




Christmastide, December 31, 2023  
Covenant Presbyterian Church of Chicago,  
*cover by Lenae van der Bijl*

A watercolor illustration of three pomegranates hanging from a stem. The pomegranates are rendered in shades of pink, red, and purple, with some yellow and green highlights. The background is white with vertical streaks of pink and yellow, and scattered watercolor splatters.

*Now burn, new born to the world,  
Double-naturéd name,  
The heaven-flung, heart-fleshed, maiden-furled  
Miracle-in-Mary-of-flame,  
Mid-numbered He in three of the thunder-throne!  
Not a dooms-day dazzle in his coming nor dark  
as he came;  
Kind, but royally reclaiming his own;  
A released shower, let flash to the shire, not  
a lightning of fire hard-hurled.*

*~ Gerard Manley Hopkins, 1918.*

Children's programming is available during both services on the lower level, see page 14 for details.

Large Print orders of worship are available in the back of the sanctuary.

## Welcome

Silent moment to prepare for worship



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ was born to - day.  
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



Ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

*Good Christian Friends Rejoice. words: Latin carol, 14th century; music: Traditional German melody*

## Call to Worship

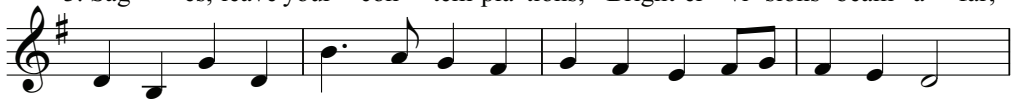
from Isaiah 49

Leader: Thus says the LORD:  
"In a time of favor I have answered you;  
in a day of salvation I have helped you;  
I will keep you and give you  
as a covenant to the people,  
to establish the land,  
to apportion the desolate heritages,  
saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,'  
to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.'"

**All: Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;  
break forth, O mountains, into singing!  
For the LORD has comforted his people  
and will have compassion on his afflicted.**



1. An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
2. Shep - herds in the fields a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
3. Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;



Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with man is now re - sid - ing, Yon - der shines the in - fant Light:  
Seek the great De - sire of na - tions, Ye have seen His na - tal star:



Come and wor - ship, Come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

*Angels From the Realms of Glory, Words James Montgomery, 1816, Music: Henry Smart, 1867*

## Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

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Leader: Faithful God, in a time of favor you have answered us in the incarnation of your Son, Jesus Christ, and brought us out of darkness and into your light.

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth!  
O incarnate Son, visit us with your presence today. Amen.**

*silent moment of meditation and adoration*



4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in hope and fear,



Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, In His tem - ple\_ shall ap - pear:



Come and wor - ship, Come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

## Confession of Sin, from Isaiah 59

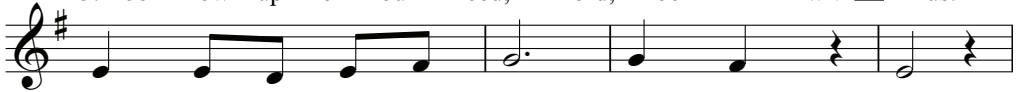
Leader: Justice is far from us,  
and righteousness does not overtake us;  
**All: we hope for light, and behold, darkness,  
and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.**

Leader: For our transgressions are multiplied before you,  
and our sins testify against us;  
**All: for our transgressions are with us,  
and we know our iniquities.**

### Sing to Confess



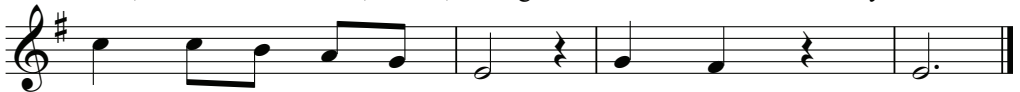
1. Fa - ther, en-throned on high Ho - ly, ho - ly!  
2. Lord, save us from the dark of our stri - ving,  
3. Look now up - on our need; Lord, be with us.



