A Throne Unshaken

Ascension Sunday

May 16, 2021
Covenant Presbyterian
Church of Chicago
7th Sunday of Eastertide

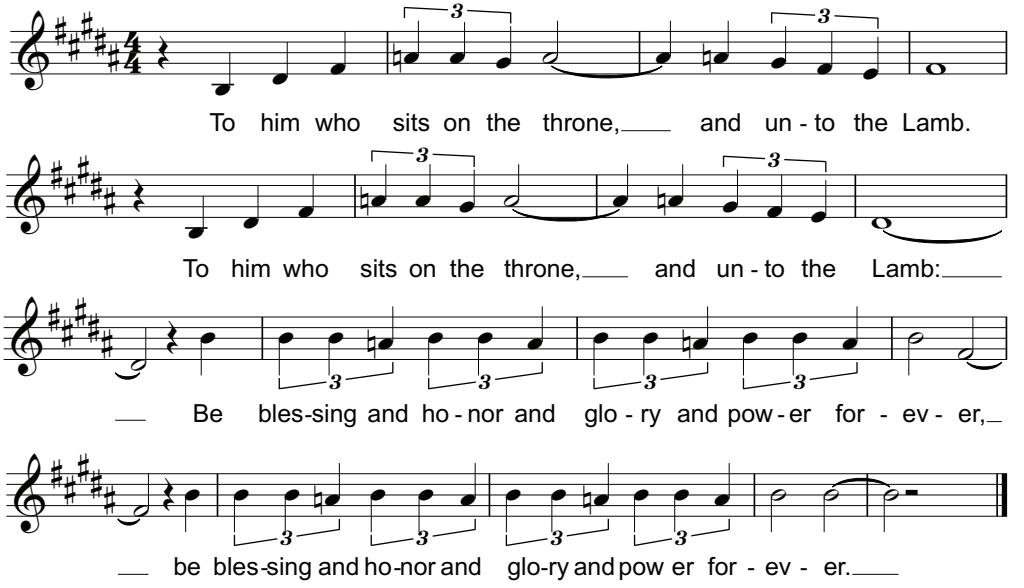
Welcome

Ascension Call to Worship

Acts 1-6-11 and Revelation 19

Leader: *So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."*

All: **Hallelujah!**
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory.



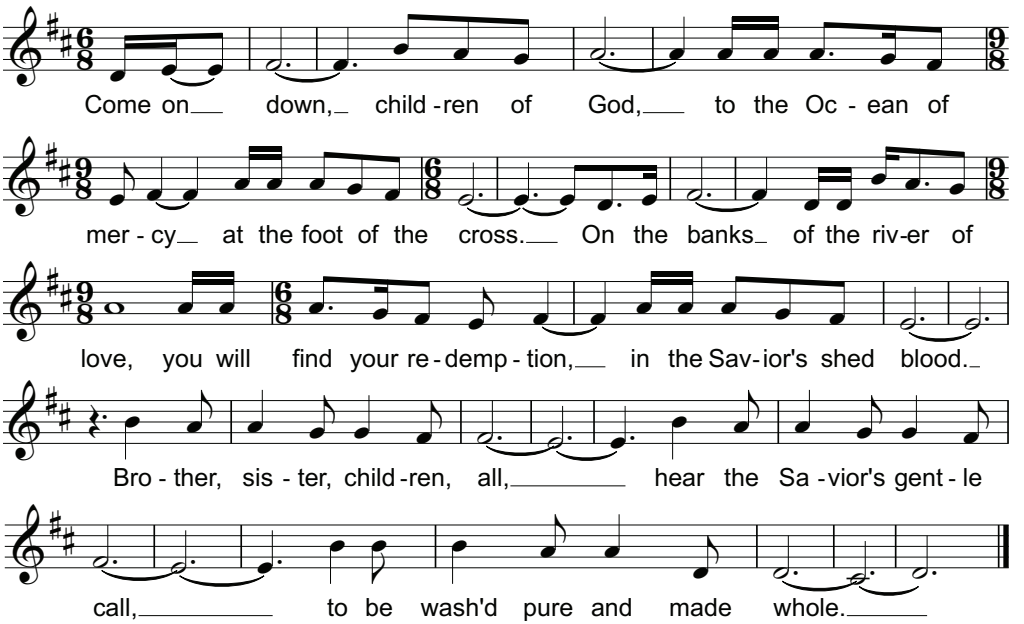
To Him Who Sits on The Throne, Words and Music, Debbye Graafsma, 1985

2nd & 3rd service only

Sacrament of Baptism

Sing to Prepare, Ocean of Mercy

All:



2nd service

Fiona Margaret Stewart Lester, daughter of Olivia and Mark

Prayer of Congregational Blessing:

All: Ever-living God, in your mercy you promised to be not only our God but also the God of our children. We thank you for receiving **Fiona** by baptism. Keep her always in your love. Guide her as she grows in faith. Protect her in all the dangers and temptations of life. May she be a faithful disciple of your son Jesus Christ to her life's end. In Christ's name, Amen.

