



Church of
England

St. Mark's Church

Bedford



Methodist
Church

The Covenant Service & Renewal of Baptismal Vows

**You are standing here in order to enter into
a covenant with the Lord your God**

Deuteronomy Chapter 29 verse 12

Introduction

On December 25th 1747 and on many other occasions, John Wesley, a Church of England clergyman and the founder of Methodism, strongly urged the people called Methodist to renew their Covenant with God.

Since that time, there have been a number of developments in The Covenant Service, which owes its origin to Joseph and Richard Alleine.

This service combines elements of the 1999 Methodist Covenant Service with the Anglican tradition of Renewal of Baptism Vows.

Thus the North Bedford Church Partnership is able to express both traditions within a single service.

The Gathering of the People of God

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn

All sit

Minister: Let us pray.

Glory to the Father, the God of love;
who created us;
who continually 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.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Glory to Jesus Christ our Saviour,
who, though he was rich,
yet for our sake became poor,
and was tested in every way as we are,
yet without sin;
who proclaimed the good news of the kingdom,
and was obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross;
who was raised from the dead
and is alive for ever,
and has opened the kingdom of heaven
to all who trust in him;
who is seated at God's right hand in glory,
and will come to be our judge.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Minister: Glory to the Holy Spirit,

the Lord, the 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 will do for us far more
than we can ask or think.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Minister: To the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be praise and glory for ever.

All: Amen

The Gloria *may be sung*

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Offering

The Offering may be brought forward with the bread and wine. The people stand as it is presented and sing

A Hymn may be sung

All sit. The minister says the Collect

God of grace, through the mediation of your Son, you call us into a new covenant. Help us therefore to draw near with faith and join ourselves in a perpetual covenant with you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Ministry of the Word

A reading from the Law

Exodus 24: 3-11 or Deuteronomy 29: 10-15 is read
after the reading

Reader: For the wisdom that guides us

All: we praise you, O God.

A reading from the Prophets

Jeremiah 31: 31-34 is read
after the reading

Reader: For the word that inspires us

All: we praise you, O God.

A reading from the Epistles

Romans 12: 1-2 is read
after the reading

Reader: For the truth that enlightens us

All: we praise you, O God.

A reading from the Gospel

All stand

either John 15: 1-10 or mark 14: 22-25 is read

Reader: The Gospel is from

All: Glory to Christ our Saviour

after the reading

Reader: This is the gospel of Christ

All: Praise to Christ our Lord

The Sermon

A HYMN *may be sung*

The Covenant And Renewal of Baptism Vows

Introduction

God made a Covenant with the people of Israel, calling them to be a holy nation, chosen to bear witness to his steadfast love by finding delight in the law.

The covenant was renewed in Jesus Christ our Lord, in his life, work, death and resurrection. In him all people may be set free from sin and its power, and united in love and obedience.

In this covenant God promises us new life in Christ. For our part we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God. We meet, therefore, as generations have met before us, to renew the covenant which bound them and binds us to God.

We come also to renew the promises made at our baptism, affirming our allegiance to Christ and our rejection of all that is evil. In our baptism we died with Christ and were buried with him, so that we might rise with him to a new life within the family of his church.

Let us first seek forgiveness for the sin by which we have denied God's claim upon us.

Let us pray.
God of mercy, hear us as we confess our sins.
For the sin that has made us slow to learn from
Christ, reluctant to follow him,
and afraid to bear the cross:

Minister: Lord, have mercy,

All: Lord, forgive.

For the sin that has caused the poverty of our
worship, the formality and selfishness of our
prayers, our neglect of fellowship and of the
means of grace, and our hesitating witness for
Christ:

Minister: Lord, have mercy,

All: Lord, forgive.

For the sin that has led us to misuse your gifts,
evade our responsibilities, and fail to be good
stewards of your creation:

Minister: Lord, have mercy,

All: Lord, forgive.

For the sin that has made us unwilling to
overcome evil with good, tolerant of injustice, quick
to condemn, and selfish in sharing your love with
others:

Minister: Lord, have mercy,

All: Lord, forgive.

Minister: Do you turn to Christ?

All: I turn to Christ.

Minister: Do you repent of your sins?

All: I repent of my sins.

