

Worship for Covenant Sunday (complete text. A video version is also online)
Keep safe. Keep caring. Keep praying.

Hello, and welcome to our covenant service. Before our service begins, a word of introduction about the service and the act of covenanting.

The people of God have been in a covenant relationship with God since the time of Abraham. Promises were exchanged, and promises have continued to be exchanged throughout the ages. It marks the relationship between the all-powerful, almighty, ever-loving God, and us – God’s people.

At the time of Wesley, this service grew in importance, and became an annual act for the Methodist people, a way of reminding ourselves that we are in relationship with God. That in that relationship, we give all to God asking him to rule over us. Although Wesley borrowed ideas from elsewhere, the service became uniquely Methodist, held annually either in September or January. Today we share this act of commitment with the universal church throughout the world, knowing that other communities and church denominations have chosen to use either the words or the concept of our covenant service.

Yet this service remains a significant act of commitment to God. It is not to be taken lightly and places great demands upon us. If you are new to covenant, you may find the words difficult, you may find the act of commitment and offering everything to God, to be a very significant one. You may find that you wish to simply listen to the words, rather than saying them yourself. Equally you are invited to join with us as we make our commitment in this service. Maybe this service raises questions and thoughts, and if so you are invited to email or make contact with us to hold those conversations.

Normally this service would take place in corporate worship with us all together, for although the words of the covenant are often

expressed as ‘I’, they are said together in community with each other, holding each other before God, supporting each other, caring for each other. This service may be watched at any time over the coming weeks, and you may feel that you are alone in making these promises; but be assured we make them together.

The words of the covenant are not easy – they ask us to give everything to God. Some may appear to be asking God to undertake certain things that we don’t believe God does, in part of the prayer we use the words ‘*Put us to suffering*’. We do not believe that God causes us to suffer, but that it is our desire by God’s help to actively do, or patiently accept, what is God’s will for us. It is not that God causes our suffering, but in our suffering, we will continue to find God.

This service would usually conclude with a celebration of Holy Communion, a reminder that the relationship that we have with God is through the loving sacrifice of Christ. Online, we cannot celebrate that communion, the words will not be used in this service, but hopefully, the other words of the service, the hymns and the general feeling is one of us relying on the love of God, shown to us through the life, death, resurrection of Christ, and through the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit with us now.

I invite you to take a few moments of quiet as we prepare to worship God.

Welcome to worship with the South Warwickshire Methodist Circuit. I’m Anne Oliver your worship leader for today; and our superintendent minister, the Rev. Dr Iain Ballard will preach and lead us through much of the service. Nigel Saxton and the Rev. Jemima Strain bring us our readings. Today’s format is slightly different as this is our annual Covenant Service, and we are using the liturgy from the

Methodist Worship Book. This service is a celebration of all that God has done and an affirmation that we give our lives and choices to God. It is an invitation for people to renew their covenant relationship with God.

Wherever you are as you join us for worship you are most welcome, and we hope that you will feel God's presence as we worship Him together.

THE PREPARATION

Call to worship

In love we were made, by love we are redeemed, and love at last shall bring us home.

In gratitude for all that we have and all that we are, we come to give thanks to our loving God and to praise God's holy name.

Hymn: StF 553 – I am a new creation

**I am a new creation,
no more in condemnation,
here in the grace of God I stand.
My heart is overflowing,
my love just keeps on growing,
here in the grace of God I stand.**

***And I will praise you, Lord,
yes, I will praise you, Lord,
and I will sing of all that you have done.
A joy that knows no limit,
a lightness in my spirit –
here in the grace of God I stand.***

Dave Bilborough (b 1965)
Words © The Northumbria Community

MWB p 282

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.

Blessèd 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.

Blessèd be God for ever.

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 more than we can ask or think.

Blessèd be God for ever.

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

Amen.

Silence

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 Lord's Prayer

We say the Lord's prayer:

**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 forever
Amen**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Deuteronomy 29:10-15 (NRSVA)

A reading from the Law.

¹⁰You stand assembled today, all of you, before the Lord your God—the leaders of your tribes, your elders, and your officials, all the men of Israel, ¹¹your children, your women, and the aliens who are in your camp, both those who cut your wood and those who draw your water—¹²to enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, sworn by an oath, which the Lord your God is making with you today; ¹³in order that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you and as he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. ¹⁴I am making this covenant, sworn by an oath, not only with you who stand here with us today before the Lord our God, ¹⁵but also with those who are not here with us today

For the wisdom that guides us
we praise you, O God.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NRSVA)

A reading from the Prophets

A New Covenant

³¹The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It 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. ³³But 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. ³⁴No 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.

For the word that inspires us;
we praise you, O God.

Romans 12:1-2 (NRSVA)

A reading from the Epistles.

The New Life in Christ

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For the truth that enlightens us
we praise you, O God.

Testimony

What does the Covenant service mean to me?

I grew up in the Anglican church, so the Covenant service was new to me when I started worshipping at the Methodist church in Warwick. Mind you that was around 30 years

ago, so I've had time to think about it over the years! I'm not sure I really understand all that it means even now, but I know that 245 years ago it was John Wesley's idea to develop a Covenant Service to help people to open themselves up to God more fully.

The emphasis of the whole service is on God's readiness to enfold us in generous love, which we know is not dependent on our deserving.

I have to remember that feeling of being enfolded in God's generous love as I pray the Covenant prayer, which is really quite a challenge to every individual who speaks it. It makes me examine the very roots of my faith; do I submit myself to God in everything that I do? I'm afraid I fall short in that department, being quite a strong willed and impulsive person! I try my best.

"Put me to doing, put me to suffering" an indication that we desire, with God's help, actively to do or patiently to accept whatever is God's will for us. I know that I am a "doing" sort of person and I hope that the things I've done throughout my life have been God's will. I certainly felt called to spend my working life as a teacher, and I hope that I brought God's love into my work with young people. I believe He gave me the strength and patience I needed to do the job well and am forever grateful for that. I have also been very aware of his presence during the most difficult times of my life.

Our human personalities struggle against the pledge to commitment when it might mean being brought low, being empty or having nothing, but it is an indication of our trust in God, and we have to remember that this is a covenant underpinned by the knowledge that we are held in God's gracious love and all things will be well with him.

The Covenant prayer reminds me that I am one of God's disciples on earth, and that I have a

responsibility to try to make a difference in this world. Sometimes this seems like an overwhelming task, but we can make a difference in so many small ways. It might be calling out an injustice when we see it; challenging someone who speaks in a racist or homophobic way for example; it might be financial, such as contributing to the local foodbank; or political, writing letters to your local MP about an issue you care about. It may just be giving of your time in a volunteering capacity. For the last 20 years I have supported a blood cancer charity and I see that as part of God's work on earth too.

Many of us find service in our local church which enables others to find a place to worship God. In later years that service might be in prayer for the work that younger people are taking on, an equally valuable contribution. As this prayer reminds us we all have a part to play in serving God, witnessing to his truth and creating his community on earth.

Hymn: StF 566 – Take my life and let it be

- 1. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee; take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.**
- 2. Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love; take my feet, and let them be swift, and beautiful for thee.**
- 3. Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King; take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee.**
- 4. Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold; take my intellect and use every power as thou shalt choose.**

**5. Take my will, and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart – it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.**

**6. Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.**

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836 – 1879)

John 15:1-10 (NRSVA)

A reading from the Gospel according to John

Hear the Gospel of Christ.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Jesus the True Vine

¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

This is the Gospel of Christ.

Praise to Christ our Lord

Sermon

As I prepared for this service, I reflected on the last year. The time that is passed since I last led a covenant. In my last appointment, there were four churches I had pastoral charge of, and so said these words on four different occasions. Each one and each community being different, yet there being a constant – the words are the same, and the God to whom they are made, the God who invites us into relationship, is unchanging.

Much has changed since we last undertook to covenant, to recognise our relationship with God and to place ourselves living wholly within it. The world is a very different place. No one could have predicted where we would be today. Many things appear topsy-turvy, nothing appears to last, we are made promises by our leaders that we will have things and then don't – that Christmas could be celebrated together, but actually things have changed; that we're on top of what's going on – and the virus mutates; it is easy in this to lose hope. And if I am honest, on a number of occasions in the last year, I have felt in a place of losing hope, of not knowing who to trust, which way to turn. Yet as I reflected on the words of this service, I was reminded that in all things, and at all times, God is unchanging. God has made promises to his people, and those promises will last forever. Promises to prosper us, promises to love us, promises to be present with and within us.

In the reading from John's gospel, we hear of Jesus speaking of him abiding in us and us abiding in him. This is not simply a promise to those of us who are baptised or confirmed, but to all people. Christ promises to be within the lives of each and every one of us. That promise has never been forgotten, never been broken, it is unchanging. Whether we feel Christ's presence or not, Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit, sits within our very hearts, our souls,

our minds. Even when we are most alone, we are never fully alone. God is present, waiting for that moment that we acknowledge the presence, waiting for that moment that we turn again, waiting as the father of the prodigal child, arms outstretched, looking only to hold us tight, dear, cared for, loved.

