



# The Palms Ascents

15th Sunday of Pentecost | September 3, 2023

### *A Future Not Our Own*

*This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water the seeds already planted knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.*

*We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing this. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.*

*We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.*

*~ Oscar Romero*

*Children's programming is available during the service on the lower level, see page 15 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*

*By your power may we, with all the saints, comprehend the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that we may be filled with your fullness. Amen.*

All:



Wor - thy is the\_ Lamb who was slain; Ho - ly, ho - ly is He;\_  
Fall be - fore the\_ throne of glo - ry;\_ gaze upon the crys - tal sea.\_  
Clothed in po - wer, might and splen - dour, th'Bride - groom calls us to the feast,  
Sing a new song to him who sits on\_ Heav - en's mer - cy seat.\_  
Join the my - riad saints and an - gels sing through all eter - ni - ty  
of ho - ly man - na\_ and li - ving wa - ter. our'con - suma - tion now com - plete.  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the\_ Lord God\_ Al - might - y  
Who was\_ and is\_ and is\_ to come;\_ With all cre - a - tion I sing  
praise to the King of Kings; You are my ev - ry - thing and I will a - dore You.\_

*Revelation Song, Words and Music: Jennie Lee Riddle, 2004.*

# Call to Worship,

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from Revelation 5:11-13

Leader: Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, around the crystal sea:

**All: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might  
and honor and glory and blessing!"**

Leader: And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

**All: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"**

Wor-thy is the\_ Lamb who was slain; Ho-ly, ho-ly is He;\_

Sing a new song to him who sits on\_ Heav-en's mer-cy seat.\_

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the\_ Lord God\_ Al - might - y

Who was\_ and is\_ and is\_ to come;\_ With all cre-a - tion I sing

praise to the King of Kings; You are my ev-ry-thing and I will a-dore You.\_

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Wor-thy is the\_ Lamb who was slain; Ho-ly, ho-ly is He;\_ Sing a new song to him who sits on\_ Heav-en's mer-cy seat.\_ Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the\_ Lord God\_ Al - might - y Who was\_ and is\_ and is\_ to come;\_ With all cre-a - tion I sing praise to the King of Kings; You are my ev-ry-thing and I will a-dore You.\_"



# Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

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Leader: *O God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we hear your voice calling us to come together in worship. We thank you that in our gathering you show us a glimpse of the day when in fear and joy we will gather around the crystal sea before your throne with all your children of faith and all the angels of heaven to worship and adore you.*

Open our hearts and eyes to your presence.

**All: Come Holy Spirit in your Word and in your Sacrament. Amen.**

*silent moment of meditation and adoration*

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the prayer: "Come, Ho - ly Spi - rit. Come, Ho - ly Spi - rit.\_\_\_\_". The second staff contains the melody for the second line: "Come, Ho - ly Spi - rit, a - men. A - men." The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

# Confession of Sin,

from 1 Peter 1:13-16

Leader: *Prepare your minds for action, and be sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."*

**All:** **Father, forgive us our undisciplined and distracted hearts and minds.  
We so easily give in to those unholy passions  
that drive us away from the open arms of your Son.  
Have mercy on us and reveal to us by your Spirit the living hope we have in Christ**

*Silent time to pray and confess*

1. How great the cha - sm that lay be - tween us, how high the  
2. Who could im - a - gine so great a mer - cy? What heart could  
moun - tain I can not climb. In des - per - rat - ion I turned to  
fa - thom such bound - less grace? The God of ag - es step'd down from  
heav en and spoke your name in - to the night. Then through the  
glo - ry to wear my sin and bear my shame. The cross has  
dark - ness your lov - ing kind - ness tore through the sha - dows of my  
spo - ken, I am for - giv - en. The King of kings calls me His  
soul The work is fin - ished the end is writ ten, Je - sus Christ, my liv - ing hope.  
own. Beau ti - ful Sav - ior, I'm yours for e - ver. Je - sus Christ, my liv - ing hope.

**chorus**  
Ha - le - lu - jah, praise the One who set me free Ha - le - lu - jah, death has  
lost its grip on me. You have bro - ken eve - ry chain There's sal -  
va - tion in Your name. Je - sus Christ, my li - ving hope.

