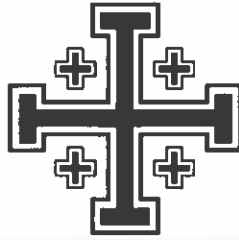


# Word and Table

## Liturgical Worship in the Wesleyan Tradition



Second Sunday after Christmas  
Wesley Covenant Service  
January 4, 2026

*Please note that the **bold** print is spoken by the congregation in unison. Those who are able are invited to stand at sections of the liturgy identified with an asterisk (\*).*

GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP

IN JOHN WESLEY'S OWN WORDS:

Dearly beloved, the Christian life, to which we are called, is a life in Christ, redeemed from sin, and through Him consecrated to God. Upon this life we have entered, having been admitted into that New Covenant of which our Lord Jesus Christ is mediator, and which He sealed with His own blood, that it might stand forever.

On one side the Covenant is God's promise that He will fulfill in and through us all that He declared in Christ Jesus, who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. That His promise still stands we are sure, for we have known His goodness, and proved His grace in our lives day by day.

On the other side we stand pledged to live no more unto ourselves, but to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, and has called us to serve Him that the purpose of His coming might be fulfilled.

From time to time, we renew our vows of consecration, especially when we gather at the Lord's Table: but on this day we meet expressly, as generations of our forebears have met, that we may joyfully and solemnly renew the Covenant which bound them and binds us to God.

Let us then, remembering the mercies of God, and the hope of His calling, examine ourselves by the light of His Spirit, that we may see wherein we have failed or fallen short in faith and practice, and, considering all that this Covenant means, may give ourselves anew to God. Amen.

\*HYMN #196 – "There's a Song in the Air"

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Let us worship our Creator, the God of love; God continually preserves and sustains us; we have been loved with an everlasting love; through Jesus Christ we have been given complete knowledge of God's glory.

**You are God; we praise you; we acknowledge you to be the Lord.**

Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor; he was tempted in all points as we are, but he was without sin; he went about doing good and preaching the gospel of the kingdom; he accepted death, death on the cross; he was dead and is alive for ever; he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all who trust in him; he sits in glory at the right hand of God; he will come again to be our Judge.

**You, Christ, are the King of Glory.**

Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life. Through the Spirit we are born into the family of God, and made members of the body of Christ; the witness of the Spirit confirms us; the wisdom teaches us; the power enables us; the Spirit will do far more for us than we ask or think.

**All praise to you, Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## READING OF SCRIPTURES

FIRST READING – Jeremiah 31:7-14

*In response to the reading:*

*Leader:* This is the Word of the Lord. *The People:* **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING – Psalm 147: 12-15, 20

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

**The Lord strengthens the bars of your gates, and blesses your children within you.**

The Lord grants peace within your borders, and fills you with the finest of wheat.

**The Lord sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. Praise the LORD!**

THIRD READING – Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12

*In response to the reading:*

*Leader:* This is the Word of the Lord. *The People:* **Thanks be to God.**

\*GOSPEL – John 1:1-5, 10, 12-14, 18

*In response to the reading:*

*Leader:* This is the Word of the Lord. *The People:* **Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

### CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us humbly confess our sins to God. O God, you have shown us the way of life through your Son, Jesus Christ. We confess with shame our slowness to learn of him, our failure to follow him, and our reluctance to bear the cross.

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.**

We confess the poverty of our worship, our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our evasion of responsibility in our service, our imperfect stewardship of your gifts.

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.**

Let each of us in silence make confession to God.

*Brief silence*

Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your abundant mercy 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 put a new and right spirit within me.**

Now the message that we have heard from God's Son and announce is this: God is light, and there is no darkness at all in him. If we live in the light – just as he is in the light – then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us. But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right; he will forgive us all our wrongdoing.

**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

\*HYMN #193 – “Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”

## THE COVENANT

In the old covenant, God chose Israel to be a special people and to obey the law. Our Lord Jesus Christ, by his death and resurrection, has made a new covenant with all who trust in him. We stand within this covenant and we bear his name. On the one side, God promises in this covenant to give us new life in Christ. On the other side, we are pledged to live not for ourselves but for God. Today, therefore, we meet to renew the covenant which binds us to God.

Friends, let us claim the covenant God has made with his people, and accept the yoke of Christ. To accept the yoke of Christ means that we allow Christ to guide all that we do and are, and that Christ himself is our only reward. Christ has many services to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some make others applaud us, others bring only reproach; some we desire to do because of our own interests; others seem unnatural. Sometimes we please Christ and meet our own needs, at other times we cannot please Christ unless we deny ourselves. Yet Christ strengthens us and gives us the power to do all these things. Therefore let us make this covenant of God our own.

*\*The people stand.*

Let us give ourselves completely to God, trusting in his promises and relying on his grace.

