

A psalm of Isaak

amid uncommon darkness

*O Being both far distant and most near,
O Lover embracing all unlovable, O Tender
Tether binding us together, and binding, yea
and tenderly, Your Person to ourselves,
Being both beyond our ken, and kindred, One
whose dire energies invest such clay as ours
with patent animation, O Secret One secreting
life anew into our every tissue moribund,
afresh unto our stale and stalling craft,
grant in this obscurity a little light.*

~ Scott Cairns



*Sermon Series: The Teaching Jesus
Covenant Presbyterian Church of Chicago
26th Sunday of Pentecost, November 19, 2023
Collage by Jamie Gray*

Children's programming is available during both services on the lower level, see page 16 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.

Call to Worship

1. All crea-tures of our God and King, Lift up your voice and with us
sing Al-le - lu - ia, Al-le - lu - ia! Thou burn-ing sun with gold-en
beam, Thou sil-ver moon with soft-er gleam, O_ praise him, O
praise him, Al-le - lu - ia, Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!

The musical score is written for a choir or congregation in 3/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign (8:).

All Creatures of Our God and King, Words: Francis of Assisi, 1225. Music: 17th Century German

Call To Worship

From Psalm 145

Leader: I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

**All: Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

Leader: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

**All: We will pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness
and will sing aloud of your righteousness.**

Leader: All your works will give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your saints will bless you!

**All: My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD.
Let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.**

1. All crea-tures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing,
2. O rush-ing winds that are so strong, Ye clouds that sail in heav'n a-long,
3. O ev'-ry-one of ten-der heart, For-giv-ing oth-ers take your part,
Sun, moon and stars re-joice on high, Praise to the Lord of light di-vine,
O ris-ing moon, in praise re-joice, Ye lights of eve-ning find a voice!
All you who pain and sor-row bear, Praise God and lay on Him your care.
Sing al-le-lu-ia! Sing al-le-lu-ia! Praise the Fa-ther a-bove, sing
al-le-lu-ia, sing al-le-lu-ia, sing al-le-lu-ia, For His
in-fi-nite love, sing al-le-lu-ia!

All Creatures, Words: Francis of Assisi, 1225. Music: Steve Hindalong, 2002

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Leader: O Father, we can never reach the bottom of your abundant goodness and grace. Thank you for gathering us into your merciful outstretched arms.

Come Holy Spirit:

All: Open our eyes to your presence among us today.

silent moment of meditation

Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Praise the Fa-ther a - bove, sing
al - le-lu - ia, sing al - le - lu - ia,__ sing al - le - lu - ia,__ For His
in - fi - nite love,, sing al - le - lu - ia!

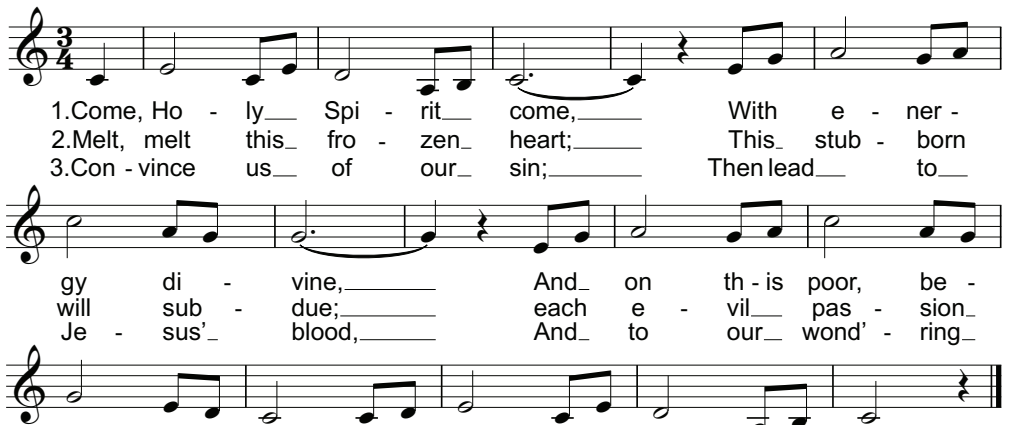
The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three staves of music in a single system, all written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Praise the Fa-ther a - bove, sing al - le-lu - ia, sing al - le - lu - ia,__ sing al - le - lu - ia,__ For His in - fi - nite love,, sing al - le - lu - ia!". The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes, with some phrases connected by slurs. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Confession of Sin, from John 3

Leader: *And this is the judgment of God: the light has come into the world, and we loved the darkness rather than the light because our works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest their works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.*

All: **Forgive us, O Lord, for we we hide in the darkness of our sins. Grant us the grace to come to your light to see clearly who we are under your merciful love.**

Sing to Confess



1. Come, Ho - ly Spi - rit come, With e - ner -
2. Melt, melt this fro - zen heart; This stub - born
3. Con - vince us of our sin; Then lead to

gy di - vine, And on th - is poor, be -
will sub - due; each e - vil pas - sion
Je - sus' blood, And to our wond' - ring

night - ed soul, With beams of mer - cy shine.
o - ver - come, And form me all a - new.
view re - veal The se - cret love of God.

Abbeville, Words: Benjamin Beddome, 1800; Music: The Sacred Harp, E.J. King, 1844

Silent time to pray and confess

Assurance of Pardon, from John 3

All: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Sing to Assure

4.'Tis Thine to cleanse the heart, To sanc - ti -
5.Mine will the pro - fit be, But Thine shall
-fy the soul, To pour fresh life in
be the praise; And un - to Thee will
eve - ry part, And new cre - ate the whole.
I de - vote The rem - nant of my days.

Lessons from the Word

Olivia Stewart Lester ①, Hyunseob Kim ②

Old Testament Lesson - Ezekiel 36.24-28, p.724
New Testament Lesson - 1 Peter 1.3-5, p.1014

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



O splen dor of the fa-ther's light, that makes our day light lu-cid bri-ght
True Sun, break out on earth and shine, in ra-diance with your light di-vine_



O light of light and sun of day, now shine on us your bright-est ray.
By daz-zling of your Spi-rit's might, o give our ja-ded sens-es light.

O Splendor of the Father's Light, Words: St. Ambrose (340-397). Music: mode 1, Antiphoner, 1400's

The Word

Pastor Aaron Baker
Born Again, John 3:1–17 p.887

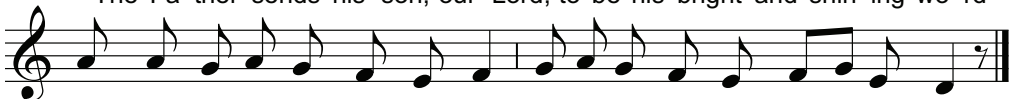
¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.



The Fa-ther sends his son, our Lord, to be his bright and shin-ing wo-rd



Come, Lord, ride out your gleam-ing course and be our dawn our light's_ true source.

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 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, use the QR code on page 18, or text a donation amount to 84321.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1709, Music, German Psalter, 1561

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: Your Spirit brooded over the waters
before the foundation of the world.**

Leader: Your pillar of fire led your people to freedom
through the waters of the Red Sea.

**All: Your son Jesus came to his disciples
across the stormy waves of Galilee.**

Leader: In his agonizing death we see how far we stray from you,
and in his resurrection we see how you draw us close
despite our betrayals and failures.

**All: We long for the day when all the saints adore you,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,**

Leader: 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.**

Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Sing al - le - lu - ia!__ Praise the Fa - ther a - bove, sing
al - le - lu - ia, sing al - le - lu - ia, __ sing al - le - lu - ia, __ For His
in - fi - nite love, __ sing al - le - lu - ia!

Distribute the Bread & Cup

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 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.

Music for Communion

You are welcome to join in song:



By this we re-mem-ber in faith as we ga-ther,
By this we re-mem-ber in hope as we ga-ther,
By this we re-mem-ber in love as we ga-ther,



with bread and wine we re-mem-ber un-til he comes a-gain.
with bread and wine we re-mem-ber un-til he comes a-gain.
with bread and wine we re-mem-ber un-til he comes a-gain.

Chorus



When He comes__ a-gain, like a thief in the night, when he comes__ a-



gain, all the wrongs will be right. All the earth lift-ed up as



heav-en_ comes down: we re mem-ber un-til he comes a-gain.

Until He Comes Again by Sandra McCracken, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Nashville, TN, 2022

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.**

Chorus



When He comes__ a - gain, like a thief in the night, when he comes__ a -
gain, all the wrongs will be right. All the earth lift-ed up as
heav-en__comes down: we re mem-ber un - til he comes a - gain.

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:

We be-lieve in one God, Fa-ther Al-might-y. Who made hea-ven and
We be-lieve in one Spi-rit, gi-ver of life. Who pro-ceeds from the
earth all things seen and un- seen. We be-lieve in one Christ, true Son of
Fa-ther and from the Christ. We be-lieve in one Church, one faith, one
God, be-fore all time, ha-le-lu-jah!
love, through-out all time, ha-le-lu-jah!
God of God, Light of light, true God from true God.
Christ has died! He a-rose! He comes a-gain!
We be-lieve! We be-lieve! Ha-le-lu-jah! We be-lieve!

Based on the Nicene Creed, by Paul van der Bijl & Dave Jarvis, 2023, a song in triplets to exalt the Trinity.

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

TODAY AT COVENANT

1st Service, 9am

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

2nd service, 11:15am

- Nurseries, ages 0-4, lower level

Common Ground, 10:15am

- Coffee and snacks available in the Fellowship Hall
- Nursery: Ages 0-4 (Lower Level)
- Sunday School: PreK-8th Grade (Lower Level)
- Sunday School: High School (Youth Room, Ed Building)
- Adult Education: Envisioning God's World (All Saints Room, Lower Level)
- Adult Education: How the Universe is Designed for Discovery (Fellowship Hall, Ed Building)
- Adult Education: Covenant Life Class (Conference Room, Ed Building)

Volunteers in Service Today:

Communion Servers: Cora Passis, Holly and Steve Lehmann (9:00); Andrew Dykstra, James Leach, Karyn Herndon (11:15)

Ushers: Brent Blankenship, Chuck Michalek, Kim Edison (9:00), Phil Koerner (11:15)

Welcome Table: Choon Lee (9:00); Phil Koerner (11:15)

Musicians: Paul David Young, guitar, vocals; Cassidy Miller, vocals; Matthew Siefert, bass; Paul Kamp, electric guitar, Iva Riggs, vocals; Adriane Fink, piano; sound technician, Danny Medina

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

November 26 Break: On November 26, Covenant Sunday schools, Common Ground nurseries and adult classes will take a break. Please join us between services for bagels in the Fellowship Hall. All regular Common Ground activities will resume on December 3.

Covenant Life Class: This 6 week class is for those who are interested in learning more about the church and the things we care about most, starting with the gospel. This week, the pastors will teach on stewardship, serving and polity.

How the Universe is Designed for Discovery: In this series, we will examine some pivotal discoveries in physics which seem to suggest that the universe was designed for discovery. David Hofman (Professor of Physics, University of Illinois Chicago) and Joshua Norton (Professor of Philosophy, Wheaton College) will co-teach this class in the Fellowship Hall of the Education Building.

Envisioning God's World: We believe that all good things come from God and point towards him. In this class, we'll look at some concrete ways we see theology in works of art. Class will meet in the All Saints Room. This week, Larissa Bossemeyer will teach on art and the body.

Waiting: The church waits expectantly for Christ to complete his work in us and our world. We are all waiting for something. What does it look like for us to wait faithfully? In this three-week Advent class taught by women on the Spiritual Formation team, we will explore our own seasons of waiting and how God meets us in them. We will hear personal stories from some of Covenant's own people and look to specific stories in scripture that point us to the tasks, transition and transformation of waiting and how those can lead us to anticipation, trust and hope. Class will meet at 10:15 in the All Saints Room beginning December 3.

The Once and Future King: Prophecy, Incarnation & Apocalypse. Advent gathers up all of time for God's people. In Advent, we remember the ancient promises of a coming King, we celebrate the mystery of Incarnation, and we anticipate a second Advent of Jesus in glory. Join us for this 3-week class that will trace the theological themes of Advent through time. Class will begin December 3 in the Library at 10:15.

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).

Midnight Clear: Join us for a fun evening of music and carol singing on Sunday, December 10 from 6:00 to 7:15 pm in our sanctuary. There will be a dessert reception to follow in the gym of the Education Building. We're looking for volunteers to help with setup and clean up and to bring desserts for the reception. If you'd be willing to help, contact office@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: November 25, December 2, 16, 23 and 30. 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).

November Mercy Bin: This month, Covenant is collecting donations for Breakthrough Urban Ministries and New Moms who are hosting Christmas stores to help families celebrate the joy of the season through gift giving despite financial difficulties. We're also collecting Amazon or grocery gift cards for refugees and asylum-seekers through World Relief. Please consider purchasing items from one of the gift lists on our website (<https://covenantchicago.org/mercy-bin/>) or pick a gift tag off the Christmas tree at the back of the sanctuary. Please return labeled gifts to Covenant's Mercy Bin located in the narthex by November 27 for New Moms or December 10 for Breakthrough. Gifts can also be sent directly to the organizations via their online wish lists.

Breakthrough Christmas Store: This year, Covenant is helping to set up for Breakthrough's Christmas Store on Friday, December 15 from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. If you'd be interested in helping, please contact Pastor Dan (dadamson@covenantchicago.org).

Mentoring at Pulaski: Covenant, in partnership with Together Chicago and Love Your School, has launched a mentoring program for 6th -8th graders at Pulaski Elementary School, blocks away from church. We are looking for additional volunteers who are available on Thursdays from 4:00-5:15 pm to meet with young students and invest in them during the school year. We are in particular need of female mentors, as many of the students are girls. Please reach out to Linda Kim (lindakim5@gmail.com) to learn more.

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/>.

NEWS AND UPDATES

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: Luke 6:20-26

Giving QR Code



Pastoral Staff

Aaron Baker
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Dan Adamson
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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, Josh 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:

↑ *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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