



## Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

Sunday worship on is on  YouTube

The easiest way to find the link to the YouTube meeting each Sunday is to find the link on the Corps web page. Type.....

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ramsgate](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ramsgate) and select **Church on YouTube**

You can also find us by searching on YouTube and on the Ramsgate Facebook page.

**But we want to still “meet together”** and share our thoughts and prayers and testimonies. It will give a chance to share how God has spoken to us during the meeting – and allow us to encourage each other.

Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> 10 am	Ramsgate Church at Home (YouTube)
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> 11.15 am	ZOOM fellowship
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> 12 noon	ZOOM Youth Group
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> 4.30 pm	ZOOM Children’s Church Kids Club (up to 11 years)
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> 7.30pm	APEST
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> 7pm	ZOOM Bible study
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> 7pm	ZOOM Social

## Advance notice

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> 7pm

Corps Council (yes we have put it back a week because of APEST)

## Ramsgate ZOOM 8651865167

If you have no internet that we are providing each week's service on a DVD which we will deliver to you.



Please let us know if you **do not want** a DVD each week.

Also tell us if you **need help** watching the DVDs we are sending.



There is a full day of activities on Fortress Radio.

<https://www.fortressradio.online/listen-now.html>

## Songs of Praise Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January 13.15pm

Gospel Singer of the Year - Semi-Final

Mark De-Lisser hosts the semi-final of a brand new competition to find the Gospel Singer of the Year, with three celebrity judges deciding who will make it into next week's final.



## Holocaust Memorial Day Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> 2pm

As we explained last week, this year's HMD was very different to previous events. Yet the on-line recording of the service has had over 400 views and the ZOOM service was attended by another 60 or so – including local Mayors and those from Bromley and Croydon. Feedback has been positive. We pray that we have shone more of God's light into this dark world.



Loving God, we come to you with heavy hearts, remembering the six million Jewish souls murdered during the Holocaust.

In the horrors of that history, when so many groups were targeted because of their identity, and in genocides which followed, we recognise destructive prejudices that drive people apart.

Forgive us when we give space to fear, negativity and hatred of others, simply because they are different from us.

In the light of God, we see everyone as equally precious manifestations of the Divine, and can know the courage to face the darkness.

Through our prayers and actions, help us to stand together with those who are suffering, so that light may banish all darkness, love will prevail over hate and good will triumph over evil. Amen

**Maggie** is available with the constant prayer line where you can call or text for prayer. You can contact her on 07840 753 603

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.



### **Birthdays**

Heather	31 January
Beryl Jones	2-February
Annie Lade	4- February
Daniel Akinleye	6- February

## Prayers please for

For the family and friends whose funeral will be in Birmingham on Monday. Pray especially for his grandmother **Inga**. We have not been able to attend but have sent tributes on behalf of the Corps and those in the rough sleeping community.

For the family of Jan Penfold suffering with Covid, we continue to pray for **Muriel** recovering at home, for **Grant** and **Al** and **David** all waiting for medical treatment. For **Joyce Hill** what has been unwell this week. For full recovery for **Kate**. Continued prayers for **Paul**, son of Hazel and for **Archie**, Lisa and Scott. We thank God that **Mo's father** has made a recovery. For Janet who is feeling unwell.

And finally the family and friends of **Liz Harden** following her funeral on Thursday.

This week is **Children's Mental Health Week**.



Take a moment to pray for children facing mental health issues amidst the pandemic.

Dear Heavenly Father,

You mention in your Word that children are a blessing. Indeed they are! Every child differs from another, yet you created them and know them by name. Thank you for the gift of children and giving us adults the incredible opportunity of being surrounded by them. I pray for children who are struggling with their mental health. I intercede for them right now asking that you would fill them with joy and show them they are wonderfully made. I pray that all who are raising a child – whether at home or in school - with mental illness would be patient in loving them and seek the support they may need.

May you bless these families and guide them in Jesus name      AMEN!

## Thoughts from Major John

### Attitude

When driving down Margate Road I usually glance at the wayside pulpit in front of St. Mark's Church, particularly if I have to stop at the traffic lights there. Recently the message has been 'A bad attitude is like a flat tyre. You won't get far until you change it.'

On Tuesday evening in bible study, we were looking at Jesus through a number of scriptures and were building up a picture of his personality and character. One of the readings was the well-known reading from Philippians 2 verses 1-11. In verse 5 it tells us...

'Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.'

Who being very nature God,  
Did not consider equality with God  
Something to be grasped,  
but made himself nothing,  
Taking the very nature of a servant,  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
He humbled himself  
And became obedient death –  
Even death on a cross!