An - cient e - ter - nal Light hear our prayer.  
faith - less, and trou - bled hearts weighed down.  
Heal us and make us free from our sin.



Come, O Re - dee - mer, come; grant us mer - cy.



Come, O Re - dee - mer, come; grant us peace.

*Come, O Redeemer, Come, by Fernando Ortega, 1995*

*Silent time to pray and confess*

## Assurance of Pardon *from Isaiah 60 and 1 John 7*

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Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.  
and his glory will be seen upon you.

All: **We walk in the light of the risen Lord and have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Amen!**

*Refrain*

Come, O Re - dee - mer, come; grant us mer - cy.

Come, O Re - dee - mer, come; grant us peace.

## Lessons from the Word

read by Taylor Nesse

Old Testament Lesson -  
Gospel Lesson -

Exodus 6:2-8, p.48  
John 8:31-36, p.894

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



Of the Fa-ther's love be - got-ten, ere the worlds be- gan to be.  
This is he whom heav'n-taught sin-gers Sang of old with one\_ac-cord,



He is Al - pha and O- meg-ga, He the Source, the End-ing He.  
Whom the Scrip-tures of the pro-phets Pro-mised in their faith-ful word;



Of the things that are, that have \_\_\_\_\_ been,  
Now he shines, the long - ex - pe - - cted;



and that fut-ure years shall see, e - ver-more and e - ver more...  
Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord, e - ver-more and e - ver more...

*Of the Father's Love Begotten, Words: Aurelius Prudentius, 4th Cent. Music: 13th Cent.*



## The Word

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Ian Troll

From Slaves to Heirs, Galatians 4:3–7, p.974

<sup>3</sup> In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. <sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.



Christ, to Thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho-ly Ghost, to Thee,



Hymn and chant and high thanks-gi - ving, and un-wea-ried prai-ses be:



Ho - nor, glo - ry, and do - mi - - nion,



And e - ter - nal vic - to - ry, e - ver - more and e - ver more!\_

## Sacrament of Communion

2 Corinthians 13:11-14: Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

Leader: The Lord be with you

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts

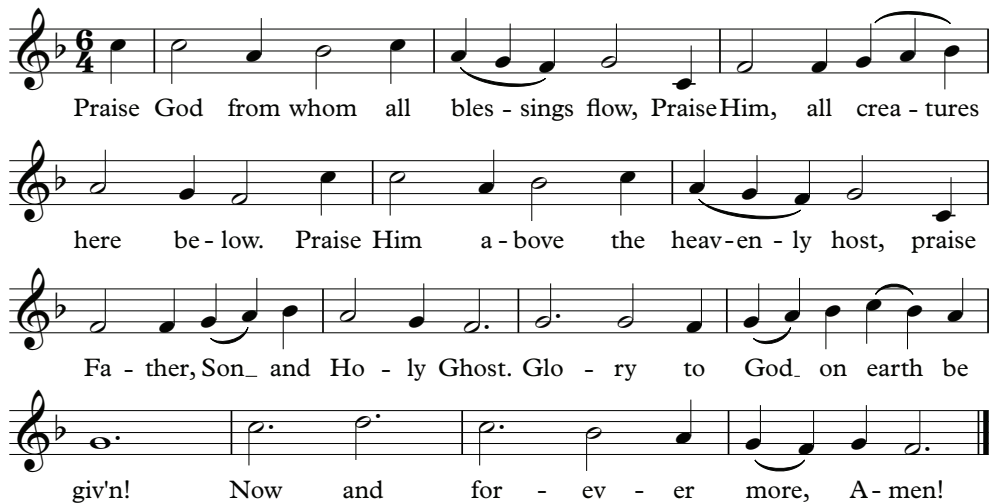
**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

