



Epiclesis

An Ancient-Future Faith Community

Liturgy

January 2, 2011 (Renewal of the Covenant)

GATHERING

We are gathered to worship our Creator, the God of love,,
who continually preserves and sustains us.

**We have been loved with a Covenant Love;
in Jesus Christ we have been made complete,
and have been graced to see God's glory.**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth!

**We will worship the Lord with gladness,
and come before Him with joyful singing.**

Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us and we are His.

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise;
be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

**For the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever;
His Covenant Love continues through all generations.**

– based on Psalm 100

Forever

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King,
His love endures forever.

For He is good, He is above all things,
His love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise.

With a mighty hand, and outstretched arm,
His love endures forever.

For the life that's been reborn,
His love endures forever.

Sing praise, sing praise, Sing praise, sing praise.

Chorus:

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong,



Forever God is with us; forever and ever, forever.

From the rising to the setting sun,
His love endures forever.
And by the grace of God we will carry on,
His love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise, Sing praise, sing praise.

Chorus (two times)

His love endures forever (eight times)
Sing praise, sing praise, Sing praise, sing praise.

Forever You are faithful, forever You are strong,
Forever You are with us; forever and ever.
Forever You are faithful, forever You are strong,
Forever You are with us; forever and ever, forever.

CCLI Song No. 3148428; ©2001 worshiptogether.com songs | sixsteps Music; Chris Tomlin

INVOCATION

Prayers of welcome and praise

Psalm 66:1-15 (Chanting)

Be joyful in God, all the earth;*
Sing the honor of His name; make His praise glorious.
Say to God, “How awesome are Your deeds!”*
because of Your great strength Your enemies cringe before You.
All the earth bows down before You,*
sings to You, sings out your Name.”
Come now and see the works of God,*
how wonderful He is in His doing toward all people.
He turned the sea into dry land, so that they went through the water on
foot.* and there we rejoiced in Him.
In His might He rules for ever; His eyes keep watch over the nations;*
let no rebel rise up against Him.
Bless our God, you peoples;*
make the voice of His praise to be heard;



Who holds our souls in life,*
and will not allow our feet to slip.
For You, O God, have proved us;*
You have tried us just as silver is tried.
You brought us into the snare;*
You laid heavy burdens upon our backs.
You let enemies ride over our heads; we went through fire and water;*
but You brought us out into a place of abundance.
I will enter Your house with burnt-offerings and will pay You my vows,*
which I promised with my lips and spoke with my mouth when I was in
trouble.
I will offer You sacrifices of fat beasts with the smoke of rams;*
I will give You oxen and goats.
Be joyful in God, all the earth;*
Sing the honor of His name; make His praise glorious.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**God was pleased, in his eternal purpose,
to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son,
to be the mediator between God and human beings.
As the mediator, He is the prophet, priest, and king,
the head and Savior of the church, the heir of all things,
and the judge of the world.
God gave to Him, from all eternity,
a people to be His seed and to be by Him, in time,
redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.
The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself—
which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up to God—has
fully satisfied the justice of His Father.
He purchased not only reconciliation but also an everlasting
inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father
has given to Him.**

—from Westminster Confession (MESV), Chap. VIII, Sec. 1, 5



PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

O God, you have shown us the way of life through your Son, Jesus Christ. We confess with shame our slowness to learn of him, our failure to follow him, and our reluctance to bear the cross.

Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.

We confess the poverty of our worship, our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our evasion of responsibilities in our service, our imperfect stewardship of your gifts.

Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.

O Lord, Hear My Prayer

O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
When I call answer me.

O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
Come and listen to me.

©1982 Les Presses de Taizé (France); Based on Psalm 102:1,2

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Now the message that we have heard from God's Son and announce is this: God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him.

If we live in the light, just as He is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from every sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us.

But if we confess our sins to God, He will keep His promise and do what is right; He will forgive us all our wrongdoing.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 66:16-20 (Chanting)

Come and listen, all you who fear God,*
and I will tell you what He has done for my soul.
I called out to Him with my mouth.*
and His praise was on my tongue.



If I had cherished sin in my heart,*
the Lord would not have heard me.
But in truth God has heard me;*
He has attended to the voice of my prayer.
Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,*
nor withheld His love from me.