# Assurance of Pardon

from 1 Peter 1:3-4

Leader: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!  
According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope  
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is  
imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.*

All:

3. Then came the mor - ning that sealed the pro - mise Your bu - ried  
bo - dy be - gan to breathe Out of the si - lence, the Roar - ing  
Li - on De - clared the grave has no claim on me.  
Je - sus yours is the vic - tor - y!  
Ha - le - lu - jah, praise the One who set me free Ha - le - lu - jah, death has  
lost its grip on me. You have bro - ken eve - ry chain There's sal -  
va - tion in Your name. Je - sus Christ, my li - ving hope.

*Living Hope, Phil Wickham, Harvest Christian Fellowship, Riverside CA, 2018*

# Lessons from the Word

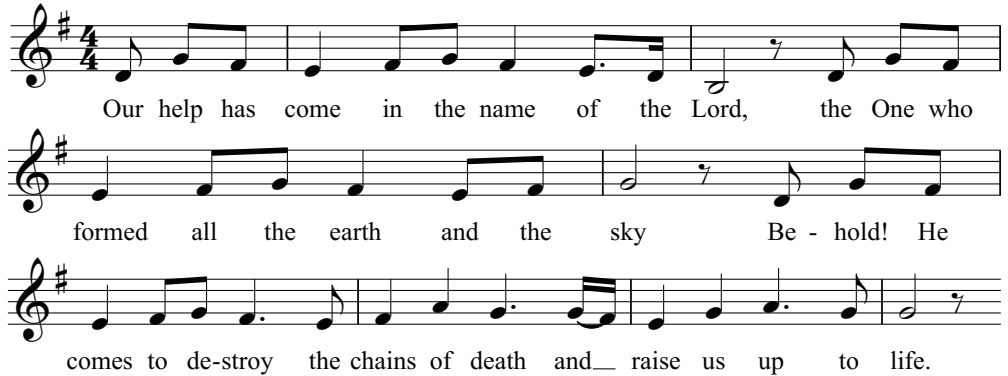
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read by ??y

New Testament Lesson -  
Gospel Lesson -

Colossians 2:13-15, p.959  
?, p.811

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



Our help has come in the name of the Lord, the One who  
formed all the earth and the sky Be - hold! He  
comes to de-stroy the chains of death and\_ raise us up to life.

## *Refrain*



Oh bless his name, for he has gi - ven us e - ver - y -  
thing we need to fly. Our bro-ken wings, they have not  
hin - dered us. We have the Lord: he's on our side!

Psalm 124, Wendell Kimbrough, Church of the Incarnation, Dallas, TX, 2018



# The Word

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Ian Troll

The Lord is on Our Side, Psalm 124 p.518

A Song of Ascents.

<sup>1</sup> If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—  
let Israel now say—

<sup>2</sup> if it had not been the LORD who was on our side  
when people rose up against us,

<sup>3</sup> then they would have swallowed us up alive,  
when their anger was kindled against us;

<sup>4</sup> then the flood would have swept us away,  
the torrent would have gone over us;

<sup>5</sup> then over us would have gone  
the raging waters.

<sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
who has not given us  
as prey to their teeth!

<sup>7</sup> We have escaped like a bird  
from the snare of the fowlers;  
the snare is broken,  
and we have escaped!

<sup>8</sup> Our help is in the name of the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.

**All sing: Psalm 124**

*(on previous page)*

# Sacrament of Communion

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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.**

*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 15, or text a donation amount to 84321.*



Ho - ly\_ Fath er, Son, and Spi-rit. Ho -ly Com-mu-nion, Three in One.

Come with Your peace, with Your in-vi-ta-tion. Bind us to-ge-ther in ho-ly\_ love.

*Trinity Song, by Sandra McCracken, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Nashville, TN, 2016*

# The Great Thanksgiving, by Samuel Wells, vicar, St. Martin-in-the-fields, Church of England, 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: We glorify and enjoy you now and forever, gracious God,  
because you created the universe as your work of art,  
and set us in the midst of it.**

Leader: When the canvas of your kindness was torn by our sin,  
you crafted a work of even more depth and beauty  
from the damage we had done.