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

## Greet each other in the name of Christ

*Giving back to God a portion of what he's already given us is an important part of the Christian life. The bread and wine we use in communion are a picture of the gifts that God has given us, offered back to him as an act of worship. You can offer your resources back to God in support of the work of the church by placing your offering in the boxes in the back on the way out. You can also give online at [covenantchicago.org/give](http://covenantchicago.org/give), use the QR code on page 16, or text a donation amount to 84321.*



Praise God from whom all bles - sings flow, Praise Him, all crea - tures  
here be - low. Praise Him a - bove the heav - en - ly host, praise  
Fa - ther, Son\_ and Ho - ly Ghost. Glo - ry to God\_ on earth be  
giv'n! Now and for - ev - er more, A - men!

Doxology, Words: Thomas Ken, 1709, Music, Sussex Carol by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1900

## The Great Thanksgiving, *from the Anglican Church, 1998*

Leader: As we approach your table, grant us the peace with each other that we find in you so that we can come to this feast united in love. Accept now our offerings of bread, wine and gifts to you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to the work of your kingdom.

With clear hearts and minds,  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: All glory and honor be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty Creator, everliving God. We give you thanks and praise for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,**

Leader: who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,  
was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of your Spirit,  
and lived as one of us.

**All: In this mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,  
to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
In him we see our God made visible  
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.**

Leader: Therefore with all the angels of heaven  
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name  
and sing our joyful hymn of praise.

**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.**

*Refrain*

Come, O Re-dee-mer, come; grant us mer-cy.

Come, O Re-dee-mer, come; grant us peace.

## Distribute the Bread & Cup

Please note that we serve both red wine and white grape juice.  
There is individually wrapped gluten free bread available.

### 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.*

#### *Prayer for those struggling with sin*

*Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Grant also that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and finisher of my faith. Amen.*

## Song for Communion

You are welcome to join in song:



1 Sing we now of Christ-mas, No - el, sing we here! Hear our  
2 An - gels called to shep-herds, "Leave your\_ flocks at rest, jour-ney  
3 In Beth - le - hem they found him; Jo - seph and Ma - ry mild, seat - ed  
4 From the eas - tern coun - try came the\_ kings a - far, bear-ing  
5 Gold and myrrh they took there, gifts of\_ great-est price; there was

grate - ful prai - ses to the babe so dear.  
forth to Beth-le-hem, find the\_ lamb-kin blest."  
by the man- ger, watch-ing the ho - ly child. Sing we No - el, the  
gifts to Beth-le-hem guid - ed\_ by a star.  
ne'er a place on earth so like\_ pa - ra - dise.

King is born, No - el! Sing we now of Christ-mas, sing we now No - el!

*Sing We Now of Christmas, Traditional French carol, 15th Century*

## 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.**

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system contains the lyrics "Sing we No - el, the King is born, No - el!". The second system contains the lyrics "Sing we now of Christ - mas, sing we now No - el!". The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands, supporting the vocal melody.

## The Work of the People

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*Romans 12:4–6, For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.*

### ***In Community***

Events and opportunities at Covenant during the coming weeks.

### ***In Statement of Faith***

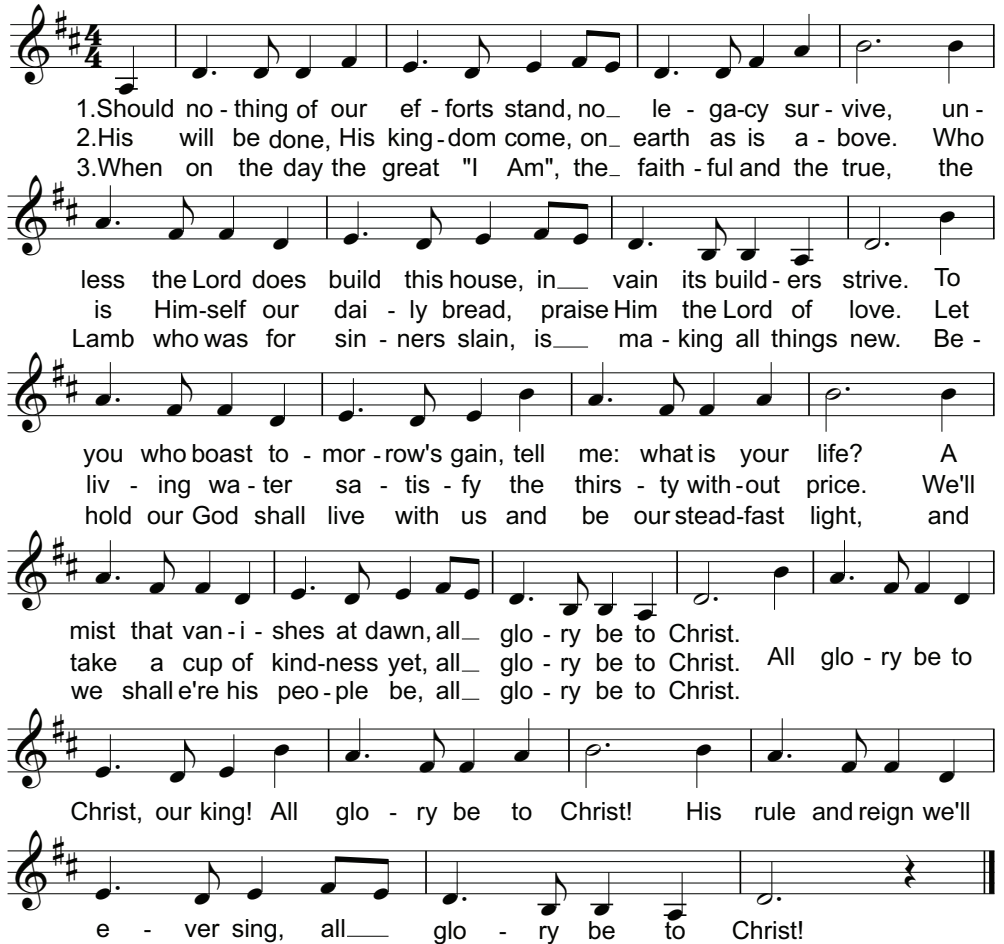
*Apostle's Creed*

**All:** I believe in God the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;  
and in Jesus Christ  
his only Son our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried:  
He descended into hell;  
The third day he rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;  
the holy catholic church;  
the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body;  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.

## Go With Joy

### A New Years Song to Send:



1. Should no - thing of our ef - forts stand, no\_ le - ga - cy sur - vive, un -  
2. His will be done, His king - dom come, on\_ earth as is a - bove. Who  
3. When on the day the great "I Am", the\_ faith - ful and the true, the

less the Lord does build this house, in\_\_ vain its build - ers strive. To  
is Him - self our dai - ly bread, praise Him the Lord of love. Let  
Lamb who was for sin - ners slain, is\_\_ ma - king all things new. Be -

you who boast to - mor - row's gain, tell me: what is your life? A  
liv - ing wa - ter sa - tis - fy the thirs - ty with - out price. We'll  
hold our God shall live with us and be our stead - fast light, and

mist that van - i - shes at dawn, all\_\_ glo - ry be to Christ.  
take a cup of kind - ness yet, all\_\_ glo - ry be to Christ. All glo - ry be to  
we shall e're his peo - ple be, all\_\_ glo - ry be to Christ.

Christ, our king! All glo - ry be to Christ! His rule and reign we'll

e - ver sing, all\_\_ glo - ry be to Christ!

