

2023 Covenant Renewal

Introduction:

The Christian life to which we are called is a life in Christ, redeemed from sin by Him and through Him, consecrated to God. We have entered this new life and been admitted to the new covenant which our Lord Jesus Christ has established by his death and resurrection.

On God's side, the covenant is His guarantee that he will fulfil in us all he promised in Jesus Christ; who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. We know his promises still stand because we have known his goodness and proved his grace in our lives day by day.

On our side, we pledge to no longer live for ourselves but for Jesus - who loves us and gives himself for us. He has called us to serve him in ways that mean the reason he came can be fulfilled.

There are times in our lives when it is important for us to remember and reaffirm our promises and vows. This is such a time. We have heard the voice of God calling us to offer Sanctuary to the people of our community, and to provide a hub to help people find everything they need for life and godliness.

So today, we will renew our personal covenant with God - and also promise together to do all in our power to "press forward and capture the prize" that God calls this community to. With joy and sincerity let's renew the covenant that binds us all to God.

Preparation/Confession:

We want to live as disciples of Christ, but sometimes we fall short. Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our own sins and the sins of our community, submitting our hearts so that we do not deceive ourselves.

Reflection:

What do we/I need to change?

Response: (Sung)

Create in me a clean heart O Lord

And renew a right spirit within me (repeat)

Cast me not away from thy presence O Lord

Take not thy Holy Spirit from me

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation

And renew a right spirit within me.

God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light we have fellowship with

one another the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The Covenant

Let us now bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God and take the yoke of Christ upon us. This means that we are absolutely content that he appoints us our place and work, and that he alone is our reward.

Christ calls us to many things. Some are easy, others are difficult. Some bring honour, others bring reproach. Some suit our natural desires and worldly interests, others are contrary to both. In some we can please Christ and please ourselves. In others we cannot please Christ unless we deny ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is given to us as he strengthens us.

Therefore, let us make the covenant of God our own. Let us engage our hearts to the Lord and resolve in his strength never to go back. Having prepared ourselves, let us now in dependence on his grace and trust in his promises yield ourselves to him.

Holy Father, you have called me through Christ to share in this gracious covenant. I take to myself with joy the yoke of obedience and promise to seek to do your perfect will. I am no longer my own, but yours.

I will do what you call me to do. I will stand alongside whoever you send me to. I am willing to be used mightily by you - or to wait patiently on you. To be exalted for you or brought low for you.

As a community we commit to offer sanctuary to the people you bring to us. We will do all in our power to equip people with whatever they need to live the abundant life you call them to.

We freely surrender everything to your pleasure and purposes. And now glorious and blessed God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we receive your holiness, your redemption and your power, and make you our first priority and our first love.

You have given us the desire, and the power to live in this covenant of perfect freedom, of patient endurance, and of effective service. For this, we thank you, as we pledge ourselves again to be the people of God in this place.

Doxology