A serene winter landscape featuring a snow-covered road that leads into the distance. The trees and bushes are heavily laden with frost, creating a soft, white glow. The sky is a pale, clear blue, suggesting a bright but cool day. The overall mood is peaceful and quiet.

... whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high

November 29, 2020
Covenant Presbyterian Church of Chicago
1st Sunday of Advent

Welcome

Call to Worship

from Romans 13:11-12

Leader: You know what time it is,
how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep.
For salvation is nearer to us now

**All: Let us then lay aside the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light.
Come, let us worship God.**

I O come, O come, Em - ma - nu - el, and ran-som cap-tive
Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone-ly ex - ile here un -
til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em
man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Lighting of the Advent Candle

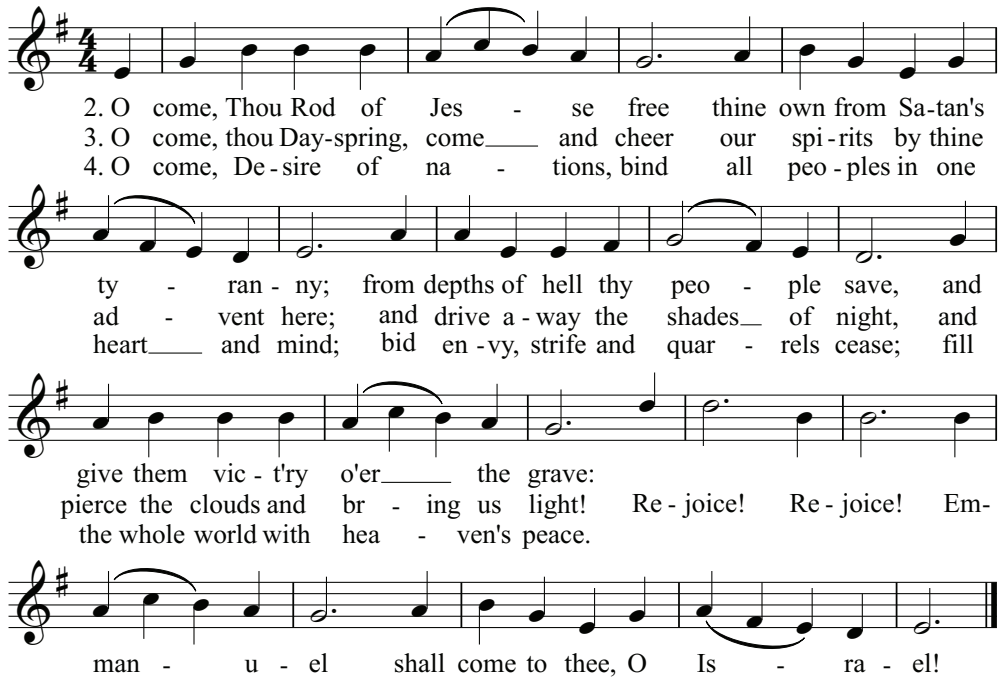
The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Leader: The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

All: Prepare the way of the Lord.

Leader: We light the first candle as a sign of *hope* in the
Christ who came and who will come again.

All: Prepare the way of the Lord.



2. O come, Thou Rod of Jes - se free thine own from Sa-tan's
3. O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer our spi-rits by thine
4. O come, De-sire of na - tions, bind all peo - ples in one
ty - ran - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple save, and
ad - vent here; and drive a - way the shades of night, and
heart and mind; bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease; fill
give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave:
pierce the clouds and br - ing us light! Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
the whole world with hea - ven's peace.
man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, Words: Latin hymn, Music: Thomas Helmore, 1854; plainsong

Confession of Sin, from Isaiah 64

Leader: Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence

All: **for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.**

The musical score is written on three staves in 6/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: O Sav - ior, rend the heav - ens wide; Come O Morn - ing Star, O ra - diant Sun, when Sin's dread - ful doom up - on us lies; Grim down come down, with might - y stride; Un - lock the gates, the will our hearts be - hold your dawn? O Sun, a - rise with - death looms fierce be - fore our eyes. Oh, come, lead us with doors break down; Un - bar the way to heav - en's crown. out your light, We grope in gloom and dark of night. might - y hand From ex - ile to our prom - ised land.