*All Glory Be To Christ, Words; Dustin Kensrue, 2012, Music: Auld Lang Syne, Traditional Scottish folk song*

### 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.*



# Welcome to Covenant Presbyterian Church

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## TODAY AT COVENANT

Service, 10:15am

- Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level

### Volunteers in Service Today:

Communion Servers: Barry Reece, Larry and Maribeth Shover

Ushers: Leslie Lucas, Margret-Ann Natsis

Large Print orders of worship and electronic hearing assistance devices are available in the back of the sanctuary. An usher can assist you with finding and using these items.

## COMMON GROUND CLASSES

**Communicants Class:** The staff will teach a two-week communicants class for children beginning Sunday, January 7. The class will address the sacraments, repentance, faith, and how we are to take the Lord's supper. The class is intended to prepare children who may be ready to take communion to talk with one of the pastors about being admitted to the table. We ask that each child in the class have a parent in attendance with him or her. The class will meet during Common Ground at 10:15 on January 7 and 14. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Ian Troll ([ian@covenantchicago.org](mailto:ian@covenantchicago.org)).

**Winter Class Break:** On January 7 and 14, we'll gather together in the Fellowship Hall for bagels as a full congregation. Common Ground nurseries, Sunday School and adult classes will take a break with the exception of the communicants class. Classes will resume on January 21.

**What's the Big Deal about the Kingdom?** Why did Jesus talk so much about the Kingdom of Heaven and what is its importance to us today? Join us for this 4-week class as we explore what the kingdom is, where it is, how we can encounter it, and what it looks like to become its citizens. Class will begin on January 21 in the Conference Room during Common Ground and will be taught by Jeanie Hoover and Michele Dillon.

**Ezra-Nehemiah: Return, Rebuilding, and Reformation:** Join us for this 4 week class designed to dive into the historical and theological dimensions of Ezra-Nehemiah. This class will serve to provide a comprehensive overview and focus on the three key themes of the book: the rebuilding of the house of God, the significance of ordinary people and the profound impact of the written word. Young Bok Kim (PhD in Near Eastern Languages, University of Chicago) will teach this class beginning on January 21 in the All Saints Room.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Small Groups:** Covenant small groups meet throughout the city. Small groups are a great way to get to know others at Covenant, study Scripture, and pray together. If you'd be interested in learning more about small groups, please contact Pastor Dan. (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).

**Pickleball at Covenant:** Join others from Covenant for pickleball in the gym on some Saturdays from 9 to 11 am. All are welcome to join; instructors will be available if you're new to the sport. Sign up on our website (covenantchicago.org/pickleball/) for upcoming dates. Questions? Contact Ian Cull (iancull74@gmail.com).

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

**Ushers Needed:** Ushers are the first people to greet people as they come to Covenant. They pass out the orders of worship, help people find the bathrooms and classrooms, and help at the end of service to clean up the sanctuary. Most ushers serve once a month. If you'd like to join our usher team, please contact Margaret-Ann Natsis (margretann.natsis@gmail.com).

**Common Ground Volunteers:** Covenant is looking for additional volunteers to help with coffee and snacks for Common Ground. Volunteers help with either setup (during the 9:00 am service) or clean up (during the 11:15 service), as well as helping during Common Ground to replenish coffee as needed. Most volunteers serve once a month. If you'd be interested, please contact Larissa Bossemeyer (lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org).

**Serve Breakfast at Breakthrough:** On the fourth Saturday of every month, Covenant provides breakfast for the Breakthrough women's shelter. If you are interested in volunteering to help purchase, prepare and serve food to shelter guests, you can reach out to breakthrough@covenantchicago.org for more information or sign up for upcoming dates on our website: <https://covenantchicago.org/events/breakfast-at-breakthrough/>.

**Gospel Justice Center:** Please pray for Covenant's Gospel Justice Center, a legal-aid clinic created in partnership with Together Chicago and Administer Justice, and run entirely by Covenant volunteers. On the second Saturday of every month, we welcome our neighbors with legal questions from the Logan Square, Bucktown, Garfield Park and Humboldt Park neighborhoods. Please pray for us to care well for our guests, and pray for us to grow in our ability to become a more known presence in our neighborhood.

