



A New and Better Covenant

*“Christ has obtained a ministry ...
enacted on better promises”, (Heb 8:6)*

Call to Worship

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will establish a new covenant
with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. *(Heb 8)*

**Sing praises to the LORD,
for he has done gloriously;
let this be made known in all the earth.** *(Isa 12)*

Let us pray.

**Sovereign Lord, our Heavenly Father,
it is our heart's desire, our deepest longing,
to know you, to love you, and to worship you.**

**It is our greatest pleasure, our highest privilege,
our chief delight, to meet with you,
the one true and living God,
and experience your grace and favour.**

**Grant us power by your Holy Spirit
to worship you now, in spirit and in truth.**

Amen. *(Valley of Vision)*

Psalm 63

O LORD, my God, most earnestly
I seek your holy face,
within your house again to see
the glories of your grace.

Apart from you I long and thirst,
and naught can satisfy;
I wander in a desert land
where all the streams are dry.

The loving-kindness of my God
is more than life to me,
so I will praise you all my days
and pray continually.

In you my soul is satisfied,
my darkness turns to light,
and joyful meditations fill
the watches of the night.

Beneath the shadow of your wings
I sing my joy and praise.
Your right hand is my strong support
through troubled nights and days.
All those who seek my life will fall;
my life is in your hand.
God's king and people will rejoice;
in victory they will stand.

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Confession and Assurance

Hear what God's word says:

"O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether." (Ps 139:1-4)

Have mercy on us, O God

**According to your unfailing love;
According to your great compassion.**

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 to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
Therefore, let us confess our sins against God,
and against our neighbour,
first in silence and then aloud together.

Please kneel or remain seated.

Prayer of Confession

O most great, most just and gracious God;

You are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; but you have promised mercy through Jesus Christ to all who repent and believe in him.

Therefore, we confess that we are sinful by nature and that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.

We have neglected and abused your holy worship and your holy name.

We have dealt unjustly and uncharitably with our neighbours.

We have not sought first your kingdom and righteousness.

We have not been content with our daily bread.

You have revealed your wonderful love to us in Christ and offered us pardon and salvation in him; but we have turned away.

We have run into temptation; and the sin that we should have hated, we have committed. Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father!

We confess you alone are our hope.

Make us your children and give us the Spirit of your Son, our only Saviour.

Amen.

(Savoy Liturgy)

Assurance of Pardon

"Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." (Mic 7:18-19)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it
mount of God's redeeming love.

Here I find my greatest treasure;
hither by thy help I've come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
bought me with his precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;
seal it for thy courts above.

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The Word of God

First Reading: Luke 2:1-14, "The Birth of Christ"

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Heb 8:1-13

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: A New and Better Covenant (Mark Payne)

Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery

Come behold the wondrous mystery
In the dawning of the King
He the theme of heaven's praises
Robed in frail humanity
In our longing, in our darkness
Now the light of life has come
Look to Christ, who condescended
Took on flesh to ransom us

Come behold the wondrous mystery
He the perfect Son of Man
In His living, in His suffering
Never trace nor stain of sin
See the true and better Adam
Come to save the hell-bound man
Christ the great and sure fulfillment
Of the law; in Him we stand

Come behold the wondrous mystery
Christ the Lord upon the tree
In the stead of ruined sinners
Hangs the Lamb in victory
See the price of our redemption
See the Father's plan unfold
Bringing many sons to glory
Grace unmeasured, love untold

Come behold the wondrous mystery
Slain by death the God of life
But no grave could e'er restrain Him
Praise the Lord; He is alive!
What a foretaste of deliverance
How unwavering our hope
Christ in power resurrected
As we will be when he comes

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Response to God's Word

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived
by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

After each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

As our Saviour taught us, let us pray:

**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.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Table

All baptised Christians who trust in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and seek to lead a new life by God's mercies, are welcome at this table. If you do not profess faith in Christ, please refrain from receiving the bread and wine.

Gifts and Offerings

Gifts and offerings may be placed in the offertory box at the back of the hall. *"Honour the LORD with your wealth and with the first-fruits of all your produce." (Pro 3:9)*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Please join in saying the Sanctus ("The Holy", based on Isaiah 6:3)

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died;

Christ is risen;

Christ will come again.

The stewards will distribute the wine and bread.

Eat the bread as you receive it, but keep the wine until we all drink together.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Almighty and eternal God,
we thank you for reassuring us at this meal
of your favour and goodness toward us,
and of your word for us.**

**We thank you that we are members
of the body of your Son,
and that we are heirs, by grace,
of your eternal kingdom.**

**We humbly beg you, heavenly Father,
to keep us as faithful members of your church,
to strengthen us by your Spirit,
and to draw us together in love and unity,
that we may serve through those good works
which you have prepared for us to do
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
and for His glory.**

Amen.

Psalm 27

O Lord, You are my light
and my salvation near:
then who will cause me fright
or fill my heart with fear?
While God my strength, my life sustains,
secure from fear my soul remains.

My one request has been
and still this prayer I raise;
that I may live within
God's house for all my days.
God's glorious beauty to admire,
and in His temple to inquire.

When troubles 'round me swell,
when fears and dangers throng,
securely I will dwell
in His pavilion strong.
Within the shelter of God's tent
He hides me till the storm is spent.

Uplifted on a rock
above my foes around,
amid the battle shock
my song shall still resound.
Then joyful off'rings I will bring;
the Lord God's praise my heart shall sing.

Benediction and Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the Name of Christ, Amen.

Sermon Notes

What is a covenant?

Relational Bond with God

Why is it important?

A Greater Priest in a Greater Place (v. 1-5)

With Greater Promises (v. 6-13)

What is the New Covenant, and when was it announced?

Who is included in the New Covenant, and who is the “house of Israel”?

What does God promise in the New Covenant?

Renewed by Me (v. 10)

Truly know Me (v. 11)

Forgiven by Me (v. 12)