In this service, we will make promises, and occasionally we make promises in church. Promises were made at our baptisms, though I was far too young to remember any of those promises, they were said in my name, promises to live as best we can for Christ; promises to be children of God. If you are confirmed or have been made a member of the church, then again you will have made promises – promises acknowledging that it is God who loves us first, that it is God who calls us out, and that God has expectations that we will do our best to follow and to follow the commandments to love God with everything that we are and to love one another as ourselves. These are promises said at specific times for specific reasons, yet this annual service of covenant is a promise we take every year to remind us of the relationship we have with God, to bring us back to God, to remind us that it is God who knows what is best for us. And so we take promises together, that we are God's.

I have lost count of the number of covenant services I have attended, but each one of them has great significance, in some, I have cried, in others, my heart has rejoiced. But for a long time, the covenant was said with me having my fingers crossed, I don't know if it is the same for you, but growing up, if you were telling a lie, you would cross your fingers in a way that says I don't really mean what I'm saying. And for many years, I undertook the same, I crossed my fingers and said the words – while secretly hoping that God wouldn't call me out on them. 'Yes God, I want to give everything to you, but not God, not that'. If I'm honest, that was my call to ordained ministry – 'yes God, I'll follow you, yes

God, I'll preach, yes God I'll try my best but no I'm not going to do that, I'm not going to undergo the selection process, the training and become a presbyter'. It was a step too far, and perhaps for you, the promises of the covenant service – the allowing God to have total control feels like a step too far, maybe a few steps too far. Maybe you would rather say, 'Yes God, I know you love me' and allow life to continue as it always has. Yet God calls us into a deeper and deeper relationship with him. God calls us into a relationship where we understand that God actually does know what is best for us. God knows what we were created for, what we were created to be and the role we have to play in the kingdom of God and in the body of the church.

In this service, we acknowledge that God knows what is best for us. That is easy when we agree with God, when our thoughts are the same as God's thoughts – when God does what we want. Yet this service is not about God's doing what we want, but us doing what God wants.

As a parent, there are times when I know what is right for our children, when running round with scissors is a bad idea, put them down; or running round when someone has a hot drink is a bad idea, sit down let us finish our hot drink. There are other times when it is not so easy – what is the right thing for people to have for their tea. Equally there are times when we want to empower others and say, 'what would you like? what do you want to do this afternoon? what would you like to do tomorrow?' As adults, one of the marks of adulthood is there are things we are allowed to do – there are age limits where below this, you can't do something, and above this you can, and as adults we can make up our own mind. We can determine our own futures. Yet in this service, we declare that we are the children of God, that it is God who knows what is best for us, that it is God who knows what is right for us, that it is God who should have control of our lives. Giving up control is not easy.

It will lead us into places and things that we may not like.

The covenant prayer acknowledges that some of the things that God will ask of us meet our natural inclinations, and the gifts and graces, the strengths that we have - whilst others won't. That sometimes we will be called to do and other times to not do. And I realise that in the last year for many, the not being able to do things has been hugely important, difficult and painful. But sometimes we need to sit and be with God, rather than running round doing for God. Yet in this service, we acknowledge, that God actually does know what is right, that God does know who we are called to be and what we are called to do. That the God who loves us, the God who knew us before we were born, the God who knitted us together in our mother's wombs, actually knows us better than we know ourselves. God know what I'm going to think before I think it, what I'm going to say before I speak it, God knows me. And my experience, though at times difficult, God does know what is best for me. What I'm created to be, where I'm meant to serve, how I am meant to live.

God asks nothing of us that we cannot do; for in the things that we find difficult, God supports us through the gifts of the Spirit, through the gifts of forgiveness, through the gifts of each other, supporting one another as we undertake the building of God's kingdom in the world. I reflect I am not called to be a builder, or a plumber or an electrician, or a craftsman – these are not my gifts – they're other people's gifts and I can celebrate those gifts knowing that they make the things I need.

What are your gifts? What is God asking of you? Where is God asking you to be? Have you spent time, asking, discerning, being with God, understanding who you were created to be and what you were created to do?

This service invites us to consider our calling. But that calling is not simply to jobs within the church context – are you called to be a steward, a Sunday school leader, are you called to be an organist or a preacher. It goes beyond church activity – what is God calling you to be and do in the world? What is your part in the great body of Christ? Only you can answer that, but this service asks you to examine the question, and then to follow where God leads. It is our tradition that callings are not explored alone, but in community with each other. And so maybe in answering those questions, you have found something new or perhaps, you have stopped running from a calling you've had for a long time and instead, you are feeling God calling you into a position of responsibility, a place of caring, a place of simply being – for no one calling is more important than the others and being called to just be with God, if that is what you are called to do, then I ask that you follow that call. But if, if this service awakens a call in you, I invite you to contact your Minister or your church and have a conversation about how you might explore that call.

