



# COVENANT

presbyterian church

SENIOR PASTOR CANDIDATE PACKET - JULY, 2024



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## WELCOME TO COVENANT

### HELLO, AND WELCOME!

We're so glad you're here and are interested in the position of Senior Pastor for Covenant Presbyterian Church (CPC) in Issaquah, Washington. On the following pages, you'll find a brief summary of Covenant's beliefs and values; our worship, ministries, and congregational life; and our local community. In addition, we have included the specifics of who we are looking for in our Pastoral Profile and how to apply.

As a congregation, we seek to worship the Lord Jesus genuinely, humbly, and reverently. Worship is deeply important to us; we treasure our corporate time in the Lord's presence. We are looking for a pastor who will cultivate an attitude of humility and awe before the Lord and who seeks to authentically glorify the Lord in worship.

We look forward to finding and working with a pastor who is the God-ordained fit for our congregation and community; one who will flourish in the Pacific Northwest, and above all, a man who places the highest priority on the kingship of Christ, the preaching and teaching of God's word, compassionate shepherding, and godly character.

Our prayer is that as you read through this packet and seek God's will, that the Lord would make your steps clear. We are praying for you and for your family and look forward to seeing what the Lord will do, to the glory of His great name.

Grace and Peace,  
CPC Pulpit Search Committee



*Mitch Connors, Wes Buxton, Austin Samuel, Hani Rizkalla, Rebecca Steelman, Rebekah Friesen, Janet Hepler, and Tom Greene*

## BELIEFS & VALUES

### BELIEFS

We believe in the Triune God who is revealed to us through His Word, the Holy Bible, which is inspired by God, inerrant and infallible. We believe that God speaks to us through His word, so we hear and obey Him. We believe in the sovereignty and glory of God in all things. You can find more information about our beliefs in the Westminster Confession of Faith, along with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Covenant Presbyterian Church, Issaquah is part of the [Presbyterian Church in America](#).



*Rev. Spencer Murphy giving the benediction.*

### VALUES

#### Worship

The primary purpose of our call is to worship God and to live out our lives as a living sacrifice to whatever end our Lord requires. As our catechism says, “What is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.” As Hebrews 12:28 exhorts us, we strive to offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.

#### Preaching and Teaching of God’s Word

CPC is committed to the whole Word of God, as exhibited by our emphasis on engaging expository preaching, and our practice of gathering both morning and evening

on Sundays to hear God’s Word. Preaching his Word helps us to understand Christ and his sacrifice for us, to support his kingdom’s health and growth, and to rejoice in our God-centered existence.

#### Community

We value fellowship with one another to build and grow together in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We build community through periodically sharing a meal after worship and weekly neighborhood home groups (“community groups”) where we study Scripture together. We also have fellowship groups for men and women.

#### Local and Global Missions

We believe that Christ has called us to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). This drives us to intentionally evaluate both local and global missions’ needs and to participate beyond solely financial support. We engage with missionaries and ministries through prayer, one-on-one contact, and encouragement.

#### Christian Education

We believe that education is a religious endeavor, as it is the pursuit of God’s truth as it is revealed in Scripture and nature. The focus of CPC’s education is to instill a hunger to continue accumulating knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. When children are taught to seek after God in this manner, they will find Him and honor and glorify Him in the process. We have invested in christian education through Covenant Christian Schools and Sunday School.



# WHO WE ARE

## WORSHIP

Lord's Day worship is central in the life of CPC, and follows a liturgical structure of Adoration, Confession, Formation, and Commission. We partake in the Lord's Supper weekly, as well as in the reading and preaching of the Word. Our worship songs come from the Trinity Hymnal as well as contemporary songwriters and are often accompanied by our pipe organ, piano, and other instruments. We also have a Kids' Choir on special occasions.

Our liturgy is infused with scripture which we read aloud together. We also recite answers from a catechism (currently the Westminster Shorter Catechism) together before praying for particular needs in our congregation, our community, our ministries, and the world. While we do [livestream](#) our service online, this is primarily for those who are unable to attend for health reasons, and the vast majority of our congregation attends in person.

After the service, our Deacons and Elders are busy interviewing new members and communicants, speaking with congregants, and meeting individually with those in need. On Sunday evenings, congregants gather for a prayer meeting.



## WORD-BASED FORMATION

The goal of our formation ministries is that our members would know the Word well, and be equipped to live out their faith in their everyday lives. To this end, our curricula generally have Scripture as their explicit subject, with occasional discussions of the catechisms, and topics of christian living, such as *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Before our Sunday Services, we offer Sunday School classes for ages two through adult, in various outbuildings around our campus. Outside of Lord's Day activities, we encourage members to be involved in smaller community groups which generally involve a meal together, Bible study, and prayer. In addition, we have ministries for all ages that meet regularly throughout the year. Occasionally, we offer cohort-based seminary courses for those who would like to dig deeper into a topic than other classes will allow.

## WITNESS

Our witness ministries exist to make Christ known and glorified among our community, the surrounding areas, and the world. We have participated with the Northwest Church Planting Network to plant churches in the Puget Sound Region. In 2023, our deacons distributed over forty thousand dollars in charitable gifts to those in need in our congregation, and in the surrounding communities.

We are heavily involved in CareNet of the Puget Sound, and Sacred Road (a PCA ministry to the neighboring Yakama Nation), and our congregation regularly fills board seats for both organizations. Additionally, we support a variety of other Local Ministries including



English Language Learning, hunger relief programs, prison ministries, and nursing home ministries. Each summer we host a Vacation Bible School as an outreach to local non-believing families, and this year hosted 100 children, half of whom came from outside our church body.

In order to make Christ known among the nations, CPC sponsors 19 missionaries, encompassing 14 missions and church-planting organizations. These include domestic ministries such as Reformed University Fellowship and Mission to North America, seminaries in strategic locations around the world, orphanages, Bible translation projects, and more.

## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Our congregation is geographically diverse. While this diversity is a blessing, it means that we need to be more intentional to cultivate hospitality within our body. Consequently, we plan for shared congregational meals together after Lord's day worship or before evening gatherings when we are all naturally together in one place.

The majority of our members serve in several church ministries. Our prayer ministry keeps us connected to the needs of the congregation. The Deacons organize the body to help individuals and families with moving or other household needs. We also bring meals to bless families through times of transition and change.

The COVID-19 pandemic struck a serious blow to congregational life, as each of these communal practices were disrupted. For several months, we were prohibited from meeting together. This was followed by a two-year-long process of reopening, starting with outdoor worship services, then moving to indoor services with limited capacity. We were finally able to drop the remaining COVID precautions in 2022. For health reasons, our



*Rev. Andrew Perkins baptizing one of our covenant children.*

meals together were one of the last practices to be re-established, and our meals together this year have been especially precious for that reason.

The pandemic was a period of high turnover in our membership, but because we resumed meeting in person as soon as we were able, we were blessed to welcome many new members who desired to worship in person. Our current members come from 120+ families, with about 220 people in worship on any given Sunday.



We provide space for 21st-Century Mission Church, who worships in the Korean language, and True Light Christian Church, who worships in the Chinese language. We also host a thriving English Language Learners (ELL) ministry. Additionally, our congregation has been home to numerous gifted educators over the years, prompting us to launch two schools: Covenant Christian Middle School and Covenant Christian High School. We also host Classical Conversations of Issaquah.

We continue to pray that the Lord would lead us in loving our neighbors to the fullest extent possible. Covenant Presbyterian Church is geographically centered within thousands of town homes, apartments, condominiums and neighborhoods that are home to a wide variety of immigrants from all over the world (often from countries with no Christian witness), drawn to the region because of its rich technology sector opportunities. We are eager to learn all that we can about our unique neighboring communities and cultures and discern how best to become a place to discover and worship the triune God of the Bible, but also how to consider providing an excellent education for the next generation of believers.