All sing: **"Brother, sister, children, all..."**

3rd service

Joseph Ray Shaver, son of Rachel and Alex

Prayer of Congregational Blessing:

All: Ever-living God, in your mercy you promised to be not only our God but also the God of our children. We thank you for receiving **Joseph** by baptism. Keep him always in your love. Guide him as he grows in faith. Protect him in all the dangers and temptations of life. May he be a faithful disciple of your son Jesus Christ to his life's end. In Christ's name, Amen.

All sing: **"Brother, sister, children, all..."**

Confession of Sin

from 1 John 4:18-19

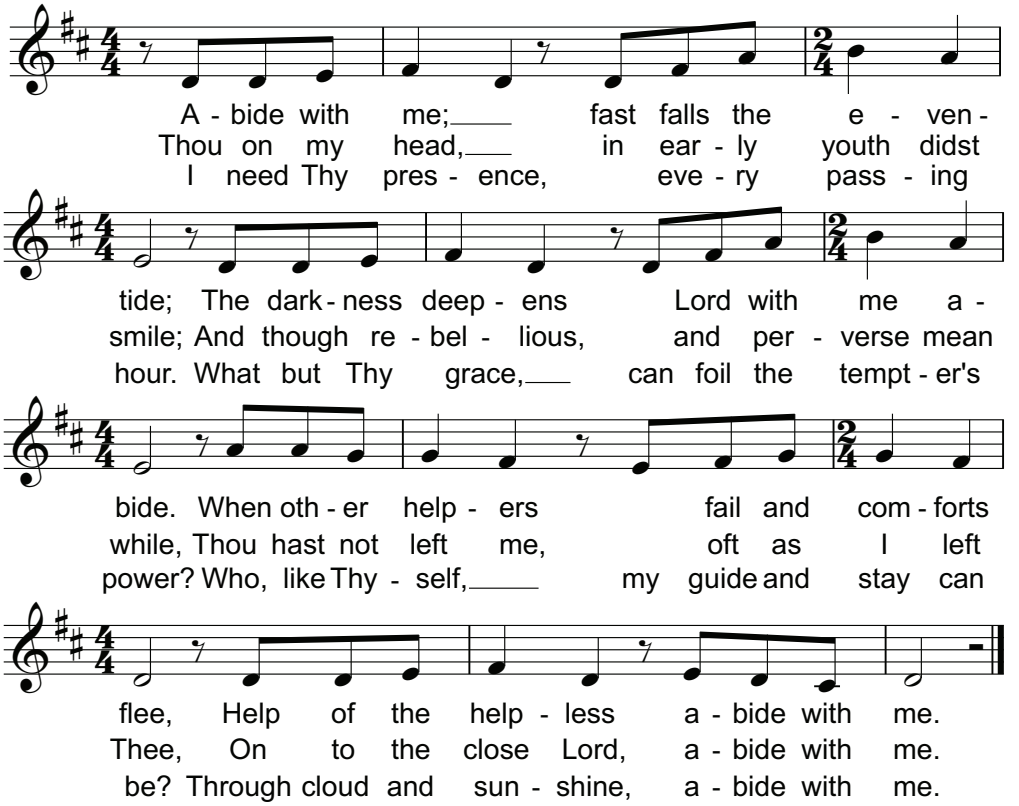
Leader: God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

All: We love because he first loved us.

