

Armstrong CHAPEL

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A welcoming community alive in serving Christ.

Worship Resource



Wesley Covenant Service

In 1775, John Wesley introduced a covenant service as an important part of spiritual life in the Methodist Societies. This renewal service was a time to annually gather in a season of self-examination, reflection, and dedication, wholly giving themselves and renewing a covenant with God. Repentance through confession and commitment were a key focus of the service.

A covenant is a formal relationship of faithfulness between you and God. God offers this covenant as a gift of God's love.

Be honest with yourself! Have you in the past, or can you freely in the present make a commitment to God in Christ?

- First, name your sins to yourself and whether you are ready to give them up. Compare and contrast your behaviors with the ways of God—God's holiness, God's boundaries, and the spiritual ways of God. Are you prepared to accept God's ways as your ways?
- Second, take your commitment to God as the highest, most serious priority of your life.
- Third, embrace this special relationship with God called a 'covenant.' Depend on God's promise to give you grace (that is, unconditional love and acceptance) and strength in order to remain faithful to this special relationship. Do not trust in your own strength. It will fail. Trust only in God's strength.
- Fourth, be determined to keep your promise to God. Having given your heart to God, your mouth to praise God, and your hands to serve God, decide today to never go back.
- Fifth, now that you've prepared to make this covenant in the most serious way possible, give your heart to the Lord as if God were standing right here in front of you now...

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: *The Lord has been our dwelling place in all generations.*

People: *You are the one true God who reigns forever!*

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, you search our hearts and you see every part of us. All our desires are known to you, and from you no secrets are hidden. By the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts so we may perfectly love you and glorify Your holy name. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*HYMN

Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine, # 606

Come, let us use the grace divine,
and all with one accord,
in a perpetual covenant
join ourselves to Christ the Lord;
Give up ourselves, thru Jesus' power,
his name to glorify;
and promise, in this sacred hour,
for God to live and die.

The covenant we this moment make
 be ever kept in mind;
 we will no more our God forsake,
 or cast these words behind.
 We never will throw off the fear
 of God who hears our vow;
 and if thou art well pleased to hear,
 come down and meet us now.

Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 let all our hearts receive,
 present with thy celestial host
 the peaceful answer give;
 to each covenant the blood apply
 which takes our sins away,
 and register our names on high
 and keep us to that day!

*Author: Charles Wesley (1762)
 Arrangement: Ralph Vaughan Williams (1906)*

SCRIPTURE

2 Kings 23:1-3 (NIV)

Then king Josiah sent, and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were gathered to him. ² And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and with him all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the prophets, all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the Lord. ³ And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people joined in the covenant.

The Word of God for the People of God.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

by Bass Mitchell

O Triune God, grant us your gracious, guiding presence as we prepare to enter into the new year. As we join Christians of every time who have awaited Jesus' return, lead us into this new time, confident that your promises will be fulfilled.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Spirit of Truth, call us to repentance at the beginning of this new year. Forgive us for past unfaithfulness. Restore us when we were silent in the face of injustice and were unresponsive amid suffering. Help us to share your gifts with those who cry out for daily bread.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

Prince of Peace, healer and reconciler, heal the divisions in your Church and among the peoples of the world. As you prayed that we should all be one, give us new visions to enable that unity. Be with us on our ecumenical journey, and with those sisters and brothers who surround us in the great cloud of witnesses.

Hear us, O God: **Your mercy is great.**

God of all ages, release us from fear. Lead us forward, even as you have led your disciples forward from an empty cross and tomb. Be our companion as we walk unexplored paths into an unknown future. Open us to new possibilities. Renew our hope. Grant us faith to move ahead. Be our companion until Jesus comes again in final victory. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Lift up your eyes and see the grace of God poured out into your lives. The light of God shines through the darkness. Our hearts rejoice for Christ is in our midst.

GIVING

*RESPONSE

#95, UMH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
 praise him, all creatures here below;
 praise him above, ye heavenly host;
 praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
 Amen.