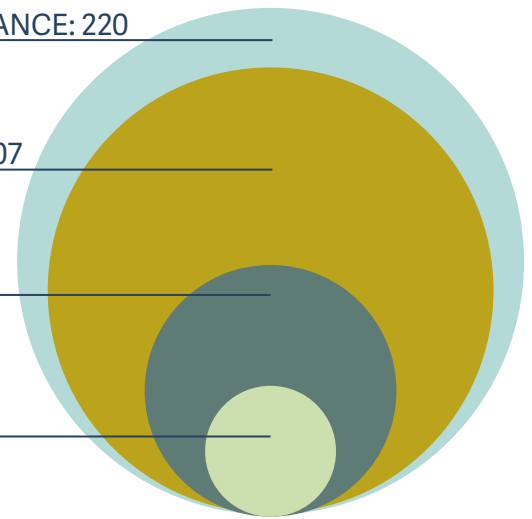
## BY THE NUMBERS (2023)

AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE: 220

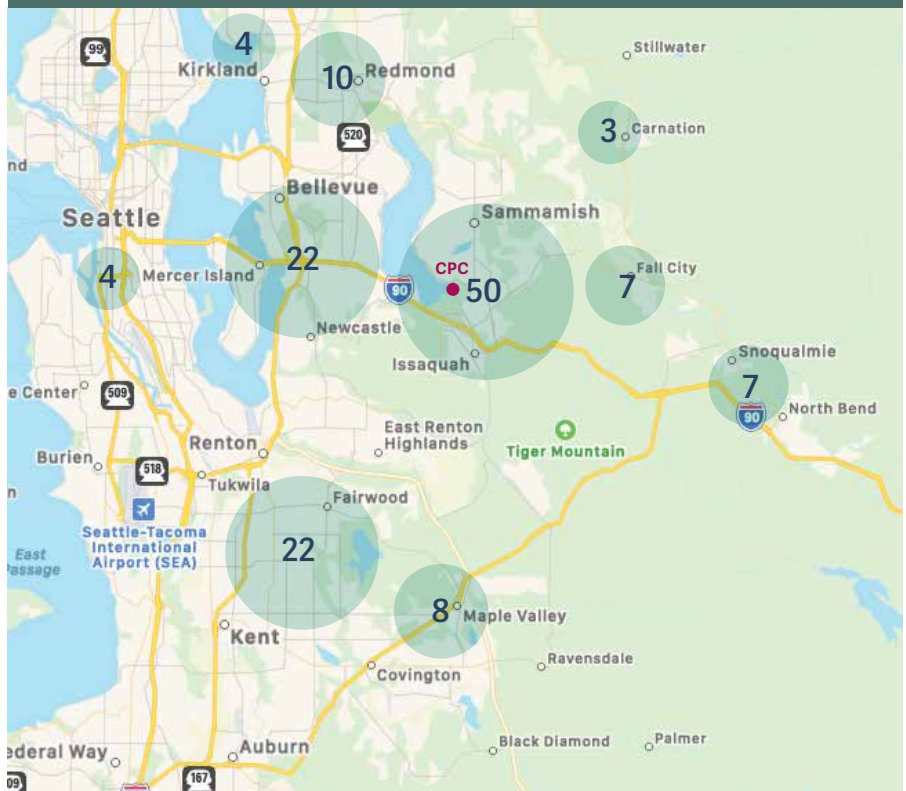
COMMUNING MEMBERS: 207

REGULAR ATTENDERS: 85

NON-COMMUNING MEMBERS: 30



### Number of Households by Area



- Sammamish/Issaquah: 50
- Bellevue/Newcastle: 22
- Kent/Renton/Auburn: 22
- Redmond: 10
- Maple Valley: 8