**I give myself completely to you, God. Assign me to my place in your creation. Let me suffer for you. Give me the work you would have me do. Give me many tasks or have me step aside while you call others. Put me forward or humble me. Give me riches or let me live in poverty. I freely give all that I am and all that I have to you. And now, holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. May this covenant made on earth continue for all eternity. Amen.**

*Brief silence*

## \*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*Leader:* Hear this good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's great love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

*The People:* **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**

*All:* **Glory to God. Amen!**

*Leader:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*The People:* **And also with you.**

*The congregation exchanges signs of God's love and reconciliation.*

## \*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

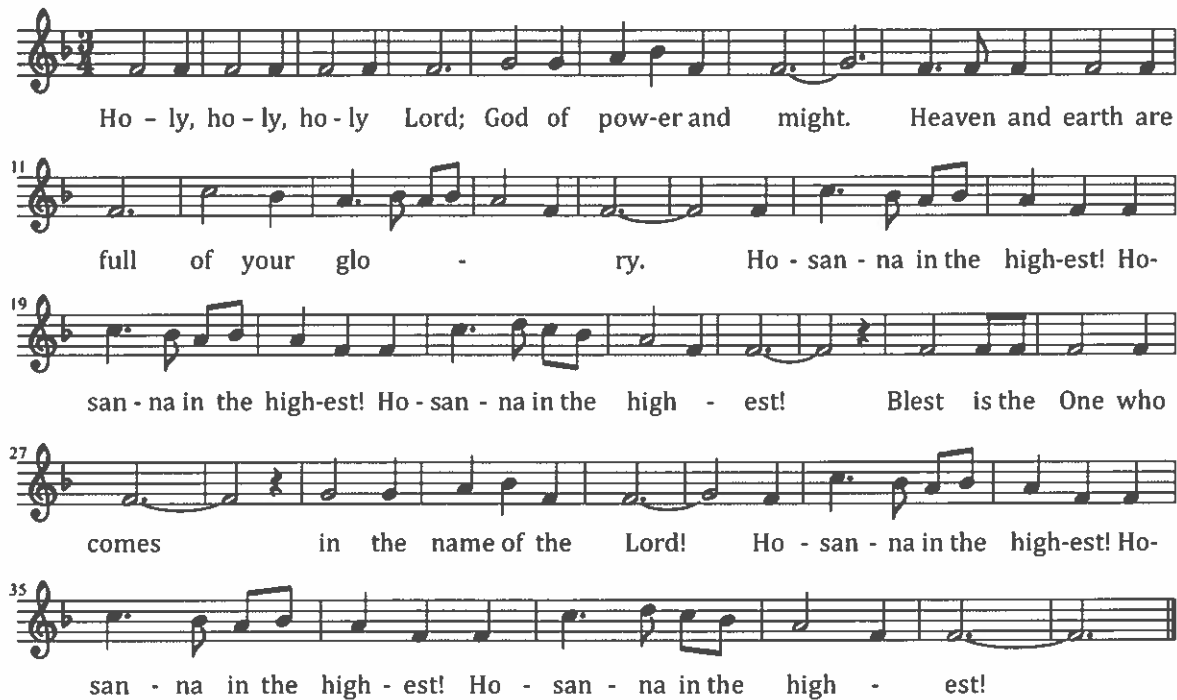
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, gracious God, creator of heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. *(Response below is sung):*

### Sanctus



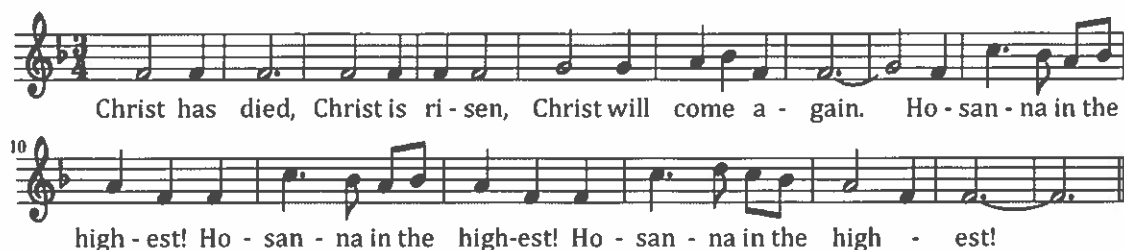
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord; God of pow-er and might. Heaven and earth are  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho-  
san - na in the high-est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! Blest is the One who  
comes in the name of the Lord! Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho-  
san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, our Savior took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith. *(Response below is sung):*

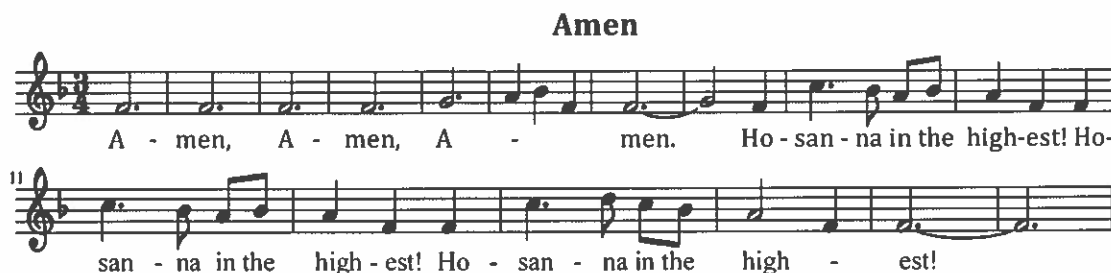
### Memorial Acclamation



Christ has died, Christ is ri-sen, Christ will come a - gain. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est! Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho - san - na in the high - est!

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, gracious Father, now and forever. (*Response below is sung*):



And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**\*BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

**\*GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

**PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING**

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OFFERING**

**\*HYMN #197 – “How Great Our Joy!”**

**\*DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

**Leader:** May the God who established a covenant with those who seek to enter the kingdom be always present with you.

**The People:** **Amen.**

**Leader:** May Jesus Christ who sealed the new covenant with his sacrifice on the cross bring you peace.

**The People:** **Amen.**

**Leader:** Go in peace to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. And may the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you this day and forever.

**All:** **Amen. Alleluia!**

**POSTLUDE**