AFFIRMATION FOR THE NEW YEAR

by Christine Sine

God is the eternal rock;
 From year's beginning to its end,
 God is faithful.
 In each day God is present;
 In each action God comes near.
 Through all eternity
 God is trustworthy
 Yesterday, today and forever.
 Sustaining, enlivening, making all things new
 God is the eternal rock.

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

The Word of God for the People of God.
Thanks be to God.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

by Christine Sine

As this new year dawns, let us not be blinded by the world's divisions, or consumed by paralyzing fear.

Let us remember:

God is the light that gives us sight,
 God is the breath that gives us life,
 God is the water that quenches thirst.

As this new year dawns, let us give birth to what honors God, let us give life to what makes goodness shine, let us give growth to God's emerging eternal world.

In the depths of our hearts we cry:
 Your kingdom come,
 Your will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.

In this bread and in this cup, we celebrate something we can't quite understand. Because God has made a table wide and welcoming. Because God satisfies hunger in the most unexpected places. Because God comes to be with us. Now and always.

It is with this expectation that we come to the table to taste and see this God of faithfulness.

PRAYER AT THE TABLE

Holy Spirit, come into this bread and this cup.
 Transform these ordinary objects;
 As you change our hearts
 to shape and form your world
 with the joy of your promise.
 Pour your grace upon us,
 so, we overflow with your love.
 Let this meal be a sign of your commitment to us and
 the world of your redeeming purpose. Establish our
 hearts into your will.
 Because of Jesus Christ
 and the sacrifice He alone offers. Amen.

Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord.
 Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
 Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more;
 fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

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 Words: Richard Blanchard (1959)

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

RESPONSE TO GIFTS OF GRACE

Now with our hearts united together, we share the prayer Jesus taught saying: **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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.**

O God, our help in ages past,
 our hope for years to come,
 our shelter from the stormy blast,
 and our eternal home!

Under the shadow of thy throne,
 still may we dwell secure;
 sufficient is thine arm alone,
 and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
 or earth received her frame,
 from everlasting, thou art God,
 to endless years the same.

A thousand ages, in thy sight,
 are like an evening gone;
 short as the watch that ends the night,
 before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
 bears all who breathe away;
 they fly forgotten, as a dream
 dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
 our hope for years to come;
 be thou our guide while life shall last,
 and our eternal home.

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 Words: Richard Blanchard (1959)

WESLEY'S COVENANT PRAYER

IN MODERN LANGUAGE

I no longer belong to myself,
but am yours Lord Jesus.
Do with my life what you wish.
Position me in life with others as you choose.
Help me to serve
and even suffer for you when necessary.
Let me be used by you or put aside for you,
Made important for you or made humble for
you.
Let me be satisfied, let me be wanting.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and completely give up my whole life
to your will and for your use.
And now, mighty and holy God,
Creator, Son, and Holy Spirit,
You are mine and I am yours. This is true!
And may the covenant I have made here on
earth, be sealed in heaven. AMEN

BENEDICTION

May our God, who establishes covenant
relationship with those who seek to enter the
Kingdom, be with you always.
May Jesus Christ, who seals the new covenant
with his blood on the cross, bring you peace.
May the Holy Spirit guide your life
both now and forever.
Go in peace to serve the Lord!



Tell us you watched!

Scan QR code for attendance

Liturgist – Jane Florer
Music– Lynne Miller, Piano

Armstrong**KIDS**
SKATING
Party
Sunday
January 29
4:30-6:30 pm
Castle Skateland
in Loveland
\$10 Donation per family for Admission
**PIZZA &
DRINKS**
\$3 per person for skate rental
Dress as your favorite cartoon character!
INVITE FAMILY & FRIENDS

Ally Breakfast
Saturday
January 14
8:00 - 10:00 am
in the Fellowship Hall
RSVPs appreciated
Scan for RSVP
Armstrong MEN

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