- Fall City: 7
- Snoqualmie/North Bend: 7
- Seattle: 4
- Lynnwood/Kirkland/Bothell: 4
- Carnation: 3

## WHERE WE LIVE

Covenant Presbyterian Church is located just off I-90, 16 miles east of the city of Seattle in beautiful Issaquah, Washington. Issaquah is one of many unique, growing cities in the greater Seattle metro area. Many of our congregants drive from surrounding areas including Kirkland, Redmond, and Sammamish to the north; North Bend and Snoqualmie to the east; Renton (home of the Seahawks!), Maple Valley, and Auburn to the south; and Seattle, Burien, Newcastle, and Bellevue to the west.

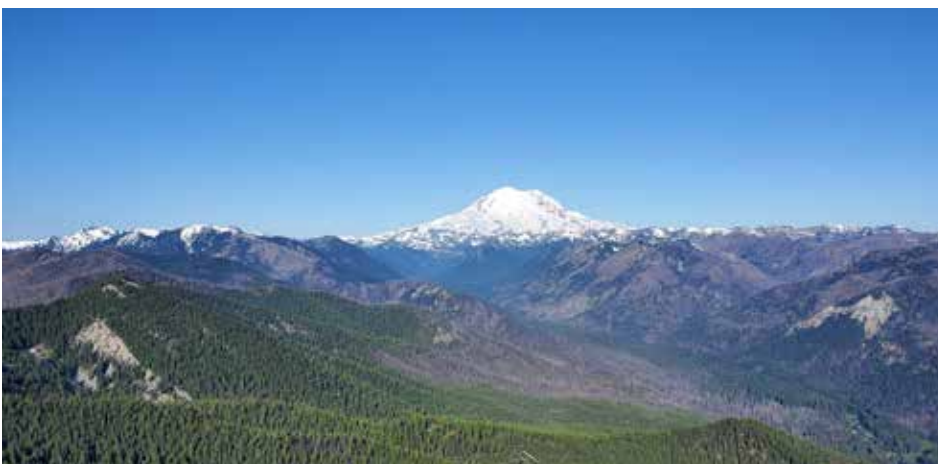
Issaquah has been nicknamed “Trailhead City” with easy access to many local trails, ski areas, and three National Parks within a two-hour radius. We are along the beautiful “Mountains to Sound” Greenway where you can go from the beautiful waters of Lake Washington to the picturesque Cascade mountains in less than 2 hours. The Seattle area experiences an average of 226 partly cloudy to cloudy days a year, with most of our sunshine making an appearance in June through September. Surprisingly, because of our



generally light precipitation, the Seattle area doesn’t make the top ten list of the rainiest cities in the U.S. by amount of annual rainfall.

The key industries in the greater Seattle area include aerospace, tourism, information technology, transportation & logistics, clean technology, research, business technology, maritime, and life sciences & global health. We host large software and aerospace companies, one of the top e-commerce businesses, the world’s largest coffee retailer, plus one of the higher concentrations of aerospace engineers and software developers in the U.S. In addition, one of the world’s largest international chain of membership warehouses is headquartered right here in Issaquah.

The culture of the Pacific Northwest, and specifically the Puget Sound region is typically considered affluent and largely unchurched. Many people in the region connect their spiritual growth to their outdoor experience. This post-Christian region contains a wide variety of nationalities, cultures, worldviews, lifestyles, and political affiliations that must be considered. While there are churches in this region, few would be considered reformed. We need a man who is graciously uncompromising, thoughtful, compassionate and who holds a clear and solid understanding of Biblical standards in light of cultural and societal issues.



# HISTORY

The story of Covenant Presbyterian Church is a story of God's faithfulness to His people. The church of Jesus Christ has spread throughout the centuries as the Holy Spirit has faithfully carried out His work. A small group of believers meeting in a home for Bible study and prayer has often led to the establishment of an organized church. Covenant Presbyterian Church of Issaquah began in this way.

