. 30
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.

Holiday Love Offering for Our Staff
Recognize the efforts of our church 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, and spiritual renewal. *No gift is too small and all are appreciated. . . .*

If you choose to give, offerings can be made via any of these methods:

Venmo: @mbbomely
PayPal: Martha.Bomely@gmail.com
Zelle: 7048040640

Offerings of cash or checks *made payable to Martha Bomely* will be collected by Dawn Robinson. *Please do not make checks out to the church*.
The last day for staff gifts is Sunday, December 13th so we can distribute our gifts on December 20th (Music Sunday).

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, Jean Raley-Dennis, Anita Taylor, Alice & Sally Phelan-Young

Friends & Family Members

The family of Gloria Echeverri (Melissa Noll)
Tina Buie & family in the recent death of her husband, Randy (Diane Neese)
Farug Brown Bey (Jeffery Edwards-Knight), Joan Bowling (Kristen Fuchs), Kim Chamberlain (Kevin Decker), Cecelia Ciciollo (Dom Ciciollo), April Dawson, Mario Gaetani and family (Kristen Fuchs), Ann Garret (Holly Middleton & Dawn Schmitz), Ivory Garvin-Simmons (Von & Melissa McQueen-Simmons), Samuel Head (Benjamin Rudolph), Henry Hildebrand (Bill & Connie Hildebrand), Jeremy Hong (Jim Hong), Dean Horning (Melissa Noll), Judson Hulsey (Kristen Fuchs), 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
Rev. Christopher Czarnecki, MDiv, MBA, Senior Pastor
RevChris@holycovenantucc.org
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