Perhaps this service asks you into a deeper discipleship, to explore what it is to be the children of God, and there are many groups across our circuit, across the Methodist church and all churches that I hope will enable and empower you to deepen your relationship with God. To understand more about who it is that we worship, serve and follow.

Perhaps this service is too difficult, and that though you are watching you will be unable to say the words. Please do not feel left out, there are many who at different times have found these words difficult, many who like me have said them without really meaning them, many who have cried at the implications. God's love for us does not depend on our promises to God, but instead is God's eternal promise to love us - all else is our responding to God; and so you are

invited to join and respond. But if you cannot yet, or if today is not right, then be assured of my prayers and the prayers of many in our churches, that you find time and space, peace and care to be able to trust in God.

This service is about us as a community as well as us a group of individuals. We are called as the church in places, the church at this time and the church beyond simply Methodism, to examine where we are, what we're doing, the communities that we serve. To raise questions of discipleship, of mission and evangelism, of looking to a future lived more closely to where God would call us to be. So if you are unable to say these words, know that there will be others saying them on your behalf in the great community that is the church.

This service is about us abiding in God and God abiding in us. Take time to hear the words of the covenant, take time to pray about them, take time to digest them – for in this format you can listen to them again and again, and join in when you are ready. I invite you, as Ministers and preachers have invited people for generations, to join in the church and the people of God that have existed since the beginning of time and will exist until time itself ends, in giving ourselves to God. Amen

Hymn: I stand amazed in the presence

**1. I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how he could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.**

***How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be;
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me!***

**2. For me it was in the garden
He prayed, "Not my will, but thine;"
He had no tears for his own griefs,
But sweat drops of blood for mine.**

***How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be;
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me!***

**3. He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them his very own;
He bore the burden to Calv'ry,
And suffered and died alone.**

***How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be;
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me!***

**4. When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of his love for me.**

***How marvellous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be;
How marvellous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour's love for me!***

Chas. H. Gabriel (1856-1932)

THE COVENANT

MWB p 285

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.

Let us then 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:
Lord, have mercy,
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 the means of grace,
and our hesitating witness for Christ:
Lord, have mercy,
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:
Lord, have mercy,
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:
Lord, have mercy,
Lord, forgive.

Silence

**Have mercy on me, O God,
in your constant love;
in the fullness of your mercy
blot out my offences.
Wash away all my guilt,
and cleanse me from my sin.
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.**

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.'

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Hymn: StF 549 – Come let us use the grace divine

- 1. Come, let us use the grace divine,
And all, with one accord,
In a perpetual cov'nant join
Ourselves to Christ the Lord:**
- 2. Give up ourselves, through Jesu's power,
His name to glorify;
And promise, in this sacred hour,
For God to live and die.**
- 3. The cov'nant we this moment make
Be ever kept in mind:
We will no more our God forsake,
Or cast his words behind.**
- 4. We never will throw off his fear
Who hears our solemn vow;
And if thou art well pleased to hear,
Come down, and meet us now.**
- 5. To each the cov'nant blood apply,
Which takes our sins away;
And register our names on high,
And keep us to that day.**

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)

MWB p 189 (B)

Beloved in Christ,
let us again claim for ourselves
this covenant which God has made with his
people,
and take upon us the yoke of Christ.

This means that we are content that he appoint us our place and work, and that he himself be our reward.

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.

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 your perfect will. We are no longer our own but yours.

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.

Silence

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

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

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.

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

deliver them from their distress.

We praise you for all your saints who have entered your eternal glory:

bring us all to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray in silence for our own needs and for those of others...

Silence

Lord our God, you have helped us by your grace to make these prayers, and you have promised through Christ our Lord that when two or three agree in his name you will grant what they ask. Answer now your servants' prayers according to their needs; in this world grant that we may truly know you, and in the world to come graciously give us eternal life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE DISMISSAL

Hymn: StF 503 - Love divine, all loves excelling

1. **Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.**
2. **Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.**
3. **Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise!**

Charles Wesley (17097 – 1788)

Prayer & blessing

The Peace

The Lord has made an everlasting covenant of peace with his people.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

be upon you and remain with you for ever.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Copyright Notices

Hymn Words:

StF 553 – I am a new creation

Dave Bilborough (b 1965)

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StF 566 – Take my life and let it be

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836 – 1879)

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I stand amazed in the presence

Chas. H. Gabriel (1856-1932)

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StF 549 – Come let us use the grace divine

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)

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StF 503 - Love divine, all loves excelling

Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788)

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*If you would like to take part, then please get in touch with the Circuit Office on
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