

WARREN FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Wesley Covenant Service

JANUARY 2, 2022

“The Wesley Covenant Renewal Service”

In 1663, Richard Alleine, A Puritan, published *Vindiciae Pietatis: or, A vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of it*. In 1753, it was again published in John Wesley’s *A Christian Library*. Wesley used one chapter, “The Application of the Whole,” on Monday, August 11, 1755, in what probably was the first real celebration of the Covenant Service in the Methodist movement.

Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, as expressed in his journal: “Many mourned before God, and many were comforted” (April, 1756); “It was, as usual, a time of remarkable blessing” (October, 1765); It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences...I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings” (January 1, 1775).

In London, these services were usually held on New Year’s Day. Around the country, the Covenant Service was conducted whenever John Wesley visited the Methodist Societies. In our service, the liturgy beginning with the “Invitation” is taken directly from Wesley’s service of 1780. The heart of the service, focused in the “Covenant Prayer,” requires persons to commit themselves to God.

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PRELUDE

(8:00 am)

“The Wexford Carol”
“We Three Kings with Fur Elise”

arr. Mark Hayes
arr. Tom Fettke

ORGAN PRELUDE

(10:00 am)

“In Thee Is Gladdness”
“He Shall Feed His Flock”
“We Three Kings”

arr. Greene
Handel
arr. Isele

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

*HYMN. No. 249

“There’s a Song in the Air”

Christmas Song

*GREETING

Leader: Creative God, you make all things new in heaven and on earth.

People: We come to you in a new year with new desires and old fears, new decisions and old controversies, new dreams and old weaknesses.

Leader: Because you are a God of hope,

People: We know that you create all the possibilities of the future.

Leader: Because you are a God of love,

People: We know that you accept all the mistakes of the past.

Leader: Because you are the God of our faith,

People: We enter your gates with thanksgiving and praise.

Leader: As we come to enter a new into covenant with you, remove any reluctance or falsehood in us.

People: May all that we say, all that we sing, all that we think, and all that we do, Bring glory unto you. Amen

ANTHEM

“I Am Your Servant”

Larry Norman

*PSALTER

“Psalm 1”

Page 738

*GLORIA PATRIA No. 71

CONCERNS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

UNISON PRAYER:

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open and all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name; through Christ our Lord, Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using sins)

Our Father; who art in heaven Hallowed be Thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth,

As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power; and the glory, forever. Amen.

***DOXOLOGY/PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

SCRIPTURE

“John 15:1-8”

Pew Bible Page 983

SERMON

“A New Year’s Resolution”

Rev. Dr. Mark E. Hecht

Covenant Service

The Invitation

The Act of Adoration

L: Let us adore the Father, the God of love who created us;
Who every moment preserves and sustains us;
Who has loved us with an everlasting love, and given us the light
Of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ

P: We Praise you, O God: we acknowledge you to be the Lord.

L: Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;
Who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor;
Who went about doing good and preaching the gospel of the kingdom;
Who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;
Who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross
Who was dead, and lives for evermore;
Who opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers;
Who sits at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father

P: You are the king of Glory, O Christ

L: Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Sprit, the Lord and Giver of
Life, by whom we are born into the family of God, and made members of the
body Of Christ;
Whose witness confirms us; Whose wisdom teaches us;
Whose power enables us; Who waits to do for us exceeding abundantly
above all we Ask or think.

P: All praise to thee, O Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Act of Thanksgiving

L: Let us give thanks to God for his manifold mercies. O God our Father, the fountain of all goodness, who has been gracious to us through all the years of our life; we give you our thanks for your loving kindness which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

P: We praise your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have given us life and reason, and set us in a world which is full of your glory. You have comforted us with kindred and friends, and ministered to us through the hands and minds of our neighbors.

P: We praise your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have set in our hearts a hunger for you and given us your peace. You have redeemed us and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit and the witness of your Church.

P: We praise your holy name, O Lord.

L: In darkness you have been our light, in adversity and temptation a rock of strength, in our joys the very spirit of joy, in our labors the all-sufficient reward.

P: We praise your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have remembered us when we have forgotten you, followed us even when we fled from you, met us with forgiveness when we turned back to you. For all of your long suffering and the abundance of your grace,

P: We praise your holy name, O Lord.

The Act of Confession

L: O God our Father, who has set forth the way of life for us in your beloved Son; we confess with shame our slowness to learn of him, our reluctance to follow him. You have spoken and called, and we have not given heed; your beauty has shown forth, and we have been blind; you have stretched out your hands to us through our neighbors, and we have passed by. We have taken great benefits with little thanks; we have been unworthy of your changeless love.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Forgive us, we pray, the poverty of our worship, the formality and selfishness of our prayers, our inconstancy and unbelief, our neglect of fellowship and of the means of fellowship and of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our false pretenses, and our willful ignorance of your ways.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Forgive us when we have wasted our time or misused our gifts. Forgive us when we have excused our own wrongdoing or evaded our responsibilities. Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good, that we have drawn back from the cross.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Forgive us that so little of your love has reached others through us, and that we have borne so lightly wrongs and sufferings that were not our own. Forgive us when we have cherished the things that divide us from others, and when we have made it hard for them to live with us, and when we have been thoughtless in our judgments, hasty in condemnation, grudging in forgiveness.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: If we have made no ventures in fellowship, if we have kept in our heart a grievance against another, if we have not sought reconciliation, if we have been eager for the punishment of wrongdoers and slow to seek their redemption,

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Let each of us in silence make confession to God.

