



**BARKER ROAD  
METHODIST CHURCH**

# **WATCHNIGHT COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE**

**10pm | Tue, Dec 31, 2019  
ACS Auditorium**



**Order of Worship**  
*for those who would*  
*enter into or renew their covenant with God*

*Wesleyan Watchnight Service*  
*celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion*

**10pm; Tue, Dec 31, 2019**

**ACS Auditorium**

*Please switch off your phone and other digital devices*

*On 25 Dec 1747, John Wesley strongly urged the Methodists to renew their Covenant with God. Wesley's first Covenant Service was held in Spitalfields on 11 August 1755 in what was the first real celebration of the Covenant Service within the Methodist movement.*

*In London, the services were usually held on New Year's Eve or Day and was eventually called a Watchnight Service. Around the country the Covenant Service was also conducted whenever John Wesley visited the Methodist Societies. To quote Wesley:*

*"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 give thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His grace, healing all their backslidings" (John Wesley; Jan 1, 1775)*

**Call to Worship** [PLEASE STAND]

Leader What a year this has been!

**People So many things have happened. Some of them have been wonderful; others very sad.**

Leader In all of this our Lord has been with us, guiding, healing, comforting, and rejoicing.

**People Thanks be to God for God's continual presence with us.**

Leader Now we are on the threshold to a new tomorrow.

**People We don't know what it will hold for us.**

Leader In all of what is to come, our Lord will be with us.

**People Guiding, healing, comforting, and rejoicing with us.**

**ALL Thank you, Lord, for your steadfast love and presence. Amen.**

**Hymn of Praise**

*How Great Thou Art*

UMH 77

**Hymn of Confession**

*Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine*

UMH 606

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Lord, you have asked us to feed and give drink to those who hunger,  
to clothe those who are naked, to welcome the stranger,  
to visit those who are sick and imprisoned.

When we look back on this year

we might be able to say we did some of those things.

We remember the enthusiasm with which we started out this waning year,  
ready to do your work and witness to your love.  
But you know how things got in our way.  
We allowed ourselves to be swallowed up by worries and fear.  
We placed comfort of self before service to others.  
We took the "easy way out" whenever we could.  
And you wept for us.

Now we are on the brink of the new year.  
We cannot change what we did not do,  
but we can make a covenant with you  
to be your witnesses in our words, thoughts and deeds  
to your people so that when you say,  
"Have you given food and drink to those who hunger and thirst,  
have you clothed the naked, welcomed the stranger,  
visited the sick and imprisoned?"

We can respond with a joyful  
"Yes! Lord, we have done these things with joy and love!"  
Forgive us what we have not done.  
Inspire us to do what you would have us do.  
In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

God is making all things new.  
The past is over and done.  
It taught us many lessons.  
But God is the God of the future,  
new opportunities, new hopes, new dreams, renewed vision.  
God dwells with us to be our God.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God. AMEN.

## **LITANY OF THANKSGIVING**

**Leader** Let us give thanks for all of God's mercies.  
O God, our Covenant Friend, you have been gracious to us through all the years  
of our lives. We thank you for your loving care, which has filled our days and  
brought us to this time and place.

**People** **We praise your holy name, O God.**

**Leader** You have given us life and reason, and set us in a world filled with your glory.  
You have comforted us with family and friends, and ministered to us through  
the hands of our sisters and brothers.

**People** **We praise your holy name, O God.**

Leader You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you, and have given us your peace. You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit and the witness of your Church.

**People We praise your holy name, O God.**

Leader You have been our light in darkness and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation. You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys and the all-sufficient reward in all our labours.

**People We praise your holy name, O God.**

Leader You remembered us when we forgot you. You followed us even when we tried to flee from you. You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you. For all your patience and overflowing grace.

**People We praise your holy name, O God.**

**Hymn of Prayer**

*Near to the Heart of God*

UMH 472

## **P R A Y E R**

**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 sovereignty and grace,  
and to enter anew into covenant with you,  
reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us.  
Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost 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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**Silent & Intercessory Prayer**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Offertory**

**Doxology**

**Hymn of Illumination**

*Open My Eyes, That I May See*

UMH 454

**Covenant Service Sermon**

*Hello?*

**Rev Benjamin Fong**

## **I n v i t a t i o n t o t h e C o v e n a n t**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God.  
Through baptism, we have entered this life  
and have been admitted into the new covenant  
of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator.

He sealed it with his own blood, that it might last forever.

On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ,  
the Source and Perfecter of our faith.

On the other side, we are pledged  
to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ,  
who loved us and gave himself for us.  
From time to time we renew our covenant with God,  
especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant  
and gather at the Lord's table.  
Today, however, we meet as the generations before us have met,  
to renew the covenant that binds us to God.  
Let us make this covenant of God our own.  
Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.  
Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.  
Christ has many services to be done.  
Some are more easy and honourable,  
others are more difficult and disgraceful.  
Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests,  
others are contrary to both.  
In some we may please Christ and please ourselves.  
But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ  
except by denying ourselves.  
It is necessary, therefore,  
that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.  
Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

**Let me be your servant, under your command.**

**I will no longer be my own.**

**I will give up myself to your will in all things.**

Be satisfied that Christ shall give you your place and work.

