

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.

Silence

**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.

Hymn

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 honour, 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 fulfilment 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 for ever.
Let this covenant now made on earth
be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.**

Silence, all seated

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 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 our prayers according to our needs;
in this world grant that we may truly know you,
and in the world to come graciously give us eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer