



Covenant Presbyterian Church

607 E. 3rd St. Long Beach, CA 90802 - www.CovenantLB.org - (562) 437-0958

January 1, 2024

Beloved of God,

As we transition from one year to the next, we want to ascend the steps the past has laid for us to climb; but we also want to refrain from dragging up behind us unnecessary burdens from the past that would slow our ascent.

We want to apply timeless wisdom that precedes the present; but we also want to avail of new understanding and insights, particularly those that can enlighten us about how to fulfill our mission in a much-changed world.

We want to dig out the channels to facilitate the free flow of still effective tradition; but we also want to avoid obstructing the free flow of helpful innovation.

We may hope to find the right balance if we study the challenges before us with vigorous fair-mindedness, run ideas past one another with openness to both questions and perspectives never before considered, and most of all pray and submit all our plans and programs to the sovereign will of God.

After all, our accomplishing our purposes matters more to God than it does to us, and God alone knows how best to do so.

In light of the fact that for God nothing is impossible, we just need to repent of presuming we know what is and what is not possible!

In his book *Teaching the Elephant to Dance*, Joseph Belasco describes how trainers teach young elephants to stay in place by shackling them with long heavy chains to deeply embedded stakes. As the powerful creatures grow bigger and mightier, it never occurs to them to wander off – even though they’ve developed more than enough strength to pull the stakes out of the ground and walk away. Their confinement is completely due to their conditioning. Even with the stakes and chains removed and nothing but the small metal “bracelet” around one leg, they remain within the area defined by the length of the chains to which they were once attached. Though they could head out anytime anywhere, they never think to venture beyond the boundaries that they believe are hard and fast.

Like elephants, many people and communities are bound by earlier conditioned restraints. Perhaps thinking “This is the way things have to be done” or just “We have always done things this way”, they needlessly limit their freedom, restrict progress and miss out on wonderful opportunities and adventures.

In the last worship service of last year, we considered God’s word to His people in Isaiah 43:19a, saying, “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

To be submitted to God’s rule is to be open and receptive to His surprises. It is to turn our eyes in the directions to which He points our gaze, and to perceive possibilities of service and witness we had not before envisioned. It is to grow free of false limitations and enter a bigger world of more joyful and fruitful ministry than any we had before considered.

Let us in 2024 following our loving Lord wherever He wants to lead us!

Warmly in Christ,

Rob & Adele

IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL WORSHIP

Our weekly in-person Sunday service is held each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. The service is also streamed live on *YouTube*: **Covenant Presbyterian Church Long Beach CA** and our website: **www.CovenantLB.org** at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays.

All services remain available throughout the week and in our video libraries.

Sunday, January 7th - Holy Communion

Acts 19:1-7 & Mark 1:4-11

“What Was It Like”

Sunday, January 21st

Psalm 124 & Psalm 127:1-2

“Rightly Placed Trust”

Sunday, January 14th - Ordination & Installation

Psalm 116

“Great Dedication from Great Gratitude”

Sunday, January 28th

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

“There’s More than Meets the Eye”

SPECIAL NOTES

Blessings on you as you receive these Christmas greetings from Covenant’s Giant Christmas Card:

Happy Birthday to you! XOXO * Merry Christmas to all. With love from the Sakala family ♥

Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! With love, Thelma (Joy to all) *

I hope everyone has a wonderful Jesus day in our church family, Cindy Kuhns *

Go Go Go Ho Ho Ho * Wish you all a Merry Christmas (and a Happy New Year)! Jesse Gayer *

Merry Christmas to All ♥ Sharon Siska, Henry Thacker * Happy Holidays! God bless you, Temwani Woods *

Wishing everyone a glorious Christmas! Jo & Jeff Sutton * Love & Kindness ♥ Merry Christmas *

Have a Blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year! Mary Lou * Jesus is coming again ... *

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year! Margaret Hullett * May your Christmas be filled with warmth & good cheer this holiday season & throughout the new year! ♥ Dezarae Anderson ☺ * Bella ☺ *

“O Come Let us Adore Him, Christ our Lord. Christmas Blessings, Michael Finley *

Happy holidays to everyone. Wish everyone an amazing time with y’all family XOXO Kamyia Cochran *

Faith, Joy and Love! * Wishing you a very “hope-filled” Advent and Christmas, Pastor Adele & Pastor Rob *

Feliz Navidad - Joyeux Noël - Fröhliche Weihnacht - Buon Natale - Have a Blessed holiday *

Merry Christmas to all and hope the new year will be good to you, Evelyn Haesloop *

Merry Christmas! May the light and love of Christ shine bright in your heart this Christmas! ♥ Karen Kennedy*

Happy Chanukkah! John R Pavone * Season Greetings to All - Merry Christmas - Love, Felecia *

Happy Holidays to you and yours! The Welch Family wishes everyone all the blessings and joy ... Travnetta & Bella Welch * Merry Christmas and Happy Healthy New Year! Jen *

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! ♥ Diana & Ray Law *

May the peace of our Savior fill your hearts and homes. Lea & Ruben Lindley *

Wishing everyone a safe & healthy Christmas! - Irini * Peace! ♥ Mary Turner *

May God bless you and give you joy, peace, and love - Ivy Mariotta *

God bless us everyone! * Wonderful Christmas to all! Allison Cassiday *

Merry Christmas for all! God bless everyone, Larry & Anglie ☺ * ♥ 🟡 🟢 🟣 ♥ *

Wishing everyone a very blessed Christmas holy day! Love, Hubert & Shelley *

Merry Christmas Covenant family! ♥ Narin * Christmas Blessings to all - God bless us everyone, Drury W. *

We hope for each of you a peaceful, healthy and God-filled holiday. Marilyn & Dan *

Best wishes for a wonderful and safe Christmas and blessed New Year! Love, Kris *

SUNDAY SCHOOL

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

On-site & On-line at 11:00 a.m. Adults are invited to attend Sunday School, this month studying *The Acts of the Apostles*, under the leadership of Elder Mark Wiley. The class is offered in a hybrid-style at 11:00 a.m. — in the Meeting Room for those in-person, and for those on-line through *Google Meet*. If you would like to join on-line:



- please visit **Meet.Google.com** & use the meeting code: **goeumjnwgg**
- or dial in from your phone, **1-209-781-9485** & enter this PIN: **443 527 177#**.

CHILDREN & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Youth Hybrid Sunday Programming

Youth gather in-person & on-line on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. for Sunday School, fellowship and youth group activities.

Children's Hybrid Sunday School

Sunday School for children thru 5th grade is meeting at 11:00 a.m. in a hybrid-style (in-person & virtual).

For more information about the children's & the youth's programming, including codes to join virtually, please contact Pastor Adele at ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org.

WEEKLY STUDIES

Mondays - In-depth Bible Study (except 1/1)

This on-line study meets on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Adele and Pastor Rob jointly lead this study through the Bible.

You are invited to join our study as this month it studies the books of *1 & 2 Samuel*.



To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **ohcydfgcm**

By phone: Dial **1-415-662-0116** & Enter this PIN: **903 321 793#**

Tuesdays - Book Club

The on-line Book Club is now reading and discussing *Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them* by John Ortberg. Elder Mark Wiley and Pastor Rob lead this group, on Tuesdays, beginning at 6:30 p.m.



To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **duhmbnkqku**

By phone: Dial **1-225-503-0091** & Enter this PIN: **470 552 822#**

Thursdays - Bible Study

This Bible Study meets each Thursday on-line and over the phone at 4:30 p.m.

It is presently studying the *Gospel of Matthew* (led by Pastor Rob).



To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **ohcydfgcm**

By phone: Dial **1-415-662-0116** & Enter this PIN: **903 321 793#**



Many thanks to those who purchased poinsettias to beautify the Chancel area during Advent & Christmas:

Michael Finley, Mary Lou Fournane, Evelyn Haesloop, Shelley Hellen, Margaret Hullett, Jesse Gayer and Rob & Adele Langworthy.



DID YOU KNOW ... ?

- **New Church Officers** will receive training on Wednesday, January 10th at 7:15 p.m. in the Meeting Room. The ordination and installation of officers will take place during worship the following Sunday, January 14th.
- **Cutters** are a group of adults who enjoy getting together monthly to break bread together over breakfast (on Saturday mornings) or the dinner table (on Sunday evenings). In January, Cutters will be enjoying breakfast on Friday, January 12th at 9:00 a.m. at El Dorado Golf Course Restaurant. (The Friday time is for this month only.) Please see Mary Lou Fourtané or Pastor Adele to make your reservation and find out more details.
- Join members of your Covenant family for an afternoon at a local movie theater (and a light meal following) on January 28th. The movie and show time have yet to be announced. For more details about **Movie Goers**, please contact Pastor Adele at ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org.
- **Covenant Adult Choir** meets Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. See Peter Bates for more details.
- The **Order of Worship** for Sunday worship is located just above the video of the worship service on the website and is archived under “Worship - Sermon Archive”, along with a text copy of the sermon. Hardcopies of the sermons are found in the Narthex. They can also be mailed or emailed when requested.
- When the new weekly worship video is posted, the **previous week’s video** can then be found in the video archives of the website under “Covenant’s Videos” and on our *YouTube* channel: Covenant Presbyterian Church Long Beach CA.
- **Hometouch** is a weekly publication that is mailed or emailed. (You choose in which form you receive it.) It provides updates about things happening around Covenant, as well as a devotion and an activity page.
- **E-touch** is a weekly publication that is emailed on Saturday evenings. It includes *Covenant* news and a biblical reflection on something newsworthy. These reflections are timely and thought-provoking.
- You can **request to receive copies** of the sermons, *Hometouch* and/or *E-touch* by contacting Adele at ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org.
- You can check out RightNowMedia.org and let Pastor Adele know if you would like to join.
- Our **social media presence** is on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with the handle [@CovenantLB](https://www.instagram.com/CovenantLB).
- **Covenant has an app** called *CovenantLB* that you can download on your favorite device.
- Two **women’s small groups** and one **men’s small group** offer opportunities to connect and grow.
- Volunteers help staff the church office on weekdays to answer calls, assist those who stop by, and help with small clerical jobs. Might you be interested? Please contact Pastor Adele.
- **Rising TIDE @ MKEC** programming for children and youth will meet Monday through Thursday between 12:30 & 6:00 p.m. for pre-school & elementary-aged children; 2:00 & 8:00 p.m. for middle/high school youth. Please note: Rising TIDE will be on Winter Break thru January 5th. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Pastor Adele.



*Your giving sustains the ministries of this church. You may make an offering in worship on Sunday morning, give either by writing a check and mailing it to the church, or give on-line from the church website by clicking on the green button on the website’s home page, www.CovenantLB.org. Also on the website, if you would like to pledge, go to **About** on the top bar, then on **New to the Church?**, and scroll down to the 4th **FAQ**.*