Epiphany Sunday January 7, 2024 | Covenant Presbyterian Church of Chicago

Star Song

We have been having epiphanies like stars all this year long. And now, at its close when the planets are shining through frost, light runs like music in the bones, and the heart keeps rising at the sound of any song. An old magic flows in the silver calling of a bell, rounding high and clear, flying, falling, sounding the death knell of our old year, telling the new appearing of Christ, our Morning Star. Now burst. all our bell throats! Toll, every clapper tongue! Stun the still night.

Stun the still night. Jesus himself gleams through our high heart notes (it is no fable). It is he whose light glistens in each song sung and in the true coming together again to the stable, of all of us: shepherds, sages, his women and men, common and faithful, wealthy and wise, with carillon hearts and suddenly, stars in our eyes

~ Luci Shaw

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

Large Print orders of worship and devices to improve hearing are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Welcome

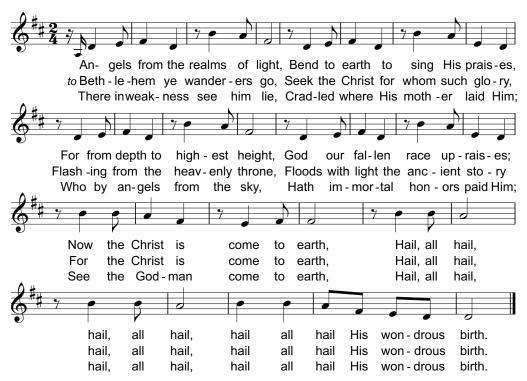
Silent moment to prepare for worship

Epiphany Sunday Reading: from Isaiah 9 and 2 Corinthians 4

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone,

...the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.



Angels from the realms of light, early church hymn, music by Paul van der Bijl, Christmastide 2012

Epiphany Call to Worship

from Isaiah 60

Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come,

All: and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

- Leader: See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,
 - All: but the LORD rises upon us and his glory appears over us.

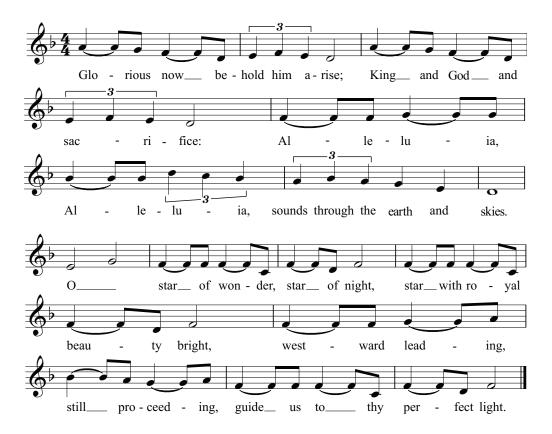


We Three Kings, words & music: John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1857

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Leader: Gracious Father, we thank you and adore you for the star of wonder has appeared over us in the incarnation of your Son, Jesus.

All: You are the light in our thick darkness! O incarnate Son, by your Spirit visit us with your presence today. Amen.



silent moment of adoration

Confession of Sin, from John 1 and 3

- Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.
 - All: The light has come into the world, and we loved the darkness rather than the light because our works were evil.
- Leader: For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

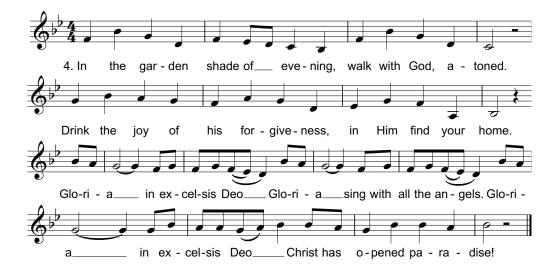
Silent time to pray and confess

1. Come you wan-dering wea - ry____ chil-dren lost and with - out peace. trav - elers_ at the 2. Ga - ther for - lorn gates of Beth - le - hem. 3. Ga - ther freed and hum - bled_ pil-grims, at the Sta - ble - Throne. ᢦ worn and burd-ened. wel - come the feast! hun - gry, thirs - ty to Sa - vior the man - ger, Find our in en - ter E - dens' rest. Praise the Christ who o - pened E - den, find your world re - stored! Glo-ri - a ____ in ex - cel-sis Deo_ _Glo-ri - a____sing with all the an - gels. Glo-ri a. in ex - cel-sis Deo____Christ has o-pened pa - ra - dise!