**Lord, make me what you will.**

**I put myself fully into your hands:**

**put me to doing, put me to suffering,  
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,  
let me be full, let me be empty,  
let me have all things, let me have nothing.**

**I freely and with a willing heart**

**give it all to your pleasure and disposal.**

Christ will be the Saviour of none but his servants.  
He is the source of all salvation to those who obey.  
Christ will have no servants except by consent;  
Christ will not accept anything except full consent  
to all that he requires.

Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Confirm this by a holy covenant.

To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

First, set apart some time, more than once,  
to be spent alone before the Lord;  
in seeking earnestly God's special assistance  
and gracious acceptance of you;  
in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant;  
in searching your hearts  
whether you have already freely given your life to Christ.  
Consider what your sins are.  
Consider the laws of Christ, how holy, strict, and spiritual they are,  
and whether you, after having carefully considered them,  
are willing to choose them all.  
Be sure you are clear in these matters, see that you do not lie to God.  
Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.  
Third, claim God's covenant,  
rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength,  
so you can keep your promise.  
Trust not your own strength and power.  
Fourth, resolve to be faithful.  
You have given to the Lord your hearts,  
you have opened your mouths to the Lord,  
and you have dedicated yourself to God.  
With God's power, never go back.  
And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord.  
Fall down on your knees, lift your hands toward heaven,  
open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

## **C o v e n a n t P r a y e r**

**O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
see me as I fall down before you.**

**Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will,  
for you have promised mercy to me  
if I turn to you with my whole heart.**

God requires that you shall put away all your idols.

**I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all,  
covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life.**

**Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world.**

**In your power**

**I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you.  
For my own righteousness is riddled with sin,  
unable to stand before you.**

Through Christ, God has offered to be your God again  
if you would let him.

**Before all heaven and earth,**

**I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God.**

**I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion,**

**and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant,**

**to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.**

God has given the Lord Jesus Christ

as the only way and means of coming to God.

**Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ**

**as the only new and living Way,**

**and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him.**

**O blessed Jesus, I come to you,**

**hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked,**

**unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants.**

**I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head.**

**I renounce my own worthiness,**

**and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness.**

**I renounce my own wisdom, and take you for my only guide.**

**I renounce my own will, and take your will as my law.**

Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

**I do here covenant with you, O Christ,**

**to take my lot with you as it may fall.**

**Through your grace I promise**

**that neither life nor death shall part me from you.**

God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

**I do here willingly put my neck under your yoke, to carry your burden.**

**All your laws are holy, just, and good.**

**I therefore take them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions,**

**promising that I will strive**

**to order my whole life according to your direction,**

**and not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.**

The almighty God searches and knows your heart.

**O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today**

**without guile or reservation.**

**If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright.**

**And now, glory be to you, O God the Father,**

**whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father.**

**Glory be to you, O God the Son,**

**who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood,**

**and now is my Saviour and Redeemer.**

**Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit,**

**who by your almighty power have turned my head from sin to God.**

O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
you have now become my Covenant Friend.  
And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant.  
So be it.  
And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.

**Communion Hymn** [PLEASE STAND]

*Spirit Song*

UMH 347

**A Service of Word and Table II**

UMH 13 & 14

During the Feast of the LORD's Supper, the following hymns will be sung prayerfully: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* (UMH 140), *Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus* (UMH 349), *Seek Ye First* (UMH 405), *Lead Me, Lord* (UMH 473), *O Jesus, I Have Promised* (UMH 396), *Because He Lives* (UMH 364), *Close to Thee* (UMH 407)

**Silence & Guided Reflection**

**New Year Greetings**

**Hymn of Dedication** [PLEASE STAND] *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

UMH 117

**The Benediction**

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## T H E M I N I S T R Y O F W O R S H I P

**Worship leaders** | Rev Dr Chiu Ming Li, Rev Dr Daniel Koh, Rev Wendy Watson, Rev Jeremy Ong, Rev Benjamin Fong

**Musicians** | Joy Balakrishnan, Goh Kheng Long, Samuel Padolina Jr, Isabel Lim

**Ushers** | James Ang, Charmaine Wee, Famajati Fong-Sastro, Chang Chong Tian, Christina Khoo, Charmaine Tang, Darren Huang, Alfred Tan, Iris Sin, Stacey Tan, Mark Chin, Lincoln Wee, Corinne Teo, Darrell Lee

**Communion Stewards** | Mathew Kwan & Family

**Communion Assistants** | Choe Peng Sum, Sandra Thng, Ng Chee Beng, Aaron Ma, Lee Soo Chye, Bernice Lim, Elaine Sung, Loke Beng Fong, Eric Teo Yew Hock, Tan Khye Suan, Nicholas Ghows, Chung Chee Kit, Ernest Ho

**PA Technicians** | John Lim and Terence Leong

**Floral Stewards** | Adeline Chin

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Our church office on L4, Methodist Centre (the main office) and L2, Sports Complex is open Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm. The office is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays

**DON'T THROW ME AWAY! BRING ME HOME FOR PRAYER OR RECYCLE ME. CONSIDER SWITCHING TO MY DIGITAL VERSION**