

Covenant Renewal Service

January 5th, 2025

Adapted from John Wesley for



GraceCommunity
Church of the Nazarene

Call to Worship

Songs of Worship

Introduction

The Covenant Service

Pastor: Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture: John 15:1-8

Pastor: My dear friends, fix these three principles in your hearts:

- 1) that things eternal are more enduring and real than things temporal;
- 2) that things not seen are as certain as the things that are seen;
- 3) that upon your present choice depends your eternal destiny.

Choose Christ and His ways, and you are blessed forever; refuse Him, and you are undone forever. Do not delay the matter. If you are unresolved, you are resolved.

If you remain undetermined for Christ, you are determined for the devil. Therefore, follow your hearts from day to day. Do not rest until the matter is settled once and for all.

And see to it that you make a good choice. Next, begin your journey with Christ. Adventure with Him. Cast yourselves upon His righteousness. As you do, Christ offers to bring you to God.

People: Lord Jesus, take up my cause. Bring me to God and bring me into the land of promise. I will venture with You. I will cast myself upon You, upon Your righteousness.

Pastor: By this you now renounce your own righteousness. Do you sense the depth of your sins and the inadequacy of your righteousness without Christ? Whether we are already forgiven sinners, or still far from God, let us confess together our total dependence on Him.

Confession & Supplication

People: We acknowledge a deep sense of our need. We see ourselves as sinners in need of a Savior. The Spirit of God has awakened us; for we have cried out, "Lord, where are we? Is there no hope of escaping out of this wretched state? We are but dead, if we continue as we are. What may we do to be saved?"

Pastor: Being made aware of our sin and its danger, we look for help and deliverance, but we often look everywhere else before looking unto Christ. Nothing will bring us to Christ but absolute necessity. We try to forsake our sins through prayers, and sermons, and sacraments, searching for salvation. But all of these, though they are needed in their places, cannot save in and of themselves. Our determination cannot help us; in fact, it may reflect the source of our sin. Ritual alone cannot help; these are but empty vessels. They tell us, "You knock at a wrong door; salvation is not in us." Can we now utterly despair of our own goodness, or do we trust in anything but Christ?

People: Lord, be merciful to us. What shall we do? We dare not abide as we are, and we are weary of trying to do it alone. Our praying alone will not help us. Our hearing alone will not help us. If we give everything we have to the poor, or give up our bodies to be burned, all this would not save our souls. What shall we do?

Pastor: We must let our sins go. We must let our righteousness go. Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He came to seek and to save those who are lost. Friends, will you now trust Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and has provided everything needed for our forgiveness?

ALL: Lord Jesus, here we are, lost creatures, and enemies to God, under His wrath and curse. Lord, undertake for us, reconcile us to God, and save our souls. You have promised not to refuse us, for we have nowhere else to go. If we had come in our own righteousness, you may well have sent us away; but since we come at the command of the Father, and because of Your great love, we know you will not reject us. We come, Lord. We believe, Lord. We throw ourselves upon Your grace and mercy. We cast ourselves upon Your blood. On You we will trust, and rest. On You we lay our hope for pardon, for life, and for salvation.

The Lord's Prayer: (Matthew 6:9-13)

*"Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed by Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in 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."*

Pastor: "At one time we were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy...so that, having been justified by grace, we might become heirs, having the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:3a, 4-5a, 7)

Songs of Worship

Scripture: 1 John 1:5 – 2:6

Commitment

Pastor: We now yield ourselves to the Lord. As His servants, we must give up the dominion and control of ourselves to Christ.

Present yourselves to the Lord that you may be the Lord's from this moment forward.

ALL: We are Yours, Lord. We reverence You.
We dedicate ourselves to Your service.

Pastor: In giving ourselves to the Lord, we affirm that we will heartily embrace what He has appointed us to do, both as a group and individually. Let Him appoint you to your work. Christ has many services to be done; some are easier and more honorable, others more difficult and menial. Find what it is that Christ expects of you and then give yourself totally to His will, without bargaining and without reservation.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-20

ALL: Lord Jesus, if you will receive me into Your house, if you will own me as Your servant, I will not compromise my commitment to You. Place on me whatever condition You choose; call me to whatever You desire; just let me be Your servant.
Make me whatever you will Lord.

Send me where You will. I am content. If I am not the head, or the eye, or the ear, one of the nobler and more honorable instruments, let me be the hand, or the foot, as one of the lowest and least esteemed of all the servants of my Lord.

Pastor: Lord, place us in Your kingdom in the roles you have designed for us.

People: Lord, make all of us your servants;

Pastor: In exalted places, or humble places;

People: Let us be full; let us be empty;

Pastor: Let us have all things; let us have nothing;

People: We freely and gladly embrace our places in Your kingdom.

Song of Worship

Covenant Requirements

Pastor: Beloved, the commitment to Christ we have just expressed is the essence of Christianity. When we have laid all our hopes upon Christ, casting ourselves wholly upon the merits of His righteousness; when we have with understanding, given ourselves to Him; then we are Christians indeed, and not until then. His people are a willing people. He will be all in all, or He will be nothing.

The Covenant

Pastor: And now let us confirm our commitment by a solemn covenant to Him. Search your hearts as you make or renew this commitment. What would it take for us to make a covenant to God, commit ourselves to His plan for our lives in this New Year?

First, consider what your sins are and examine whether you can resolve to renounce them all. Consider what God's commands are – how holy, disciplined, and spiritual, and whether you can choose them all as the rule of your whole life.

Second, hold onto the covenant of God and rely on His promise of grace and strength, so you may be able to keep your promise to Him. Do not trust in your own strength but take hold of His strength.

Third, resolve to be faithful. Having engaged your heart, opened your mouth, and committed your hands to the Lord, resolve in His strength never to go back.

Finally, having prepared yourselves seriously for this moment, as if the Lord were visible in this sanctuary, bow and open your hearts to Him.

Pastor: Most Holy God, by Your infinite grace You have promised mercy to us in Christ if we will only turn to You with all our heart. So, upon the call of the gospel, we come now and submit ourselves to Your mercy.

***Personal Prayers (take time now to do business with God)**

ALL: O God, since You have, out of Your boundless mercy, offered graciously to be our God through Christ, I call heaven and earth to record this day, January 5th, that I do here solemnly acknowledge You as the Lord of my life. I take You, O Eternal God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be my God. Be my portion. I give up myself, body and soul, to be Your servant, promising and vowing to serve You in holiness, and righteousness all the days of my life. O blessed Jesus, I come to You hungry, wretched, miserable, blind and naked, unworthy to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, much less to be solemnly married to the King of Glory. But since such is Your unparalleled love, I do here with all my power accept You and take You to love, honor, and obey; You before all others, and this to death.

I renounce my own worthiness and acknowledge You as my righteousness.

I renounce my own wisdom and take You for my only Guide.

I renounce my own will and take Your will for my life.

I covenant with You to accept my lot, as it falls. With You and by Your grace I risk everything. Neither life nor death shall part us.

Now, Almighty God, Searcher of hearts, You know that I make this covenant with You this day, without any known deceit or reservation. I humbly beg You, that if You see any flaw or falsehood, reveal it to me and help me to put it right. By Your grace I pray. Amen.

- Invitation to the Table

- Communion

Benediction

ALL: Now receive glory, O God, from your children.

Thank you for the privilege of calling you Father.

And glory be to the Son, who has loved us and washed our sins in His own blood and has now become our Savior and Redeemer.

And glory be to the Spirit, who by His mighty power has turned our hearts from sin to God.

You, God, have now become our covenant-friend, and through Your unlimited grace we are your covenant-servants.

Song of Worship – Holiness unto the LORD

Pastor: And now may the covenant we have made on earth be sealed in heaven. And may God enable you to live faithfully before Him. The peace of Christ be with you all. Amen.