## FORMATION AND PROPERTY HISTORY

In the summer of 1957, Dr. and Mrs. Homer Perkins and family began a bible study in their home, and in the summer of 1958, morning services were added, and the name of Covenant Presbyterian Church was given. In 1963, Mr. and Mrs. Leon G. Bailey, an older couple, wished to dispose of their three and one-half acres, including its several buildings. The attractive property, its existing buildings, and space for growth seemed to meet many needs. The members looked over the property, prayed about it, and decided to make the purchase. The chapel was sufficiently ready for the first service on Easter Sunday, April 25, 1965.

After years of growth and a significant capital fund project, the decision was made to build a new main building on the edge of the field. Ground was



broken in 2003 and a dedication celebration was held in June of 2006. For many years, CPC had been praying about the possibility of purchasing the property adjacent to our parking lot entrance. During those years, CPC had showed the love of Jesus to the family who lived there. After the owner passed away, the property came up for sale in September 2018. As per the owner's wishes and her daughter's choice to honor her mother, CPC was given the first option to buy the property. The Session chose to step out in faith, the CPC church body came together with many different people offering talents and treasures, and God blessed CPC with this property. The sale closed in December 2018. A property committee is currently assessing that lot, our existing property, outbuildings, and church education ministries to prayerfully consider how God would have us steward them.



## PASTORATE HISTORY

Covenant Presbyterian Church has been blessed with the shepherding of many pastors over the years.

### Senior Pastors

1958-1960	Rev. Joseph Greene
1960-1965	Rev. Robert Scott
1966-1970	Rev. Carl T. Grayson
1971-1974	Rev. Charles Gwinn Jr.
1974-1988	Rev. Bill Swenson
1988-1990	At the end of Bill's pastorate, the church was made up of around 30 households. During the next few years, the Elders led the church services. God showed his faithfulness to the congregation by keeping the ministry vibrant and effective. There was almost no loss of membership during that time.
1990-1994	Rev. Craig Vick
1994-1996	The pulpit was again vacant for two years. The Elders and leadership led the church through this time.
1996-2022	Rev. Eric Irwin

### Assistant and Associate Pastors

2001-2007	Rev. David Scott
2004-2007	Rev. Jason Stellman, Assistant Pastor
2009-2014	Rev. Luke Morton, Assistant Pastor
2014-2015	Jonathan Marzinke, Assistant Pastor
2016-2018	Rev. Casey Bedell, Associate Pastor
2018-2022	Rev. Shiv Muthukumar, Associate Pastor
2020-2024	Rev. Andrew Perkins, Assistant Pastor
2022-2024	Rev. Spencer Murphy, Assistant Pastor

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated some underlying issues in our congregation. As a result, we experienced difficulty, loss, and conflict in our congregational life, which has not been fully resolved. We are looking for a leader who is equipped to help us in this transition.



# PASTORAL PROFILE

Covenant Presbyterian Church (CPC) in Issaquah, WA is seeking a Senior Pastor who has a deep relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, an earnest love for him, and a strong desire to advance his kingdom and promote the good of his church. Each week as the pulpit committee meets, we read and reflect on 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 to remind ourselves of the qualifications God gave for the role. We prayerfully seek a pastor who is rooted in the attributes found in these passages.

We are looking for a pastor who is seeking a long-term career commitment to our church. Our desire is to grow together in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ alongside our pastor for many years to come.

## REQUIREMENTS

- A PCA-ordained Teaching Elder (or able to be ordained in the PCA).
- Demonstrated history of meeting Biblical Teaching Elder qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9.
- The ideal candidate will have 10+ years of ministry and leadership experience in order to minister to the needs of our congregation in our unique setting and community at this critical time in our history.