Eden's Rest, by Paul van der Bijl, Christmastide, 2023

Assurance of Pardon, from John 1 and 3

- Leader: Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - All: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- Leader: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.



Lessons from the Word

read by Rachael and Patrick Russell ①, Brad Lewis②

Old Testament Lesson - Isaiah 60 New Testament Lesson - Ephesia

Isaiah 60:1-6, *p.619* Ephesians 3:7-13, *p.977*

Reader: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God

1. Songs of thank ful- ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to you we raise, 2. Man - i - fest at Jor - dan's stream, Proph - et, Priest, and King su - preme: 3. Man - i - fest in mak - ing whole weak - ened limbs and faint- ing soul; 4. Grant us grace to see you, Lord, mir - rored in your ho - ly Word. man-i - fest-ed by the star to the sa - ges from a - far; and at Ca-na, wed-ding guest, in your God head man - i - fest, man - i - fest in val - iant fight, quell-ing all the dev - il's might; May our lives and all we do i - mi-tate and ho - nor you Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem, in your birth at Beth - le - hem; you re-vealed_ your power di - vine, chang-ing wa- ter in - to wine: man - i - fest_ in gra - cious will, ev - er bring ing good from ill; that we all____like you your great e - pi - pha - ny! may be at Refrain "You are Christ," we all con- fess— God in flesh made man - i - fest.

God in Flesh Made Manifest, by Christopher Wordsworth, 1862, Lincoln Cathedral, UK.

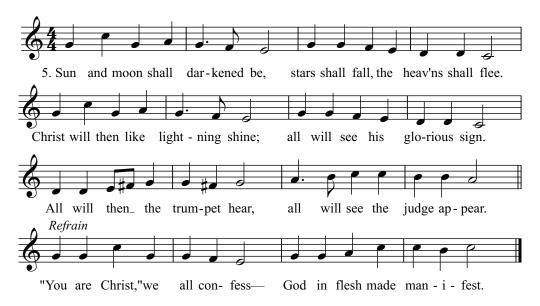
The Word

Pastor Dan Adamson Where is He?, Matthew 2:1–12, p.807

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.



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.

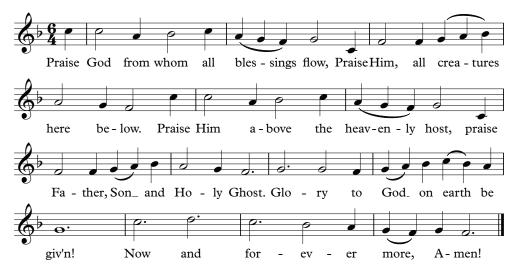
- Leader: The Lord be with you
- All: And also with you.
- Leader: Lift up your hearts
- All: We lift them to the Lord.

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, use the QR code on page 16, or text a donation amount to 84321.



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

Epiphany Great Thanksgiving from the Scottish Episcopal Church (2016)

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.

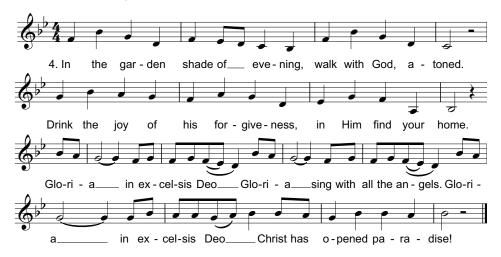
All: Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker.