Leader: Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

All: The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Sing to Confess



Abide With Me, Words: Henry Lyte, 1847, Music: Justin Smith, 2007

Silent time to pray and confess

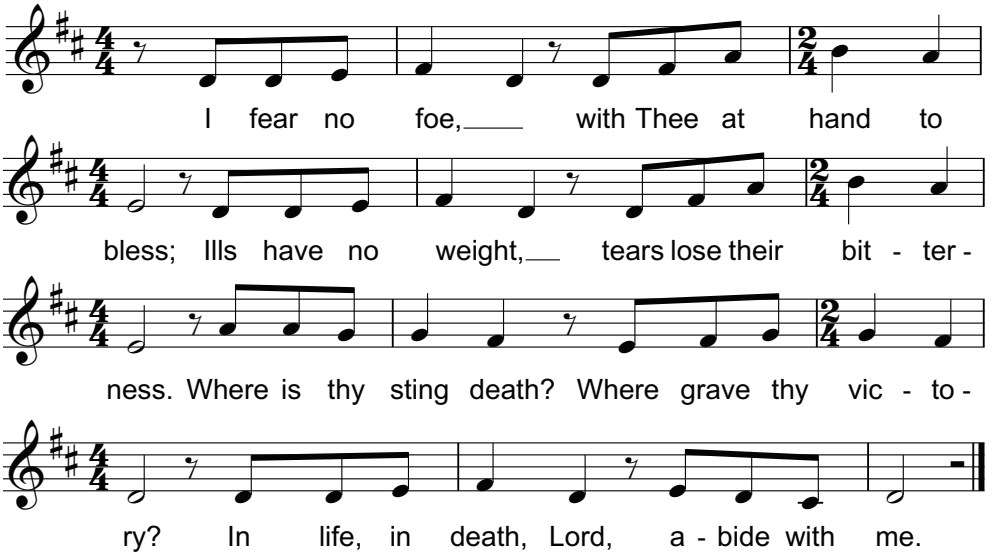
Assurance of Pardon

1 John 4:13-15

Leader: By this we know that we abide in him and he in us,

All: **because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in them, and they in God.**

Sing to Assure



Lessons from the Word

Gospel Lesson - John 1.9-13
New Testament Lesson - Galatians 4.1-7

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

The Word

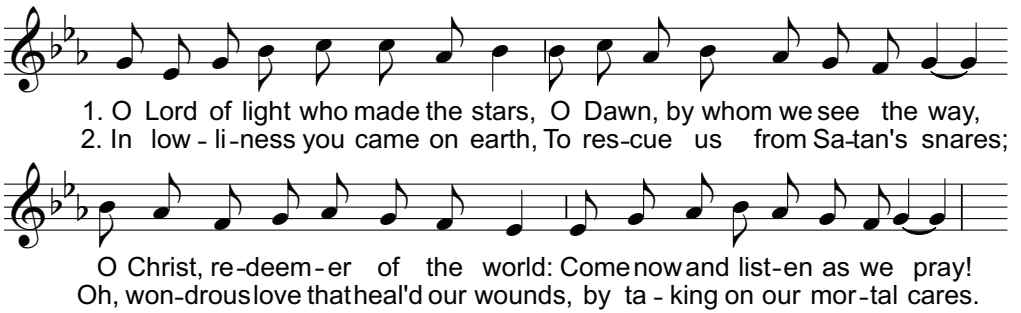
Pastor Aaron Baker
The Kindness of God, 2 Samuel 9.1-9, 11-13

And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant." And the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar." Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant." And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always." And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?"

Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

All:



O Lord of Light, Latin chant, 9th cent., Music: Sarum Plainsong, 4th verse and chorus by PvdBijl.

Ascension Great Thanksgiving, *from The Archbishops' Council, Church of England, 2008*

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them up 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 indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: For he is our great high priest
who has ascended once for all
into the heavenly sanctuary,
evermore to pour upon your Church
the grace and comfort of your Holy Spirit.

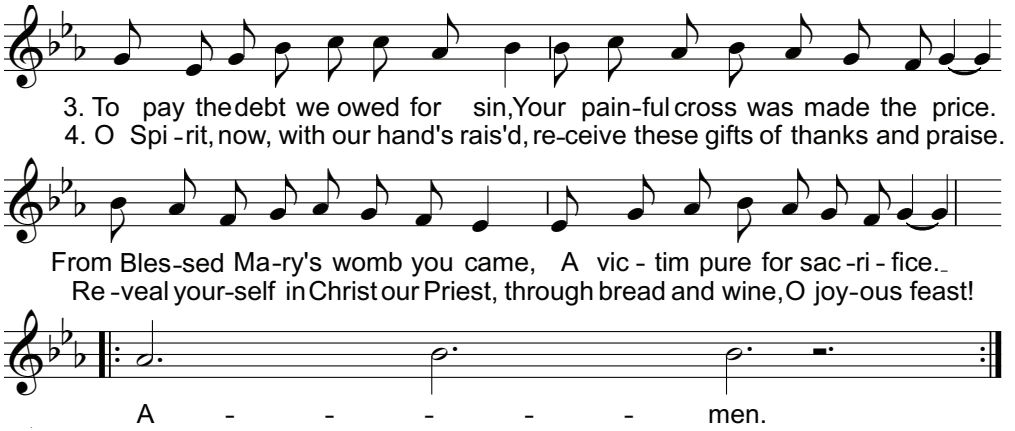
Leader: He is the one who has gone before us,
who calls us to be united in prayer

All: as were his disciples in the upper room
while they awaited his promised gift,
the life-giving Spirit of Pentecost.

