

Woodbury United Methodist Church



John Wesley's Covenant Service

Sunday, January 1, 2023

10am Worship

Woodbury United Methodist Church

January 1, 2023

John Wesley's Covenant Service

*Please stand as you are able.

On December 26, 1747, John Wesley strongly urged the Methodists to renew their covenant with God. His first Covenant Service was held on August 11, 1755. He issued this as a pamphlet in 1780 and the form was used without alterations for nearly a century. After that, various modifications were made from time to time, to give the people a larger share in the devotions. This service has been a blessing to Methodists ever since 1755!

Welcome to All Who Worship With Us Today!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship Leader/Pastor
Deuteronomy 31:9-13

*OPENING HYMN

*RESPOSIVE GREETING

Liturgist

(BOW 456 mod)

L: Come to Christ, the living stone, rejected by the world, but in God's sight chosen and precious!

P: **We have responded to Christ's call, and seek to be built into a spiritual house, a living reminder of God's presence on earth.**

L: Once we were no people, but now we are God's people,

P: **Called out of the darkness and into God's marvelous light!**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

(in unison)

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Worship Leader/Pastor

L: This is the message we have heard from Jesus and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in God is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as God is the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P: **Thanks be to God!**

COVENANT HYMN *“Come Let Us Use the Grace Divine”* #606

(Verses 1-2)

(Written by Charles Wesley in 1762 for Methodism’s Covenant Service)

***THE COVENANT**

Worship Leader/Pastor

(Please remain standing as you are able)

L: And now, beloved, let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us. This taking to Christ’s yoke upon us means that we are heartily content that Christ appoints us our place and work, and that Christ alone be our reward.

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

P: **Therefore let us make the covenant of God our own. Let us engage our heart to the Lord, and resolve in God’s strength never to go back. Being thus prepared, O let us now, in sincere dependence on God’s grace and trusting in God’s promises, yield ourselves anew to Christ.**

L: Forgive us, we ask You, the poverty of our worship, the formality and selfishness of our prayers, our inconstancy and unbelief; our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our false pretenses, and our willful ignorance of Your ways.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Forgive us where we have wasted our time or misused our gifts. Forgive us where we have excused our own wrongdoing or evaded our responsibilities. Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good; that we have drawn back from the cross.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Forgive us that so little of Your love has reached others through us, and that we have borne so lightly wrongs and sufferings that were not our own. Forgive us where we have cherished the things that divide us from others, and where we have made it hard for others to live with us, and where we have been thoughtless in our judgments, hasty in condemnation, grudging in forgiveness.

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: If we have made no ventures in fellowship, if we have kept in our heart a grievance against another, if we have not sought reconciliation, if we have been eager for the punishment or wrongdoers and slow to seek their redemption,

P: Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

L: Let each of us in silence make confession to God.

SILENT PRAYER *(A moment for the silent confessions of your heart)*

L: O God,

P: Have mercy upon me according to Your loving kindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. AMEN.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 25:31-46

Reader

THE INVITATION

Worship Leader/Pastor

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

On one side the covenant is God's promise that the Lord will fulfill, in and through us, all that God declared in Jesus Christ, who is the author and perfecter of our faith. That this promise still stands, we are sure, for we have known God's goodness and proved God's grace in our lives day by day. On the other side, we stand pledged to live no more unto ourselves, but to Christ who loved us even unto death and called us to serve God that the purposes of Christ's coming be fulfilled. From time to time we renew our vows of consecration - especially when we gather at the table of the Lord. But on this day we meet expressly, as generations of our ancestors 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 God's calling - examine ourselves by the light of the Spirit, that we may see where we have failed or fallen short in faith and practice and, considering all that this covenant means, may give ourselves anew to God.

THE ACT OF ADORATION

Liturgist

- L: Let us adore God, the Creator of Love who made us; who every moment preserves and sustains us; who has loved us with an everlasting love, and given us the light of the knowledge of the Almighty's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
- P: **We praise You, O God; we acknowledge You to be the Lord.**

L: Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, though rich, yet for our sakes became poor; who went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom; who was tempted in all points as we are; yet without sin; who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; who was dead, and lives forevermore; who opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; who sits at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

P: You are the King of glory; O Christ.

L: Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and 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 waits to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

P: All praise to You, O Holy Spirit. AMEN.

SILENT PRAYER *(A moment for the silent prayers of your heart)*

*THE ACT OF THANKSGIVING

Liturgist

L: Let us rise and give thanks to God for the Lord's manifold mercies.

(Please stand as you are able)

L: O God our Creator, the fountain of all goodness, who has been gracious to us through all the years of our life: We give You thanks for Your loving kindness which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

P: We praise Your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have given us life and reason, and set us in a world, which is full of Your glory. You have comforted us with kindred and friends, and ministered to us through the hands and minds of our fellows.

P: We praise Your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have set in our hearts a hunger for You, and given us Your peace. You have redeemed us and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given us a place in the fellowship of Your Spirit and the witness of Your Church.

P: We praise Your holy name, O Lord.