(Silent meditation)

Unison: Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your loving kindness; according to the multitude of your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Amen.

The Words of Assurance

The Covenant (please stand, if able)

L: O Lord God, holy Father, who has called us through Christ to be partakers in this gracious covenant; we take upon ourselves with joy the yoke of obedience, and engage ourselves, for love of thee, to seek and do thy perfect will. We are no longer our own, but thine.

ALL: I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thou are mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

***HYMN No. 383** “This Is a Day of New Beginnings” (verses 1-4) Beginnings

BENEDICTION

BEARING OF THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE “Go Tell It on the Mountain” arr. Mark Hayes
(8:00 am)

POSTLUDE “Ode to Joy” arr. Petzold
(10:00 am)

ACOLYTTES today are Attie Corey and Hayden Schuler.

USHERS today are Team 3, Larry Loughlin—Captain.

MUSIC today is provided by organist Michele Sandberg and soloist Melissa McCracken. The 8:00 AM pianist is Cathy Peterson.

PEDESTAL FLOWERS today are in memory of Richard & Mary Lowe, given by Nancy Siggins and Tracey & Brandon Westmoreland.

SYMPATHY ~ We extend our sympathy to the family of Dee Dee Tucker in the passing of Dee Dee's son-in-law, husband of Megan Keiper, Aaron Keiper.

We also extend our sympathy to the family of Douglas P. Wilson, who passed away on December 27, 2021.

NOW AVAILABLE –The Prayer/Birthday Calendar is now available. Pick up your families copy outside the church office door and PLEASE mark your name off the list when you do. This will help cut down on mailing cost.

OFFERING ENVELOPES – Offering envelopes for 2022 are on a table in the hallway by the Church Office. Please make sure you pick yours up ASAP.

LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY ~ On Sunday, January 9, 2022, our church will be recognizing local law enforcement agencies during the 10:00 AM worship service. Invitations have been sent to all those who are working in this area, inviting them to attend this worship service. We will be having a fellowship time in the parlors afterwards and hope you will consider attending the service and staying after to thank them for all they do for us.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS ~ Decorations will be taken down on Sunday, January 16th, immediately after the 10:00 AM worship service. Many hands will make quick work. So please plan to stay and help.

COLLEGE STUDENTS ~ Please remember to submit your first semester grades to the church office so you can receive the second disbursement of your scholarship.

FAITH ON FOOT ~ Faith on Foot needs chaperones for January 14 & 15. Our cooperative youth ministry team is hosting it's biggest event yet in the form of a lock-in at the YMCA starting at 8:00 PM on January 14 and ending at 7:00 AM on January 15. To ensure that all our students' and volunteers' needs are met, we are asking each participating church to provide at least one chaperone for each hour of the event. There is a sign up on the hallway bulletin board. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Wood, Kelly Newton, or Jess Long. You can also contact the Faith on Foot team via their email faithonfoot@gmail.com .

KANE DISTRICT HELPSHOP ~ On February 5th, First United Methodist Church will host a Kane District Helpshop, featuring Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi as the keynote speaker. The following workshops will be led by conference staff members: Christian Education in the Church Today— with Chris Kindle, Using Social Media in the Church —with Liz Lennox, Single Board Church Governance —with Alyce Weaver Dunn. Registration begins at 9:30 AM. Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi will speak at 10:00 AM. Workshops will begin at 10:30 AM with lunch served at 12:00 PM. There will be an afternoon session as well, with the Helpshop finishing at 2:30 PM.

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

January 2, 2022 -January 8, 2022

- SUNDAY** 8:00 AM Service of Word and Sacrament; Chapel
8:45 AM Fellowship; Covert Room
10:00 AM Worship Service, Sanctuary
5:30 PM-7:00 PM Jr. High UMYF; Youth Room
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Sr. High UMYF; Youth Room
- MONDAY** Office Closed
3:30 PM Jason Meeting with Youth; The Crossing
6:00 PM Children's Incarceration Group; Covert Room
6:00 PM Incarceration Support Group for Adults; FH
- TUESDAY** 8:30 AM—4:00 PM Office Hours
8:30 AM-11:15 AM Creative Preschool
12:30 PM Study Group; Covert Room
1:00 PM Staff Meeting; Parlor B
- WEDNESDAY** 8:30 AM—4:00 PM Office Hours
8:30 AM-11:15 AM Creative Preschool
8:45 AM Covenant Group
1:00 PM Book Club, Covert Room & Parlor B
3:10 PM LOGOS, New Year's Celebration
7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal; Choir Room
- THURSDAY** 8:30 AM—12:00 PM Office Hours
8:30 AM—11:15 AM Creative Preschool
1:00 PM Covenant Discipleship Meeting
5:30 PM Covenant Discipleship Meeting
- FRIDAY** 8:30 AM—12:00 PM Office Hours
12:00 PM Senior Citizen Lunch; Founder's Hall