

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January 21

### **Covenant Service**

We come together with our Methodist brothers and sisters to contemplate our covenant relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. My invitation is to pray through those quiet blessings we receive from God. As we journey together may we hold a mirror into ourselves and see kingdom – people through united fellowship and grace.

A moment to be still

Moses took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; they said “All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient.  
*[Exodus 24:7]*

This day is a new day  
That has never been before.

You God have given us life and  
reason, and have set us in a  
world which is full of your glory,



Be with us Lord, and open the door.

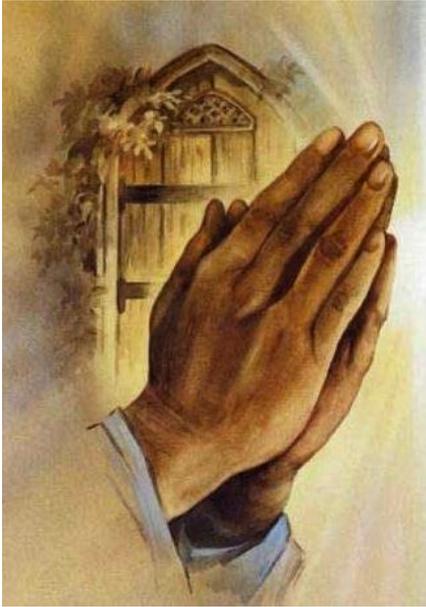
### Collect

We pray:

God of mercy,  
who inspired John and Charles Wesley  
with zeal for your gospel:  
grant to all people boldness to proclaim your Word  
and a heart ever to rejoice in singing your praises;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## Hymn



*O thou who camest from above  
the fire celestial to impart,  
kindle a flame of sacred love  
on the mean altar of my heart.*

*There let it for thy glory burn  
with inextinguishable blaze,  
and trembling to its source return  
in humble prayer and fervent praise.*

*Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
to work and speak and think for thee;  
still let me guard the holy fire  
and still stir up the gift in me.*

*Ready for all thy perfect will,  
my acts of faith and love repeat,  
till death thy endless mercies seal,  
and make the sacrifice complete.*



Charles Wesley [1707-1788]

## Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

## Reflection

Jeremiah's most personal suffering made him aware of the importance to acknowledge one's strengths and shortfalls. As it was with Jeremiah so too with us, for this openness before God enables individuals to have a more genuine knowledge of one self. It allows the opportunity to change and amend life.

Then as renewed people we regain the incentive to take to heart the dimensions of Christ's Kingdom – agenda for communities.



Here is a beautiful picture of God holding each one of us in his hands. Within our mixed experiences we all are open to receiving God's ultimate vision for humanity. For God does not look at us and see different race, age, gender, colour, tradition or any other materialistic aspects of life. He shows us He is not separate; He is part of us.

John Wesley echoes this in his "Prayers for Daily Use" Since people are created by God into His image then all people who we encounter are also created in God's image.

At the heart of Jesus' timeless invitation is the exchange of promises between God and ourselves. Whether we feel His presence strong and firm or by a thin thread we can enter and experience His loving restoration.

**Our home for God is our heart.  
Here God gives us life.  
It is our heart that speaks and acts for God.**

We come to a time of self- reflection. To ponder on words and actions, in what we have said and done or ought to have said and done.

Where do we recognise obstacles to receiving God's gifts, intentions and promises? If it helps, make a mental or written note for petition during intercessions.



The grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all.  
We come to God seeking a renewed relationship.

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Give me the joy of your help again  
and strengthen me with a willing spirit. Amen.**

A Song of the Covenant - God's call to share a covenant relationship

***Refrain* I have given you as a light to all nations,  
and I have called you in righteousness**

Thus says God, who created the heavens,  
who fashioned the earth and all that dwells in it;

Who gives breath to the people upon it,  
and spirit to those who walk in it,

I am the Lord, and I have called you in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;

I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind,

To bring out the captives from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness,

I am the Lord, that is my name:  
my glory I give to no other,

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be before ever. Amen**

**I have given you as a light to the nations,  
and I have called you in righteousness.**

*[Isaiah 42:5-8a]*

## Covenant Prayer

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

Lord God, Holy Father,  
since you have called us through Christ  
to share in this gracious covenant,  
we take upon ourselves with joy the yoke of obedience  
and, for love of you,  
engage ourselves to seek and do you perfect will.

**I am no longer my own but yours.  
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 wholeheartedly yield all things  
to your pleasure and disposal.**

**And now, glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant now made on  
earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.**



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

Loving God, hear us as we pray for those whose faithful service  
strengthens your presence:  
**make us all one, that the world may believe.**

Inspire and lead all who govern and hold authority in the

nations of the world:  
**establish justice and peace among all people.**

Healing God, bring comfort and hope on all who suffer from sickness,  
loneliness, and all manner of despair:  
**deliver them from their distress.**

We give thanks for all who are now at rest with you and all the saints.  
May they rest in peace and rise in glory;  
**bring us all to share in your heavenly kingdom.**

*We pray in silence for our own needs.*

With confidence we gather our thoughts and prayers  
into one praying as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil,  
for the Kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**



### Blessing

The blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
be with us all and those whom we love  
and also with those we find hard to love,  
today and in all our tomorrows.

**Amen**