## DESIRED STRENGTHS

### Preaching and Teaching

- Crafts sermons in a way that is Christ-centered, gospel-focused, grace-filled, and expository, declaring God's word to his people.
- Committed to preaching the whole counsel of God and applying Biblical truth to life, leading to deeper obedience and faithfulness.
- Holds a high view of scripture and its inerrancy.

### Worship Leadership

- Leads the congregation in glorifying the Lord through corporate worship.
- Collaborates with staff and the Session to plan, organize, and lead worship services in the church.
- Calls the congregation to personal faith in Christ, to repentance, spiritual growth and service.

### Spiritual Development of Members

- Leads the congregation in personal transformation and deeper spiritual maturity by cultivating a deep love for God, his people, Scripture, and the gospel.
- Demonstrated ability to disciple others within the church to become thriving members of the Body of Christ.
- Encourage and help to equip congregants who are called to the ministries of preaching and teaching.
- Seeks to promote the peace and purity of the church and is willing to exercise church discipline to that end.
- Leads the congregation through conflict resolution, reconciliation, and healing.

### Evangelism

- Seeks to promote evangelism in an increasingly diverse and cross-cultural community outside the church.
- Fosters a deep love and care for people both inside and outside the church, in a way that leads to active discipleship and spiritual development.

### Congregational Fellowship

- Joins, enhances, and contributes to our congregational life.
- Promotes fellowship within the Church.
- Ability to manage conflict and seek reconciliation and healing when necessary.

### Leadership

- Manages church staff, welcoming and encouraging others' strengths and abilities.
- Promotes the peace and purity of the church, and a greater love for God, among the staff, church officers, and the congregation.
- Collaborates with, engages with, and encourages ideas from staff, church officers, and lay leaders.
- Works with the Session to plan and facilitate officer training, officer retreats, and lay leadership training.
- Has proven skills with moderating meetings, such as stated Session, joint officer, congregational meetings, and occasional committee meetings, as applicable.
- Is prepared to actively participate in Pacific Northwest Presbytery meetings and the PCA General Assembly.

## CONGREGATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR A SENIOR PASTOR

As part of our search process, we collected input from our congregation using a church wide survey.

We place the most values in these priority areas for our Senior Pastor's immediate focus.

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD:** The word of God is preached with urgency and conviction, bringing it to bear on the changing needs of individuals, the community, and the world. High priority of pastor's time placed on sermon preparation.

**TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY:** Pastor accepts an active teaching role, interpreting and teaching the Scriptures, theological concepts, history of the Church and

current events; provides instruction for Church Officers; educational leaders, and confirms new members.

**WORSHIP LEADERSHIP:** Pastor and Session work to develop a rich worship life, educating the congregation for meaningful participation.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEMBERS:** Pastor shares members' struggles regarding the Christian faith, with opportunity provided for individuals and groups to reflect on beliefs, concerns, doubts regarding Christian understanding of the spiritual dimensions of life.

**EVANGELISM:** Pastor and congregation share faith in Christ as personal Savior in total lifestyle; seek to lead others within and

outside the Church to accept Jesus Christ; congregation is informed, trained, helped to establish effective evangelism programs for the church.

**CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP:** Emphasis placed in developing fellowship, helping members to know one another; groups encouraged which give members the opportunity to love and support one another.

**ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP:** Pastor accepts appropriate administrative responsibilities, in climate of delegated tasks and shared leadership; volunteers and professional staff encouraged to use their ideas and skills. Work done on developing accountability.

## HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

If you sense that God is calling you to this position, here is how to apply:

Please email the following to [pulpitcommittee@pcissaquah.org](mailto:pulpitcommittee@pcissaquah.org) using the file naming conventions outlined below:

1. Cover letter (*CoverLetter\_YourName\_Date.pdf*)
2. Resume (*Resume\_YourName\_Date.pdf*)
3. PCA Ministerial Data Form (*MDF\_YourName\_Date.pdf*)
4. Link to an audio recording of a sermon you've recently preached.