



BE IT REMEMBERED ...

Be it remembered ... John Wesley, taught at the knees of his mother, Susanna ... his indoctrination under the preaching of his father, Samuel ... his widening horizons in Trinity College, Oxford ... his dedication of his life to God in 1725 ... his sense of assurance of God's love gained at the service in 1738 at Aldersgate Street ...

Be it remembered ... Frances Asbury, coming to America in 1771, never to see his father and mother again, but trudging and riding up and down the continent, one of the great explorers of the American frontier, visitor in thousands of humble homes, traveling over a quarter of a million miles in his ministry ... and William Otterbein, Jacob Albright, Martin Boehm, and all the other pioneer Methodist and Evangelical and United Brethren Christians, laity and clergy, who carried the gospel message to the uttermost parts of the land and beyond – to overseas areas ...

Be it remembered ... the Christmas Conference 1784, where the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized ... the annual conferences organized on the seaboard, in the Carolinas, in Tennessee, in Texas – and on the Pacific Coast ...

Be it remembered ... the Sunday school quarterlies ... the children's Bible picture cards ... the *Christian Advocates* ... the *Quarterly Review* ... the Sunday school attendance pins ... the copies of the *Discipline* ... conference journals ... the hymnals and song books ... the *Evangelical Messenger*, the *Methodist Protestant, Church and Home*, *Woman's Evangel*, the *Pocket Bible*, Hurlburt's *Story of the Bible* ... Mary Alice Jones' Bible stories ... E. Stanley Jones *Abundant Living* ... Clovis G. Chappell's books of sermons ... George A. Buttrick's *Prayer* ...

Be it remembered ... the divisions in the church ... the African Methodist Episcopal ... the African Methodist Episcopal Zion ... the Wesleyan Methodists ... the Methodist Protestants ... the Methodist Episcopal, "North and South of God" ... the Free Methodists ... the Colored (now Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church ... the United Evangelical Church ... and the unions or reunions of 1922, 1939, 1968.

Be it remembered ... the hundreds of institutes, schools, colleges, universities, schools of theology started by these pioneers, and the many hospitals, homes for children, and homes for the neglected ...

Be it remembered ... the class meetings ... the quarterly conferences ... the camp meetings ... the grove meetings ... the revivals ... the prayer meetings ... the Sunday school rallies ... the temperance meetings ... the district conferences ...

Be it remembered ... the hymn singing ... the long prayers ... the longer sermons ... the “amens” ... the love feasts ... meaningful discussions ... revelations ... God moments ... the tears the joy ... hugs ... laughter ...

Be it remembered the opening sessions of Annual Conferences ... “And Are We Yet Alive?” ... the business sessions ... “Nothing against him, Bishop” ... the ordination of deacons and elders ... “Take thou ... authority ... to preach the Word of God, and to administer the Holy Sacraments” ... the reading of the appointments ... the General and Jurisdictional Conferences ... “Will you be faithful in ordaining and appointing others; and will you ever seek to deal justly and kindly with your brethren in the ministry over whom you are placed as chief pastor?” ...

Be it remembered ... the tabernacles ... the brush arbors ... the outdoor vespers ... the pastor’s schools ... the ministers’ and laymen’s Fall Retreats ... the Woman’s Society School of Christian Service ... the United Methodist Women ... the United Methodist Men ... youth ministries ... Methodist Youth Fellowship ... United Methodist Youth Fellowship ... Cooperative Ministry ...

Be it remembered ... the dinners on the ground ... box suppers ... Sunday school picnics ... church picnics ... ice cream and strawberry socials ... the Epworth League and Christian Endeavor parties ... visiting Bishops ... the District Superintendent preaching ... lay preachers sermons ... laity Sunday ...

Be it remembered ... the sermon that turned your life around ... the vows of church membership ... “Will you be loyal to the United Methodist Church, and uphold it?” ... the vows of marriage ... “I, Mary, take thee John” ... the baptism of your children and others ... I commend to your love and care this child” ... the Lord’s Supper ... “Ye that do truly and earnestly repent ... take and eat this in remembrance” ... the day a loved one lay mute and still ... “Earth to earth ... dust to dust ... Let not your hearts be troubled ... believe in God ... believe also in me” ...

Be it remembered ...

“On December 25, 1747, John Wesley strongly urged the Methodists to renew their Covenant with God. His first Covenant Service was held in the French Church at Spitalfields on August 11, 1755, when he recited the words of ‘that blessed man Richard Alleine,’ which he published that year in the ‘Christian Library.’ Wesley issued this as a pamphlet in 1780, and the form was used without alteration for nearly a century. Various modifications were then made, till a form was prepared which gave the people a larger share in the devotions. That form has now been revised with a deep sense of the importance of a service which has been a fruitful source of blessing to Methodism ever since 1755.”

The Book of Offices, The Methodist Church of Great Britain and Ireland
The covenant hymn, “Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine”
was written for this service by Charles Wesley.

John Wesley's Covenant Service

An Order of Worship for Such as Would Enter into or Renew Their Covenant with God January 1, 2012



Let the service of worship begin at the time appointed. Let the people kneel or bow in silent prayer upon entering the sanctuary.

PRELUDE

GATHERING MUSIC

“How Marvelous”

Praise Band

GREETING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thom Kinsey

CALL TO WORSHIP

Laura Jane Wright

Then the minister shall say, the people standing and responding thus,

He who sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Let days speak, and many years teach wisdom.

The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

SONG OF PRAISE

“One Thing Remains”

Praise Band

INVOCATION

Rev. Janet Allen

With the congregation seated, and heads bowed, pray in unison,

Let us pray together:

O God, searcher of all our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own. As we come to acknowledge your grace and sovereignty, and to enter into covenant with you, reveal any falsehood or reluctance within us. Let your Spirit impress your truth on our innermost being, and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

After this, the minister shall say, the people responding thus,

Let us pray:

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 thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then all shall say,

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.

Then shall be read John 15:1-8, the people being seated.

Thom Kinsey

Then the minister shall say,

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

On one side the covenant is God's promise that he will fulfill in and through us all that he declared in Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. That his promise still stands we are sure, for we have known his goodness and proved his grace in our lives day by day.

On the other side we stand pledged to live no more unto ourselves, but to him who loved us and gave himself for us and called us to serve him that the purposes of his 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 fathers 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 his calling, examine ourselves by the light of his Spirit, that we may see wherein we have failed or fallen short in faith and practice and, considering all that this covenant means, may give ourselves anew to God.

ADORATION

Laura Jane Wright

Then the minister shall say, the people responding thus,

Let us adore the Father, the God of love who created 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 his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be our Lord.

Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ:

who, though he was 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 like as we are, yet without sin;
who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;
who was dead, and liveth for evermore;
who opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers;
who sitteth at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

Thou art the King of glory, O Christ.

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 exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.

All praise to thee, O Holy Spirit. Amen.

Here shall follow a period of silent prayer as each person expresses adoration of God.

THANKSGIVING

Rev. Allen

Then the minister shall say, the people responding thus,

Let us rise and give thanks to God for his manifold mercies.

Here let the people stand.

O God our Father, the fountain of all goodness, who has been gracious to us through all the years of our life: We give thee thanks for thy loving-kindness which hath filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

We praise thy holy name, O Lord.

Thou hast given us life and reason, and set us in a world which is full of thy glory. Thou hast comforted us with kindred and friends, and ministered to us through the hands and minds of our fellows.

We praise thy holy name, O Lord.

Thou hast set in our hearts a hunger for thee, and given us thy peace. Thou hast redeemed us and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. Thou hast given us a place in the fellowship of thy Spirit and the witness of thy Church.

We praise thy holy name, O Lord.

In darkness thou hast 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.

We praise thy holy name, O Lord.

Thou hast remembered us when we have forgotten thee, followed us even when we fled from thee, met us with forgiveness when we turned back to thee. For all thy long-suffering and the abundance of thy grace,

We praise thy holy name, O Lord.

Here shall follow a period of silent prayer as each person expresses words of thanksgiving for God's many blessings, the people seated.

CONFESSION

Thom Kinsey

Then the minister shall say, the people responding thus,

Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and watching our hearts, lest by self-deceit we shut ourselves out from his presence.

Let us pray:

O God our Father, who hast set forth the way of life for us in thy beloved Son: We confess with shame our slowness to learn of him, our reluctance to follow him. Thou hast spoken and called, and we have not given heed; thy beauty hath shone forth, and we have been blind; thou has stretched out thy hands to us through our fellows, and we have passed by. We have taken great benefits with little thanks; we have been unworthy of thy changeless love.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Forgive us, we beseech thee, 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 thy ways.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Forgive us wherein we have wasted our time or misused our gifts. Forgive us wherein 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.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

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

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Then, the people still kneeling or bowed, the minister shall rise and say,

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

After a period of silent prayer the minister and people shall say,

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according to the multitude of thy 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.

Then the minister shall say,

This is the message we have heard from him, and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

SONG

“I Surrender All”

Praise Band

THE COVENANT

Rev. Allen

Then, the people standing, the minister shall say,

And now, beloved, let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us.

This taking of the yoke upon us means that we are heartily content that he appoint us our place and work, and that he 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 except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is assuredly given us in Christ, who strengthens us.

Therefore, let us make the covenant of God our own. Let us engage our heart to the Lord, and resolve in his strength never to go back.

Being thus prepared, let us now, in sincere dependence on his grace and trusting in his promises, yield ourselves anew to him.

Here let the people be seated as the minister shall say in the name of all,

O Lord God, holy Father, who hast 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 thee, to seek and do thy perfect will. We are no longer our own, but thine.

Then all shall say,

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee; 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 thy pleasure and disposal.

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

Here the congregation shall stand and greet each other with suitable words of fellowship.

An offering shall be taken to express our gratitude for the abundance of God's blessings.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Laura Jane Wright

OFFERTORY MUSIC

“Hosanna – Praise Is Rising”

Praise Band

SONG

“Come Thou Fount”

Praise Band

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Rev. Allen & Thom Kinsey

Here the minister shall say with the people responding thus,

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks and praise to God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, and our bounden duty that we should, at all times and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, 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.

Then may follow Holy Communion,

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering death and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always, in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took the bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is rise; Christ will come again.

The minister, with hands raised above the elements of Communion, shall pray,
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Then the congregation shall be invited to the table,

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Then the following prayer shall be prayed by all,

Let us pray,

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves to others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Then, the people standing, shall sing a hymn of departure,

SONG OF DEPARTURE

“Your Grace Is Enough”

Praise Band

BENEDICTION

Thom Kinsey

The minister shall dismiss the congregation with these words of blessing,

Go forth in peace. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and for ever more.

And all shall say,

Amen.

GREAT BRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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REV. DANNY J. KESNER

Senior Pastor
Parsonage: 410-9312

Rev. Janet Allen

Associate Pastor
Parsonage: 482-0937

Music Ministries: Denise Gregory **Contemporary Worship Director:** Robert Coxwell
Organist: Debbie Smith **Staff Accompanist:** Christine McFadden

Youth Ministries: Jeff Myers

Communion Stewards: Jennifer Williams and Laura Jane Wright

Ushers: Tom Cotten (HU), Scott Williams, Dave Shoemaker, Peggy Johnston

The food basket is filled today by Mike & Janice Amos in memory of our parents; also by Brenda Vaughan in honor of Maxine Earley and in memory of Jim Earley and Brantley Allen..

If you would like to sign up for altar flowers or food baskets the notebooks for reserving a Sunday are located at our Welcome Centers.

"Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed"

Beginning Thursday, Jan. 19 from 7 - 9 p.m. in room 132, we will offer a 6 - week study of David, called "Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed." There is some homework & great DVD sessions by Kay Arthur, Priscilla Shirer & Beth Moore. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Case at 482-4943. Everyone is welcome - dudes, chicks, young & old.

Beth Moore Bible Study

Beth Moore's "James: Mercy Triumphs" is an 8 week study of James, Jesus' own brother, who starts out as skeptic, but with one glimpse of the resurrected Savior turns an unbeliever into a disciple. Join us beginning Thurs., Jan. 12th from 9 - 11 a.m. in room 136.

The United Methodist Men Installation Dinner will be held on Sunday, Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. in the Social Hall. Everyone is invited. Please RSVP to the church office at 482-1049.

UMM hosted Bible Study - "The Thirteen Apostles"

Twelve men personally chosen by Jesus to lead in his ministry of spreading God's word and love - and later, a thirteenth. If asked, few of us could name them all; and yet, Jesus left his mission and message in the care of this small group of men. Today, their spiritual descendants fill the world. Join us on Wed., Jan. 18th at 6:30 p.m. in room 136 as we begin our journey with the group that walked with Jesus.

The United Methodist Women Circle of Grace will meet on Tues., Jan. 3rd at 6:30 p.m. in room 136 for fellowship. The business meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. The program will be the Pledge Service, presented by Sara Howard. All ladies are invited.

Calling all adults to join us for six weeks of volleyball and fun, Sundays, January 22 - February 26 at 7 p.m. A great way to meet new people and get some exercise after the holidays. Invite a friend! You don't need to be a "YMCA" member to participate.

The authors of *Common Prayer: A Liturgy For Ordinary Radicals* write that "liturgy is food for the soul." We will begin a prayer group on Monday mornings, starting January 16th at 7:30am at the home of Wendy Scott for anyone that has a hungry soul and looking for a way to start the week off with God's word in the center in the presence of community. We will practice the tradition of common prayer using the text previously listed. It takes about 20 minutes to read the daily liturgy including time for individual prayer and bible reading. Consider stopping by on your way to work, school, or before you start your busy day of errands to be reminded of what is truly important. Contact Wendy Scott at 376-3864 or wsag01@aol.com for more information.