Leader: Out of nothing, you called all worlds into being, and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment. Day and night celebrate your glory till time shall be no more.

All: In Christ, your only-begotten Son, you have revealed yourself to the world.

- Leader: By the guiding of a star, you made him known to the nations as the son of David and king of Israel;
 - All: that in following him, we might be led from darkness and into his marvelous light.
- Leader: As children of your redeeming purpose we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven singing the hymn of your unending glory:
 - 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. 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

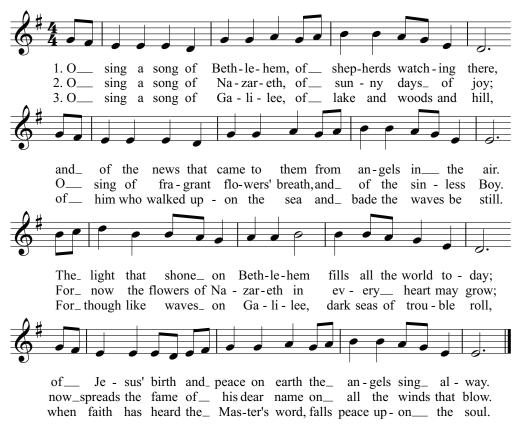
Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but, through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the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

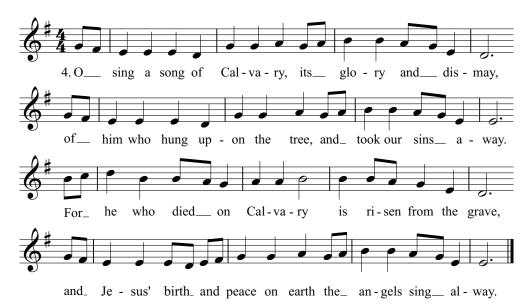
You are welcome to join in song:



O Sing a Song of Bethlehem, Words, Louis F.Benson, 1899, Music, Traditional English Carol

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 Work of the People

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.

Go With Joy

All: 1. There one Gos-pel on which I stand For all is e - ter - ni - ty. 2. There is one Gos-pel to which I cling, all else I count as loss. 3. There one Gos-pel wherehope is found; the is emp - ty tomb still speaks. this Gos-pel the church is one; we 4. And do not walk a - lone in Fa - ther's plan. The Son It my sto-ry, my has re-scued me. is For there, where jus-tice and mer - cy meet, he saved me on the cross. For death could not keep my Sa - vior down, He lives and I am free. We have His Spi-rit we press on lead us safe - ly home. as to Oh what a Gos-pel, oh what a peace. My high-est joy and____mv No more I boast in what Ι can bring. No more I car - ry____ the Now on my Sa-vior I fix my life is His my eyes, and_ His of this old sto - ry____ that And when in glo - ry still Ι will sing deep est need. Now and for - e - ver He is my___ light. weight of sin. For He has brought me from life, death to____ mine! He pro-mised hope is For has I. too. will_ rise. scued me. Praise to Sa - vior King of_ life. re my the I stand Gos - pel of Je Christ. in the _ sus Ι stand in the Gos - pel. of Je Christ. sus I stand in the Gos pel of Je sus Christ. I Christ. stand in the Gos - pel of Je sus

There is One Gospel, Jonny Robinson & Rich Thompson, St. Pauls Anglican Church Castle Hill, New South Wales, Australia, 2022

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.

TODAY AT COVENANT

1st Service, 9am

• Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level

- 2nd service, 11:15am
- Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level
- Children's Worship: preK-5th Grade, lower level

Common Ground, 10:15am

- Coffee and bagels in the Fellowship Hall
- Communicants Class (All Saints Room, Lower Level)

Volunteers in Service Today:

Communion Servers: Patrick Fisher, Margret-Ann and Nick Natsis (9:00); Phil Koerner, Amy and Brad Lewis (11:15)

Ushers: Bill Heine, Jonathan Clarke (9:00); Christie Kay, David Hofman (11:15)

Welcome Table: Jon Skinner (9:00); Phil Koerner (11:15)

Musicians: Paul David Young, electric guitar, vocals; Matthew Siefert, bass; Adriane Fink, piano, Devon Spencer, vocals; Paul van der Bijl, guitar, vocals

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 today. 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.