Leader: Therefore, all creation yearns with eager longing
as angels and archangels sing the endless 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.



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

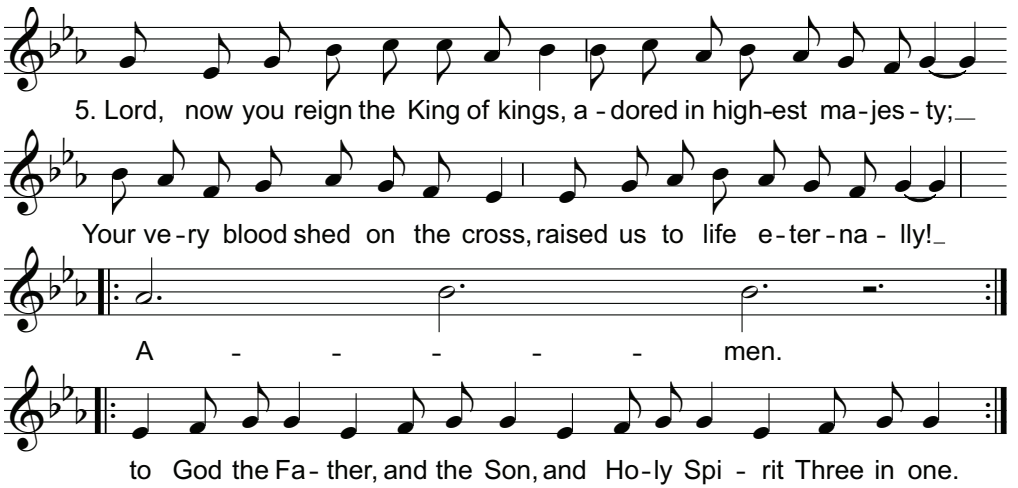
Prayer for those taking communion

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.

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

New Director of Children and Youth Ministries: We're happy to announce that Ian Troll, who has been our Director of Youth Ministry since 2019, will also be stepping into the role of overseeing our children's ministry starting on June 1st. As he steps into this new role and as our city begins to open more, we will keep you informed about any new children and youth offerings. If you have any questions about the transition, feel free to reach out to Pastor David (dsalsedo@covenantchicago.org).

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 https://covenantchicago.org/meals-ministry/ to request a meal. The Meals Ministry needs more volunteers to cook and deliver meals, and you can sign up to volunteer here: https://covenantchicago.org/volunteer-with-the-meals-ministry/.
Questions? Contact meals@covenantchicago.org.