O Savior, Rend, Words, Friederich von Spee, 1591, Music, German Spiritual song, 1623, arr. PvdBijl

Silent time to confess

Assurance of Pardon, *from Isaiah 64 and 2 Corinthians 4*

Leader: But now, O Lord, you are our Father;

All: we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Leader: And we have this treasure, *Christ*, in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

All: So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day to the glory of God.

Sing to Assure

The musical notation is written on three staves in a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "There shall we all our praises bring, Ever - er to you, our Sav - ior King; There shall we laud you and a - dore, For - ev - er and for - ev - er more." The music ends with a double bar line.

There shall we all our prais - es bring, Ev -
er to you, our Sav - ior King; There shall we laud you
and a - dore, For - ev - er and for - ev - er more.

Lessons from the Word

Old Testament Lesson -
New Testament Lesson -

Malachi 3.1-2
1 Corinthians 1.4-9

Reader: The Word of the Lord
All: **Thanks be to God**

The Word

Pastor Aaron Baker
Prepare the Way, Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,
the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”



Pre - pare the way O Zi - on, your Christ is dra-wing near. Let
ev - ery hill and val - ley a le - vel way ap - pear. Greet
One who comes in glo - ry fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry
Oh, blest is Chr-ist th - at came in God's most ho - ly name.

Prepare the Way, words, Frans Mikael Franzen 1772-1847, music: Bereden vag for Herran, 1697

The Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Leader: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe. You formed us in your image, setting us in this world to love and serve you, and to live in peace with your whole creation.

All: When we rebelled against you, refusing to trust and obey you, you did not reject us, but still claimed us as your own.

Leader: In this season of Advent, we remember that through the words of the prophets you promised your people the Redeemer, and gave hope for the day when justice shall roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

All: We rejoice that in Jesus Christ, your Son, the Savior has come and that he will come again in power and glory to make all things new.

Leader: Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on: your sav-iour's rule em-brace. His
ti-dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place. All
lands will bow be - fore Him, their voi - ces will a - dore him.
Oh, blest is Chr-ist th-at came in God's most ho - ly name.

Distribute the Bread & Cup

Please note that we serve both red wine and white grape juice.
All wafers are gluten free and available in a single serve cup

Receiving Communion

Communion (also called The Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and seek strength to live more faithfully for him.

Silent prayers for reflection

Prayer for those taking communion

Lord Jesus, your perfect life, your death and resurrection are the source of all blessing in this life and the life to come. As I eat this bread and drink this cup, renew me in the joy and glory of knowing and serving you. I come to this table on the basis of your merit only and not my own. As you have completely and fully offered yourself for me, I now completely and fully offer myself to you as a living sacrifice. Amen.

Prayer for those searching for truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but, through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Respond to the Table

Leader: Remembering your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice dedicated to your service.

**All: Great is this mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

News & Announcements

Announcements in our community

Let Us Pray for You. Covenant's staff meets remotely to pray for the congregation throughout the week. We would be honored to pray for you. Please send your prayer requests to Pastor Dan (dadamson@covenantchicago.org) who will share them with the staff.

2020 Advent Devotional Guide: Copies of this year's devotional guide are available on the Welcome Table at the back of the church. Download and view online at: <https://covenantchicago.org/advent-devotional/>

Sermon Devotional Emails: You can sign up to get an email two times a week to help you reflect on and pray through the prior week's sermon text and Scripture lessons. To sign up, send us an email: devotional@covenantchicago.org.

November Mercy Bin: This month, Covenant is collecting donations for Breakthrough Urban Ministries and Sunshine Gospel Ministries. Both organizations are hosting Christmas stores to help families on the south and west sides celebrate the joy of the season through gift giving despite financial difficulties. You can support these organizations by visiting their online registries and ordering a gift or two (<https://covenantchicago.org/november-mercy-bin/>). Gifts can be brought or sent to Covenant through December 1. Questions? Contact Pastor Dan (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).