TIME OF OFFERING

Lord God, in worship, and with joy and thanksgiving acknowledging Your sovereignty in our lives, we offer to You what You have first given to us – our moments and days, our hands and feet, our voices, our lips, our minds, our silver and gold, our wills, our hearts, our love, our whole selves. May we be always, only, all for Thee.

Take My Life

Verse 1

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love;
Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.

Chorus:

Here am I, all of me;
Take my life, it's all for Thee.

Verse 2

Take my voice and let me sing always only for my King;
Take my lips and let them be filled with messages from Thee.
Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect and use ev'ry power as Your choose.

Verse 3

Take my will and make it Thine, it shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own, it shall be Thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Your feet its treasure store;
Take myself and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.



THE WORD

Exodus 24
Nehemiah 8

THE COVENANT

Collect:

Father, You have appointed our Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator of a new covenant. Give us grace to draw near with fullness of faith and join ourselves in a perpetual covenant with You, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Leader:

In the old covenant, God chose Israel to be a special people and to obey the law. Our Lord Jesus Christ, by his death and resurrection, has made a new covenant with all who trust in him. We stand within this covenant and we bear his name.

On the one side, God promises in this covenant to give us new life in Christ. On the other side, we are pledged to live not for ourselves but for God. Today, therefore, we have met to renew the covenant which binds us to God.

Let us claim the covenant God has made with his people, and accept the yoke of Christ. To accept the yoke of Christ means that we allow Christ to guide all that we do and are, and that Christ himself is our only reward.

Christ has many tasks to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some make others applaud, others bring only reproach; some we desire to do because of our own interests; others seem unnatural. Sometimes we please Christ and meet our own needs, at other times we cannot please Christ unless we deny ourselves.

Yet Christ strengthens us and gives us the power to do all these things. Therefore let us dedicate ourselves anew to this covenant with God. Let us give ourselves completely to God, trusting in his promises and relying on his grace.

People:

I give myself completely to You, O God.



**Assign me to my place in Your creation.
Let me suffer for you.
Give me the work You would have me do.
Give me many tasks or have me step aside while You call others.
Put me forward or humble me.
Give me riches or let me live in poverty.
I freely give all that I am and have to You.
And now, holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
You are mine and I am Yours. So be it.
May this Covenant made on earth continue for all eternity.
Amen**

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by Your Name
Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as in heav'n.
Give us today our daily bread; forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us;
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours.
Now and forever, Amen.

Setting by Eric Wyse; ©2000 Wildgrove Music (BMI)

We Behold You (Fraction Anthem)

With all of the saints and angels, we gather before You.
Our hearts filled with thankfulness, we lift up Your holy Name.
With all who have gone before us, we feast at Your table.
We eat of Your body and drink of Your holy blood.

And we behold You, and we behold You,
Lamb of God, slain for our sins.
(Repeat)

©1996 Ecclesia Music Publishing. James R. Hart



SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine

Come, let us use the grace divine, and all with one accord,
In a perpetual covenant join ourselves to Christ the Lord;
Give up ourselves, through Jesus' power, His Name to glorify;
And promise, in this sacred hour, for God to live and die.

The cov'nant we this moment make be ever kept in mind;
We will no more our God forsake, or cast these words behind.
We never will throw off the fear of God who hears our vow;
And if Thou art well pleased to hear, come down and meet us now.

Thee, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, let all our hearts receive,
Present with Thy celestial host the peaceful answer give;
To each cov'nant the blood apply which takes our sins away,
And register our names on high and keep us to that day!

Public domain. Text: Charles Wesley, 1762. Hymn tune: *Kingsfold*, arr. R. Vaughan Williams.

May the God who established a covenant with those who seek to enter the kingdom be always present with you. **Amen.**

May Jesus Christ, who sealed the new covenant with His sacrifice on the cross, bring you peace. **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit of God guide your life, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Now, go in peace to love and serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. **Amen. Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

A thought about worship...

*"What humans could not attain because they could not raise themselves to God, God attained by descending to humans. . . . There can be no such thing as spirituality without God initiating relationship with human persons, a relationship that is traced back to the momentous event we celebrate as Christmas—God with us. But there is another side to spirituality that issues from the incarnation as well. That is the necessity of the human nature choosing to unite with God." (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004, 63.)*

Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community meets Sunday mornings at The Carmichael Chapel, 4600 Winding Way (Corner of Winding Way and Pasadena), Sacramento, CA 95841. Informal gathering: 10:00 AM; Worship at 10:30 AM.