**All: When your Son's body was scarred and pierced,  
your raised him to glorious life.**

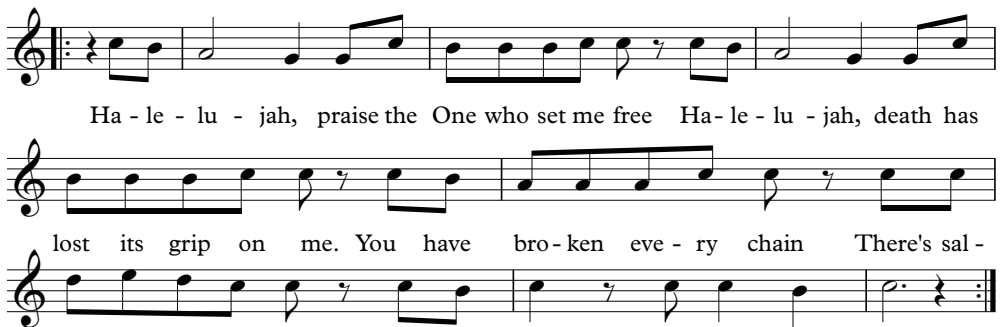
Leader: In your chosen people you drew out a song of thankfulness and praise.

**All: In your church you give us voices to shout and dance  
and sculpt and inscribe the wonders of your love.**

Leader: And so we rejoice to join with angels and archangels  
and all the company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending 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.**



Ha - le - lu - jah, praise the One who set me free Ha - le - lu - jah, death has  
lost its grip on me. You have bro - ken eve - ry chain There's sal -  
va - tion in Your name. Je - sus Christ, my li - ving hope.

# Distribute the Bread & Cup

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Please note that we serve both red wine and white grape juice.  
Gluten free bread is available in a separate dish.

## **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 meditation during the meal*

***We lift our heart to you, Lord God,  
because you draw your whole creation  
into the celebration of your glory.  
Send down your Holy Spirit upon us now,  
that every part of every one of us  
might become an instrument of your peace.  
Give us you very self in these gifts of bread and wine  
and make them be for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.***

by Samuel Wells, vicar, St. Martin-in-the-fields, Church of England, 2016

*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*

## Music for Communion

You are welcome to join in song:

The image shows a musical score for a communion song. It consists of seven staves of music in 4/4 time, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 1. What gift of grace is Je - sus my red - ee - mer. There is no  
2. The night is dark but I am not for - sak - en For by my  
3. No fate I dread, I know I am for - giv - en The fu - ture  
more for hea - ven now to give He is my joy, my righ - teous - ness and  
side, the Sav - iour he will stay. I la - bor on in weak - ness and rej -  
sure, the price it has been paid For Je - sus bled and suf - fered for my  
free - dom My stead - fast love, my deep and bound - less peace.  
oic - ing For in my need, his pow - er is dis - played  
par - don And he was raised to ov - er - throw the grave  
To this I hold, my hope is on - ly Je - sus For my  
To this I hold, my Shep - herd will de - fend\_ me Through the  
To this I hold, my sin has been de - fea\_ ted Je - sus  
life is who - lly bound to his. Oh how strange and di - vine, I can  
deep - est val - ley he will lead Oh the night has been won, and I  
now and ev - er is my plea Oh the chains are rel - eased, I can  
sing: all is mine! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.  
shal ov - er - come! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.  
sing: I am free! Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

*Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me, Jonny Robinson, St. Pauls Anglican Church Castle Hill, New South Wales, Australia, 2018*

## 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.**



4. With eve - ry breath I long to fol - low Je - sus For he had  
said that he will bring me home And day by day I know he will re -  
new me Un - til I stand with joy be - fore the throne  
To this I hold, my hope is on - ly Je - sus All the  
glo - ry ev - er - more to him When the race is com plete, still my  
lips shall re - peat: Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

## 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

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*adapted from Philippians 2:13-16*

Leader: As we enter this week,  
go with joy remembering it is God who works in you, and who is on our side  
giving us both the desire and the strength to work for his pleasure.

**All:** **In the midst of this broken world  
let us shine as lights, holding fast to Jesus Christ the word of life.**

God will give you strength, God will give you peace,  
God will give you hope, in your  
time of need. Go in the name of Christ. Go with the  
Word of Life. Shine like the stars in this dark-ening world.  
Walk in his love, filled with his joy, blame-less and pure.