Winter Class Break: On January 7 and 14, we'll gather together in the Fellowship Hall 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. Each week, we'll use a different spiritual discipline to explore this topic such as lectio divina and the examen. 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.

In Abundance and In Need: How Money Forms Us. Money is a part of many of our daily interactions – sometimes consciously and often hidden in the background. How does money shape us and how can the Bible speak to how we spend, save, give and manage money in our modern economy? Join us for this 4-week class as we discuss what money is, its role in our lives and how we can steward it. This class will meet in the Library beginning January 21 and will be taught by Brad Lewis, Patrick Fisher and Lamont Black.

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).

Wednesday Morning Women's Group: The group meets in the All Saints Room at Covenant from 9 to 11 am each Wednesday. You're welcome to join whether you're able to come weekly or occasionally. This winter, they will read Faithful: A Theology of Sex by Beth Felker Jones. Childcare is available. Contact Devon Spencer (devonspencer1112@gmail.com) with questions about this group.

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).

Dinners Together: Join others from Covenant for potluck gatherings throughout the city. On January 27 and February 3, Covenant is organizing dinners for groups of 8-12. If you'd be interested in attending one of these get-togethers, please fill out the forms on the Welcome Table or on our website (covenantchicago.org/ events/dinner-together/. Please let us know if you'd be willing to host! Questions? Contact Larissa Bossemeyer (lbossemeyer@covenantchicago.org).

Chicagoland United in Prayer. Together Chicago and their partner organization, Chicagoland United in Prayer, are hosting their annual prayer gathering on Sunday, February 4th at Apostolic Faith Church from 5-7pm. Christians from all over the city gather to pray for peace, justice, righteousness, and thriving in our city, and we're invited to join them. Learn more and register to attend at https://chiunitepray.com/chicagoland-united-in-prayer-2024/.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer with Children's Ministry: Covenant needs additional volunteers to help in our nurseries, children's worship classroom and Sunday school classrooms. We need volunteers during both services (9:00 and 11:15 am) and during Common Ground (10:15). To volunteer, contact Ian Troll (ian@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

Parents of Diverse Learners. If you have a child with a disability taking part in our children's ministry, we would like to try and find ways to meet your child's unique needs. One of our deacons, Kylene Young, has years of experience as a special education teacher and can work with you and our volunteers to tailor a plan. If you're interested in learning more, contact lan (ian@covenantchicago.org) or Kylene (Kyleneyoung@gmail.com).

Emergency Childcare: No one likes to think about tough times, especially if children are involved, but in the spirit of "bearing one another's burdens," Covenant is hoping to compile a list of people who could help with short-term childcare after a medical emergency, car or bike accident, or other similar event. Students, retirees, stay-at-home moms, nannies with available days, or others with some free time who enjoy working with children, are invited to contact Deb Van Der Molen (dvmolen79@gmail.com) for an application, which requests information about prior childcare experience, first aid certification, and references. Financial compensation would be available.

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/ 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).



Sermon Text Next Week: Mark 1.4-11

Giving QR code

Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker Pastor, abaker@covenantchicago.org

Dan Adamson Associate Pastor, dadamson@covenantchicago.org

Support Staff

Larissa Bossemeyer Director of Ministries: lbossemeyer@ covenantchicago.org

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

Ian Troll Director of Children and 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, Dave Hoover, Brad Lewis, Steve Lehmann, Joshua Norton

Please direct correspondence for the Session to 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.

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:

1 This is new or updated information 1

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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covenantchicago.org