Minister: Do you renounce evil?

All: I renounce evil.

Minister: If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore to all who truly repent, this is his gracious word: 'Your sins are forgiven.'

All: Amen. Thanks be to God.

All stand

Minister: And now I ask you to make the profession of Christian faith into which you were baptized, and in which you live and grow.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, who made the world?

All: I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ, who redeemed humankind?

All: I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

All: I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**All: This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

Minister: Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us again accept our place within this covenant which God has made with us and with all who are called to be Christ's disciples.

This means that, by the help of the Holy Spirit, we accept God's purpose for us, and the call to love and serve God in all our life and work.

Christ has many services to be done:
some are easy, others are difficult;
some bring honour, others bring reproach;
some are suitable to our natural inclinations and
material interests,
others are contrary to both;
in some we may please Christ and please
ourselves;
in others we cannot please Christ except by denying
ourselves.
Yet the power to do all these things is given to us in
Christ, who strengthens us.

Therefore let us make this covenant of God our
own.
Let us give ourselves to him,
trusting in his promises and relying on his grace.

**I am no longer my own but yours.
Your will, not mine, be done in all things,
wherever you may place me,
in all that I do
and in all that I may endure;
when there is work for me
and when there is none;
when I am troubled
and when I am at peace.
Your will be done
when I am valued
and when I am disregarded;
when I find fulfilment
and when it is lacking;
when I have all things,
and when I have nothing.**

**I willingly offer
all I have and am
to serve you,
as and where you choose.**

**Glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.
May it be so for ever.
Let this covenant now made on earth
be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.**

All sit

As we have entered this covenant not for ourselves alone, but as God's servants and witnesses, let us pray for the Church and the world.

Loving God, hear us as we pray for your holy catholic

Church:

All: make us all one, that the world may believe.

Inspire and lead all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world:

All: establish justice and peace among all people.

have compassion on all who suffer from any sickness, grief or trouble:

All: deliver them from their distress.

We praise you for all your saints who have entered your eternal glory, and we light a candle as we remember those who have died

Lord Jesus Christ, Light of the World:

All: bring us all to share in your heavenly kingdom.

The Lord's Prayer: *(we sing)*
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever, Amen.

The Ministry of the Sacrament

The Peace

Minister: Christ is our peace. He has reconciled us to God
in one body by the cross. We meet in his name and
share his peace.

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

*You may wish to exchange a sign of peace
and shake hands with those around you*

A Hymn *may be sung*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Minister: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, it is our joy and salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise through
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Through him you have created all things and made us in your
own image. Through his death on the cross and resurrection
you freed us from sin and opened the way to everlasting life.
Through him you have sent your Holy Spirit, calling us to be
your people, a community of faith.
Nothing can separate us from your love.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise you, Lord God, creator and sustainer of the
universe. Grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these
gifts of bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of
our Lord Jesus Christ, who on the night that he was betrayed,
took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
saying,

‘Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for
you. Do this in remembrance of me.’

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup and gave you
thanks, and gave it to them, saying,

‘This is my blood of the new covenant poured
out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of

sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Send down your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ. Unite us with him for ever and bring us with the whole creation to your eternal kingdom.

**Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the power of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you in songs of everlasting praise.
Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

Minister: The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body
because we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, and his blood which was shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.
Amen.

Communion is now received and you will be invited forward. If you would like communion brought to you, please remain in your seat and inform the communion steward.

You are welcome to receive the bread and wine, but if for any reason you do not wish to receive, then please bring this order of service with you and hold it in your hand. The minister will then know not to offer the sacrament to you and will say a prayer of blessing instead. If you wish to partake only of the bread, take

the chalice or glass as it is presented and then give it back without drinking.

If you wish to intinct (holding the wafer and dipping it into the chalice), please ensure you do not dip your finger into the wine.

*At the distribution the minister will say words of administration to which the communicant may reply, **AMEN.***

After Communion

The Prayer for After Communion

**All: Faithful God,
with these holy gifts
you have fed and strengthened us
in Jesus Christ your Son.
Guide us on our way,
that with all your faithful people
we may come to share the feast
of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A Hymn *may be sung*

The Dismissal

The minister will say a blessing before the final prayer

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: In the name of Christ. Amen.