## NEWS AND UPDATES

**Year End Giving:** Please note per IRS regulations, contributions to Covenant must be submitted or postmarked by December 31, 2023 in order to appear on your 2023 Contribution Statement. If you have any questions, contact Gene Pierson (gpierson@covenantchicago.org).

**Sermon Devotional Emails:** Twice a week, a team from Covenant sends sermon devotional emails that will help you reflect on and pray through the prior week's sermon text and Scripture lessons. Email devotional@covenantchicago.org to sign up.

**Meals Ministry:** The Meals Ministry cares for our community by providing occasional meals to individuals and families. If you have recently experienced health problems, have welcomed a new child into your family, or have suffered a loss, please visit [covenantchicago.org/meals-ministry/](https://covenantchicago.org/meals-ministry/) to request a meal. The Meals Ministry also seeks volunteers to cook and deliver meals, and you can sign up to volunteer through the website link. Questions? Contact meals@covenantchicago.org.

**Let Us Pray for You.** Covenant's staff meets to pray for the congregation throughout the week. We would be honored to pray for you. You can share prayer requests by writing them on the tear out portion at the back of the order of worship or by emailing Pastor Dan (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).



Giving QR code

## Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker  
Pastor, [abaker@covenantchicago.org](mailto:abaker@covenantchicago.org)

Dan Adamson  
Associate Pastor, [dadamson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:dadamson@covenantchicago.org)

## Support Staff

Larissa Bossemeyer  
Director of Ministries: [lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org](mailto:lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org)

Gene Pierson  
Director of Finance & Property: [gpierson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:gpierson@covenantchicago.org)

Ian Troll  
Director of Children and Youth Ministries: [ian@covenantchicago.org](mailto:ian@covenantchicago.org)

Paul van der Bijl  
Director of Worship and Music: [pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org](mailto:pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org)

## Session

Aaron Baker (Moderator), Dan Adamson, David Dillon, Dave Hoover, Brad Lewis, Steve Lehmann, Joshua Norton

*Please direct correspondence for the Session to [session@covenantchicago.org](mailto:session@covenantchicago.org).*

## Diaconate

Andrew Dykstra, Jonathan Ellison, Phil Koerner, Joel Miller, Margret-Ann Natsis, Shane Rector, Jon Skinner, Deb Van Der Molen, Matt Ver Steeg, Kylene Young

**Treasurer:** Ben Harvey

*If you're in need or wish to speak with a deacon, you can email us at [diaconate@covenantchicago.org](mailto:diaconate@covenantchicago.org).*

## Welcome to Covenant

Please fill out this form, tear it out, and put it in one of the offering boxes at the back of the church.

circle one:

New to Covenant | Regular Attender | Member

Name:

Email:

Address:

Phone:

↑ *This is new or updated information* ↑

### **I am interested in:**

- More information
- Small Groups
- Service Opportunities
- Membership
- Receiving the Email Letter
- Children and Youth Ministry
- Other:

Prayer Requests:

## **Covenant Life**

### **Worship Together:**

*We are made to worship the Triune God, and our worship is always ordered around Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and grace he secured for us by his cross, resurrection and ascension. Gathering around this good news together on Sundays strengthens our appetites, imaginations and abilities to live as followers of Jesus.*

### **Grow and Learn Together:**

*Learning about our faith and growing together in it forms us into human beings who are fully swept up into the work God is doing to reconcile all things to himself in Jesus. Learning is more than simply knowing; it is the internalization of truth that leads to mature thinking and acting.*

### **Serve Together:**

*The natural outcome of receiving and experiencing grace is to be propelled outward into mission and service. All of us have been given gifts to use for the good of our common life and for the good of the broken world around us, and we encourage everyone to regularly use their gifts in service.*



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

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773.486.9590

[covenantchicago.org](http://covenantchicago.org)