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

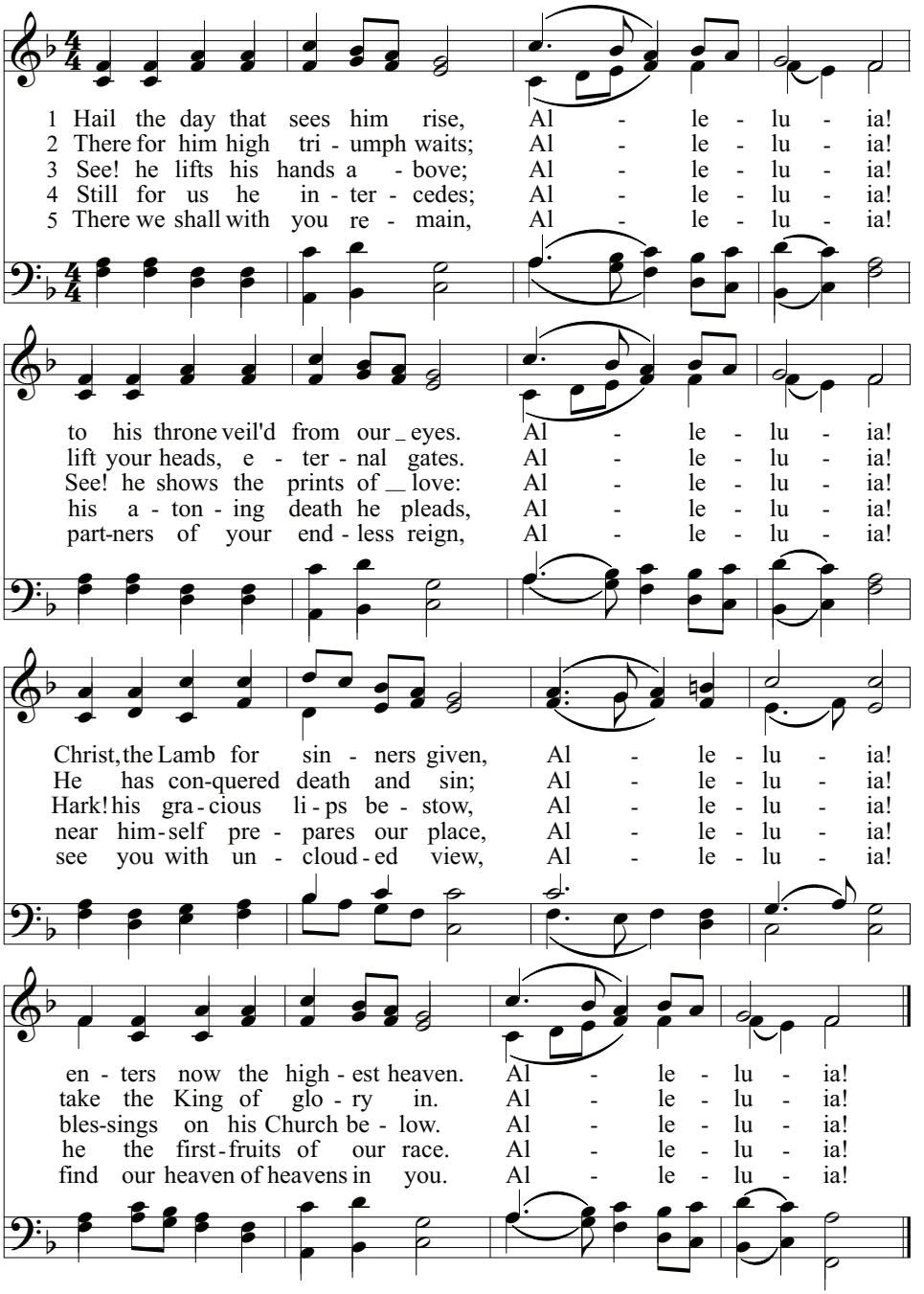
Let Us Pray for You. Covenant's staff meets remotely to pray for the congregation throughout the week. We would be honored to pray for you. Please send your prayer requests to Pastor Dan (dadamson@covenantchicago.org) who will share them with the staff.

Do you need help? The pandemic has impacted people in many different ways. If you are experiencing any kind of hardship and would like some help, 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.

Church Registration Update: Covenant will open registration for church services and childcare (ages 1-4) a week and a half in advance of a service. Registration is now open for May 23. Sign up here: https://covenantchicago.churchcenter.com/registrations/events.

May 30 Service Updates: On May 30, due to the holiday weekend, there will only be two services, at 10:00 and 11:30 am. Additionally, beginning on May 30, registration will open to 125 people per service and you may sit on either the main floor or the balcony in an appropriately marked pew. We'll also return to communion served at the front of the sanctuary. Communion servers will be masked and fully vaccinated. There will be a self-serve station for those who would prefer.

Go With Joy



Hail the Day, Words: Charles Wesley, 1739. Music: Welsh hymn melody, 1837

Leader: **Benediction**

Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker
Pastor, abaker@covenantchicago.org

David Salsedo
Associate Pastor, dsalsedo@covenantchicago.org

Dan Adamson
Associate Pastor, dadamson@covenantchicago.org

Jeff Schneider
Church Planting Pastor, jschneider@covenantchicago.org

Support Staff

Larissa Bossemeyer
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Michele Dillon
Director of Care and Counseling Ministry (CCM): mdillon@covenantchicago.org
Your email inquiry will be promptly answered.

Gene Pierson
Director of Finance & Property: gpierson@covenantchicago.org

Nicole Podkulski
Interim Director of Children's Ministry: nicole@covenantchicago.org

Ian Troll
Director of Youth Ministries: ian@covenantchicago.org

Paul van der Bijl
Director of Worship and Music: pvanderbijl@covenantchicago.org

Session

Aaron Baker (Moderator), Dan Adamson, David Dillon, 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 Harvey
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 worshiping 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).

COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH of CHICAGO

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

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