

Renewal of Vows Service

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God. Through baptism, we have entered this life and have been admitted into the new covenant of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator. He sealed it with his own blood that it might last forever. On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ, the Source and Perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we are pledged to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us. From time to time, we renew our covenant with God, especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord's Table. Today, however, we meet, as the generations before us have met, to renew the covenant that binds us to God. Let us make this covenant of God our own.

INVITATION

Leader: Let us commit ourselves to Christ as his servants. Give ourselves to him, that we may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. Some are easier and more honorable; others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests; others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ. Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

People: O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, see me as I fall down before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will, for you have promised mercy to me if I turn to you with my whole heart.

Leader: Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sins?

People: I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life. Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world. In your power I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you. For my own righteousness is riddled with sin, unable to stand before you.

Leader: Through Christ, God has offered to be our God again if we would let him.

People: Before all heaven and earth, I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God. I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion, and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant, to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

Leader: God has given the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way and means of coming to God.

People: Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ as the only new and living Way, and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him. O blessed Jesus, I come to you, hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants. I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own worthiness, and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom and take you for my only guide. I renounce my own will and take your will as my law.

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

People: I do here covenant with you, O Christ, to take my lot with you as it may fall. Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death shall part me from you.

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

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

Leader: The Almighty God searches and knows our heart. Let us now renew our vows. As members of Salem United Methodist Church, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness? (*The people kneel or bow or remain standing.*)

People: I will

Leader: Together, let us pray:

People: O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today without reservation. If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright. And now, glory be to you, O God the Father, whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father. Glory be to you, O God the Son, who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood, and now is my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit, who by your almighty power have turned my heart from sin to God. O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant. So be it. And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Leader: The Holy Spirit work within you, that having renewed your commitment to honor your United Methodist Church vows, you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. Now the God of all grace, who has called us to eternal glory in Christ, Establish you and strengthen you by the power of the Holy Spirit that you may live in grace and peace!

All: Amen.