Ushers Needed: Covenant is looking for additional volunteers to serve as ushers at one of our Sunday morning services. Ushers remain in the narthex at the start and end of service to greet attendees and answer any questions they may have. If you'd be willing to serve in this way, please contact Jenny Smith (jenny.smith@yale.edu).

Do you need help? If the ongoing repercussions of covid-19 present a financial or physical hardship for you, please contact our deacons (diaconate@covenantchicago.org). Your email will go directly to the deacons, and they'll treat it with confidence. If you're able, now is a great time to contribute to the Deacons Fund to meet the needs of others in our congregation.

Women's Book Discussion: Join women from Covenant to discuss Liturgy of the Ordinary this Thursday, November 15 from 7:30 to 9 pm. This will be the second week of the discussion, but it's not too late to join. Contact women@covenantchicago.org for additional details and the link to join.

I'll Be Home For Christmas - Midnight Clear Concert: Join us online for a live streamed Christmas concert on Saturday, December 12 at 7pm. Get some hot chocolate and gather your family for an evening of Christmas carols and music.

Go With Joy

All:

1. Come, thou long - ex - pec - ted Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2. Born thy peo - ple to de - li - ver, born a child and yet a King,

from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - e - ver, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all suf - fi - cient me - rit, raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus, Words: Joseph Hart, 1750; Music: Rowland Prichard, 1830.

Leader: Benediction

Romans 15:5–7 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker

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Your email inquiry will be promptly answered.

Gene Pierson

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Ian Troll

Director of Youth Ministries: ian@covenantchicago.org

Paul van der Bijl

Director of Worship and Music: x33, pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org

Session

Aaron Baker (Moderator), Dan Adamson, Dave Hoover, Kevin Jones, Brad Lewis, Steve Lehmann, David Salsedo, Ryan Von Drehle. *Please direct correspondence for the Session to session@covenantchicago.org.*

Diaconate

Rich Lane, Andrew Dykstra, Jonathan Ellison, Phil Koerner, Paul Leo, Joel Miller, Shane Rector, Jenny Smith, Deb Van Der Molen, Matt Ver Steeg

Treasurer: Ben Meyer

If you're in need or wish to speak with a deacon, you can email us at diaconate@covenantchicago.org.

Covenant Life

worship | grow and learn | serve

We encourage everyone to get connected to the life of the church in these three ways:

Worship Together. We believe that humans are worshipping beings, made for communion with the Triune God, and that ordering our common worship around the Gospel on Sunday has a profound, formative effect on every part of our lives. The rhythm of Sunday worship is the rhythm of the whole Christian life and it stands counter to lots of other rhythms that clamor for our attention and allegiance in this world. Ordering ourselves together around it strengthens our appetites, imaginations and abilities to live as followers of Jesus wherever we find ourselves. Come to church on Sunday!

Grow and Learn Together. We believe that learning about our faith and growing together in it are necessary for flourishing in the Christian life. The goal of Christian learning is to form us into human beings who are fully swept up into the work God is doing in his world. Learning is more than simply knowing; it is the internalization of truth that leads to mature thinking and acting.

We'd like for everyone to take two core classes while you're here: the Covenant Life Class, an introduction to Christianity and to our church, and The Story of Scripture, which traces themes through Scripture and applies them to our everyday lives. After those classes, consider joining a more intimate Discipleship Cohort that meets with a mentor. For information about these opportunities, contact Pastor David Salsedo (dsalsedo@covenantchicago.org).

We'd like for everyone to consider joining a small group which meets together regularly to build meaningful relationships and live out the Christian life together. They're one of the most important ways of getting care and being connected at Covenant. To find out more about small groups, or to join the small group that meets at church on Wednesdays at 6.30pm, contact Pastor Dan Adamson (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).

Serve Together. We believe the natural outcome of receiving and experiencing grace is to be propelled outward into mission and service. Every one of us has been given gifts to use for the good of our common life and for the good of the broken world around us. We're called to give of ourselves because we're part of the story of God's reconciliation of all things. Every week there are numerous opportunities to serve at Covenant and elsewhere listed in the order of worship. We encourage everyone to regularly use their gifts in service. To learn more about opportunities to serve, contact Pastor Dan Adamson (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).



*a church, a city,
and a world
continually made new
by the grace of Christ*
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