L: In darkness You have been our light, in adversity and temptation a Rock of Strength, in our joys the very Spirit of joy, in our labors the all-sufficient Reward.

P: We praise Your holy name, O Lord.

L: You have remembered us when we have forgotten You, follow us even when we fled from You, met us with forgiveness when we turned back to You. For all Your long-suffering and the abundance of Your grace.

P: We praise Your holy name, O Lord. AMEN

ANTHEM

THE ACT OF CONFESSION

Liturgist

L: Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and watching our hearts, lest by self-deceit, we shut ourselves out from God's presence. . . Let us pray. . . O God our Creator

P: who has set forth the way of life for us in Your beloved Son: We confess with shame our slowness to learn of Jesus, our reluctance to follow Christ. You have spoken and called, and we have not given heed. Your beauty has shone forth, and we have been blind. You have stretched out Your hands to us through strangers in our midst, and we have passed by. We have taken great benefits with little thanks; we have been unworthy of Your changeless love.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

THE COVENANT PRAYER

Worship Leader/Pastor

L: O Lord God, Holy Father, who has called us through Christ to be partakers in this gracious covenant: We take upon ourselves with joy the yoke of obedience, and engage ourselves, for love of You, to seek and do Your perfect will. We are no longer our own, but Yours.

P: I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what You will, rank me with whom You will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for You or laid aside for You, exalted for You or brought low for You; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, You are mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. AMEN.

OFFERTORY

COMMUNION

Pg. 13

*HYMN OF DEDICATION

BENEDICTION/POSTLUDE

Visitors are warmly welcomed!

Thanks to all those making special *contributions to our worship service today*; Rynn Naylor, *Liturgist*; Jo Ann and Bud Behlman, *Greeters and Ushers*; Shannon Cobb, *AV Technician*.

Prayer of Contentment

Jesus,

The world is trying to convince me that I am lacking,
nothing is ever enough.

In this season, I admit that I am easily swept away into
feeling like

I don't have enough,

I don't do enough,

I'm not enough.

But that is so far from *Your truth*.

Your word teaches me that being with You

and putting *my identity* in You is most important.

I can be content because I have You.

When I am being swept away in hurry or comparison,
remind me that Your presence is with me.

Bring me satisfaction in You alone.

Remind me that *You bring joy* no matter what this
season holds.

Let your Spirit move in close and remind me that I am
incredibly loved

just exactly the way I am, a *beloved child* of the King.

Thank You for being content to be born on this earth, laid
in straw and dust.

Thank you for being content to die on the cross for me.

Spirit, grow true contentment and peace in my heart that
allows me

to love others, myself, and You freely and passionately. Amen.

Woodbury United Methodist Church

We are a welcoming Christian fellowship who celebrate and share God's love with everyone. We seek a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Inspired by His example, we strive to be God's hands in this world. Empowered by God's word, we proclaim the Gospel and serve through worship, study, mission, and community support.

Rev. J. Michael Cobb, Pastor

Pastor's e-mail: pastormichael@woodburyumc.net

Meg Temple, Lay Leader

Christopher Shay, Director of Music

Matti Paparazzo, Administrative Assistant

4 Church Street, Woodbury, CT, 06798

203-263-4775 www.woodburyumc.net

Church e-mail: wumc@woodburyumc.net

United Methodist Church of Watertown

The mission of the Watertown United Methodist Church is to glorify God by bringing people to Jesus and into fellowship with His family.

The vision of the Watertown United Methodist Church is to nurture individuals and families in Christian living, to equip them for ministry in the church and for service beyond the church.

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors. All are Welcome!

Learning to live our lives, God's Way!

305 Main Street, Watertown, CT 06795

Church Website: www.wumcct.org

Rev. J. Michael Cobb, Pastor

Email: pastormichael@wumcct.org

Office Phone: 860-274-3785

Office Email: wumcsec@wumcct.org

John Wesley's Covenant Service

On December 26, 1747, John Wesley strongly urged the Methodists to renew their covenant with God. His first Covenant Service was held on August 11, 1755. He issued this as a pamphlet in 1780 and the form was used without alterations for nearly a century. After that, various modifications were made from time to time, to give the people a larger share in the devotions.

This morning, the service will include the following hymns and music:

January 1st Hymns

PRELUDE	<i>Nocturne</i> Orson Lin, piano	Chopin
OPENING HYMN	<i>It Came Upon The Midnight Clear</i> UMH#218	v 1, 2, 4
COVENANT HYMN	<i>Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine</i> UMH #606	v 1, 2
OFFERTORY HYMN	<i>There's a Song in the Air</i> UMH #249	v 1, 2
HYMN OF DEDICATION	<i>The Snow Lay on the Ground</i> TFWS #2093	
POSTLUDE	<i>From a Distant Home</i>	Encanto

This Service includes the joyful reception of Carol Quinby into membership of the Woodbury United Methodist Church. We invite you to participate using the liturgy found on page 45 of the United Methodist Hymnal.

This Service includes sacrament of communion. All are invited and welcome to participate. We invite you to participate using the liturgy found on page 13 of the United Methodist Hymnal.