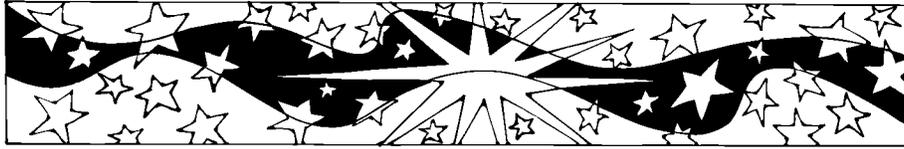


Faith United Methodist Church
Sunday, January 8, 2022



The Baptism Of Our Lord

CALL TO WORSHIP

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

O Lord open our lips and our mouth shall declare your praise.

OPENING PRAYER

Living God,

when the Spirit descended on Jesus at his baptism in Jordan's water
you revealed him as your own beloved Son.

You anointed him with the Holy Spirit.

Grant that all who are baptized into his name

may keep the covenant they have made,

and boldly confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as
the scriptures are read and your word proclaimed, we may hear with joy
what you say to us today. **Amen.**

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 3:13-17

^{3:13}Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by
him. ^{3:14} John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by
you, and do you come to me?" ^{3:15} But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so
now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he
consented. ^{3:16} And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from
the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit

of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ^{3:17} And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Baptismal & Covenant Renewal

Brothers and sisters in Christ: through the Sacrament of Baptism
we are initiated into Christ's holy Church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation
and given new birth through water and the Spirit.

All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

Through the reaffirmation of our faith
we renew the covenant declared at our baptism,
acknowledge what God is doing for us,
and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy Church.

The Covenant

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.**

**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.**

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 honor, 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.

Eternal God, in your faithful and enduring love
you call us to share in your gracious covenant in Jesus Christ.

In obedience we hear and accept your commands;
in love we seek to do your perfect will;
with joy we offer ourselves anew to you.

We are no longer our own but yours.

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 fulfillment

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 forever.

Let this covenant now made on earth

be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.

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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
gracious give us eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and give you peace. May the blessing of God, Father, Son & Holy Spirit be with you this day and always. **Amen.**

History of the Wesley Covenant Service

From the United Methodist *Book of Worship*

In 1663 Richard Alleine, a Puritan, published *Vindiciae Pietatis: or, A Vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of It*. In 1753, it was again published in John Wesley's *A Christian Library*. Wesley used one chapter, "*The Application of the Whole*", on Monday, August 11, 1755, in what probably was the first real celebration of the Covenant Service in the Methodist Movement.

Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, as expressed in his Journal: "*Many mourned before God, and many were comforted*" (April 1756); "*It*

was, as usual, a time of remarkable blessing (October 1765); “It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences...I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings.” (January 1, 1775). In London these services were usually held on New Year’s Day. Around the country the Covenant Service was conducted whenever John Wesley visited the Methodist Societies.

After the time of Wesley several versions of the Covenant were developed, gradually giving Wesley’s material less place in the total service. The present service follows our Basic Patter for worship, enables the congregation to participate more fully.

The heart of the service, focused in the Covenant Prayer, requires persons to commit themselves to God. We celebrate the Covenant Service on Baptism of the Lord as the reminder that our baptism is not the end of our spiritual journey but the continuation of God’s lifelong sanctification of our lives. As we continue to live in response to God’s grace may be live this prayer.