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are placed below the notes. There are several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a bracket) in the third, fourth, and fifth staves.

*Stars in the World (Phil.2:15-16), Paul van der Bijl, 2012*

# Benediction

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Leader: *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

### 10.15 service

- Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level
- Children's Worship: preK-5th Grade, lower level

#### Volunteers in Service Today:

Communion Servers: Alyssa and Brent Blankenship, Anna Harvey

Ushers: Craig and Cedric Horbinski

Musicians: Gunn Kim, violin; Desmond Fisher, keys; Lucy Adamson, vocals; Cora Baker, vocals; Laelia van der Bijl, vocals; Paul van der Bijl, guitar, vocals; Cassidy Miller, sound technician.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

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.

**Staff Change:** This will be Pastor David's last Sunday as a pastor at Covenant; please join us after worship for a cake and coffee reception to thank him for his service to our congregation..



**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](mailto:breakthrough@covenantchicago.org) for more information or sign up for upcoming dates on our website: <https://covenantchicago.org/events/breakfast-at-breakthrough/>.

**Newcomers Lunch:** Covenant is hosting a welcome lunch on September 24 at 12:30 for those who are new to Covenant's community. It will be a fun and informal way to be introduced to some new faces, learn some names, share some stories, and meet some of Covenant's staff and officers. Please RSVP to Pastor Dan ([dadamson@covenantchicago.org](mailto:dadamson@covenantchicago.org)) if you'd like to join.

**Save the Date: Women's Retreat.** Mark your calendars for our annual women's retreat on October 20-22. This year, we'll return to the Dekoven Center in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Look for additional details and registration in September. Interested in helping to plan the Fall Retreat or other women's events throughout the year? Contact [women@covenantchicago.org](mailto:women@covenantchicago.org) to volunteer.

**Parenting in Light of the Gospel:** In a world that feels as complex as ours does, the Gospel provides a lens that can inform our decisions where there are no easy answers. In this 4-week class, we'll talk about the way that the Gospel shapes how we approach parenting in issues like discipline, technology, and mental health. Join fellow parents as we reflect together on how to faithfully disciple our children. Class will meet in the All Saints Room at 10:15 beginning on September 10.

**The Reluctant Prophet:** In four short chapters, the book of Jonah tells the story of a runaway prophet. More than a Big Fish, this short book shows the lengths Jonah would travel to avoid God's call. Taking us on a journey from the shores of Joppa to the heart of Assyria, this is the story of a God who is slow to anger and

abounding in love and a prophet who would rather die than see his enemies receive grace. Join us for this 4-week class on Jonah taught by Mark Lester starting on September 10 at 10:15 in the Library of the Education Building.

**Serving Our City:** As a church in the city, one of the ways we love our neighbors is by working for the good of our city. Covenant does that in part through partnerships with other city ministries. Join us for this 4 week class to hear from various city ministries we serve with as a church and learn how you can be involved. We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall beginning on September 10.

**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](mailto:dadamson@covenantchicago.org)).

**Wednesday Morning Women's Group:** Beginning September 6, Covenant's Wednesday morning women's group will resume for the Fall. The group meets in the All Saints Room at Covenant from 9 to 11 am each Wednesday. This Fall, they'll read Mere Christianity. You're welcome to join whether you're able to come weekly or occasionally. Childcare is available. Anna Troll ([annelise.olson94@gmail.com](mailto:annelise.olson94@gmail.com)) and Devon Spencer ([devonspencer1112@gmail.com](mailto:devonspencer1112@gmail.com)) will lead this group.

**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](mailto:ian@covenantchicago.org)).

**Sunday Morning Sound Technicians Needed:** If you are interested in helping run sound on Sunday mornings please contact Russell Kamp at [russellkamp@gmail.com](mailto:russellkamp@gmail.com).



ONE CITY. ONE MISSION.

**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.

**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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:dadamson@covenantchicago.org)).

Giving QR Code





## Pastoral Staff

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

David Salsedo  
Associate Pastor, [dsalsedo@covenantchicago.org](mailto:dsalsedo@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, Kevin Jones, Brad Lewis, Steve Lehmann, David Salsedo.

*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, 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](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*

2012 W. Dickens  
Chicago, IL 60647  
773.486.9590

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