



**John Wesley's
Covenant Renewal Service**

Parkway Heights United Methodist Church

JOHN WESLEY'S COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: 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, who taught us to pray saying...

LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

THE PROCLAMATION

Leader: Dearly loved brothers and sisters, the Christian life is a life found in Christ, redeemed from sin, and consecrated to God. We are those who have entered into the new covenant of Jesus Christ. He is the Mediator of this covenant. On one side of this covenant stands God, who promises to give us new life in Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we stand as those who promise to no longer live life for ourselves but instead to only live for Jesus Christ. There are times when it is important for us to remember and reaffirm our promises and vows. We come today to renew our covenant with God. Like many generations before, we make the covenant our own, joyfully and sincerely renewing the covenant that binds us all to God.

THE CONFESSION

Leader: We are those who seek to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ, but sometimes we fall short. Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and submitting our hearts so that we do not deceive ourselves and cut ourselves away from God. Let us pray:

People: Father God, You have set forth the way of life through Your Son Jesus Christ, whom You love dearly. You have spoken and called to us, but we have not listened. You have revealed Your beauty to us, but we have been blind. You have stretched out Your hands to us through our friends, but we have passed by them. We have accepted Your gifts and offered little thanks. We are unworthy of Your unchanging love.

Leader: We now confess to you our sins.
Please forgive us for the poverty of our worship...
for the selfishness of our prayers...
for our inconsistency and unbelief...
for the ways we neglect fellowship and Your grace...
for our hesitation to tell others about Christ...
for the ways we deceive others...

People: Forgive us for when we waste time and when we misuse the gifts You have given us. Forgive us for when we have made excuses for the wrong things we have done and when we have purposefully avoided responsibility.

Leader: Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good and that we have not been ready to carry our cross. Forgive us that we have not allowed Your love to work through us to help others and that we have not made their suffering our own. Forgive us for those times when instead of working for unity, we made it hard for others to live with us because of our lack of forgiveness, inconsiderate judgment and quick criticism.

People: Forgive us for when we have not tried to reconcile with others and when we have been slow to seek redemption.

Leader: Forgive us also for these sins that we silently confess to You now.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE & PARDON

Leader: God, the Father of all mercies, is faithful to cleanse us from our sins and restore us to Christ's image. Praise and glory be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

THE INVITATION

Leader: Let us gathered here before the Lord now in covenant commit ourselves to Christ as His servants. Jesus Christ has left us with many services to be done. Some of these services are easy and honorable, but some are difficult and disgraceful. Some line up with our desires and interests; others are contrary to both. In some we please both Christ and ourselves, but then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Jesus Christ, we offer You this prayer:

People: Let me be Your servant. Let me follow Your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. I give myself completely to Your will.

Leader: The power and strength to live as true servants is given to us in Christ. We accept the place and work that He gives us, acknowledging that He alone will be our reward.

People: I am not my own. I am Yours alone. Make me into what You will. Rank me with those You will. Put me to use for You. Put me to suffering for You. Let me be employed for You. Let me be laid aside for You. Let me be lifted high for You. Let me be brought low for You. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have all things or let me have nothing. With a willing heart, I freely give everything to Your pleasure and disposal.

Leader: Christ is Savior to those who are His true servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. To be His servant is to consent fully to His will. Christ accepts nothing less. Christ will be all in all, or He will be nothing.

THE COVENANT PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray together:

People: My righteous God, for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, see me now as I fall down before You. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done Your will. You promise mercy if I turn to You with my whole heart.

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God again, if you allow Him to be.

People: Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge You — Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be Your servant and to serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

Leader: Christ has told you that you must suffer with Him.

People: Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with You and accept whatever comes in life. Through Your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from You.

Leader: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

People: I here and now willingly take on Your yoke and burden. All Your laws are holy, just and good. I accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

Leader: The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart.

People: If You find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right. And now, glory be to You, God the Father. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my God and Father. Glory be to You, God the Son. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to You, O God the Holy Spirit. By Your almighty power, You have turned my heart from sin to God. From this day forward I shall look upon You as my Comforter and Guide. O mighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are my Covenant Friend. And I, through Your infinite grace, have become Your covenant servant. You are mine, and I am Yours. So be it. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Leader: 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 for ever. Go in peace to serve the Lord!

People: Amen.