Christ's character was marked by humility. Let us get rid of any bad attitudes and let us imitate Christ's humility. Another aspect and quality of Christ's character was compassion. So often we read in the Gospels that Jesus 'was filled with compassion' when he met the sick, the needy and the oppressed. A favourite devotional band selection of mine from years ago is 'The Compassionate Christ', from memory I think it was written by Dean Goffin. It is based on the hymn tune Stephanos, and the song words I associate with it are found in 228 in the old song book. I was surprised to find it is not in the present song book.

Art thou weary, art thou languid,  
Art thou sore distressed?  
Come to me, saith he, and coming  
Be at rest.

Hath he marks to lead me to him  
If he be my guide?  
In his feet and hands are wound prints,  
And his side.

If I ask him to receive me,  
Will he say me nay?  
Not till earth and not till Heaven  
Pass away.  
(verses 1,2 and6)

Humility and compassion are two beautiful hallmarks of Christ's character. I looked up this week the words of one of Graham Kendrick's lovely songs. I think they make a beautiful prayer if we want that humble and compassionate attitude that Jesus displayed.

Soften my heart, Lord,  
Soften my heart.  
From all indifference  
Set me apart,  
To feel your compassion,  
To weep with Your tears;  
Come soften my heart, Lord,  
Soften my heart.

## Time to Smile

Three men were waiting expectantly outside the maternity ward of the hospital. After a few minutes, a nurse came out to tell the first man: 'Congratulations. You are the father of twins.'

'Twins!' he said. 'How about that? I work for Doublemint Chewing Gum Company!'

A few minutes later, a nurse came out to tell the second man: 'Congratulations. You are the father of triplets.'

'Triplets!' he said. 'What an amazing coincidence! I work for the 3M Organisation!'

The third man stood up ashen faced and muttered: 'Help! I need some air. I work for 7-up!'

A little boy was performing in the school play when suddenly he fell through a large crack between the floorboards.

The audience gasped, but the boy's mum calmly turned to her friend and said: 'Don't worry, it's just a stage he's going through.'

## Cross Breeds

What do you get when you cross:

A cocker spaniel, a poodle, and a rooster? A Cockerpoodledoo.

An elephant and a skin doctor? A pachydermatologist.

A humming bird with a doorbell? A humdinger.

An owl and a goat? A hootenanny

A duck with a firework? A firequacker.

A wood pecker and a carrier pigeon? A bird that knocks before delivering it's message.

A clown with a goat? A silly billy.

## Quiz

- 1.What term describes a with two or more colours?
- 2.Which years measure distance in space?
- 3.Which English county was part of the name of a horse that collapsed in sight of victory in the Grand National?
- 4.In sport, what word can go after Trent and Stamford?
- 5.Patrick Troughton followed William Hartnell to play which character in a long running TV series?

## Sounds of the Seventies

- 1.Julie Covington had a UK number 1 with a song from which Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical?
- 2.'Matchstick Men and Matchstick Cats and Dogs' was about which artist?
- 3.With which song did Brotherhood of Man win the Eurovision Song Contest?
- 4.Which member of the Dad's Army cast had a number 1 hit record?
- 5.'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing' was later used to advertise which drink?

Anagrams OT Bible books

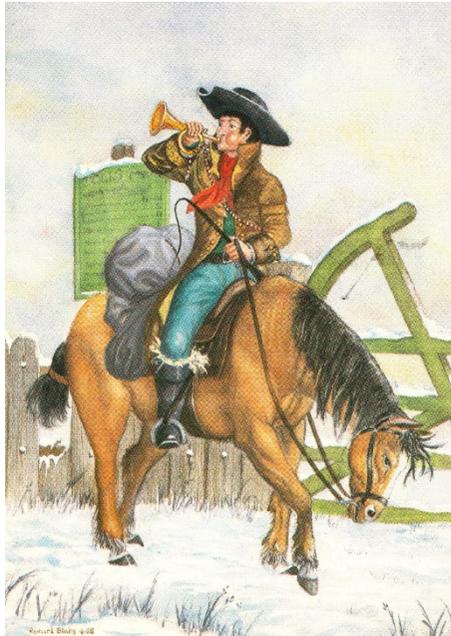
- 1.USEDOX 2. VISITCLUE 3.NAILED 4.NOMINALTASTE 5.HAZEPHINA

<p><b>Answers</b></p> <p><b>Quiz</b></p> <p>1.Variegated 2.Light Years 3.Devon 4.Bridge 5.Dr Who</p> <p><b>Sounds of the Seventies</b></p> <p>1.Evita 2.Lowry 3.Save your kisses for me 4.Clive Dunn 5.Coca Cola</p> <p><b>Anagrams</b></p> <p>1.EXODUS 2.LEVITICUS 3.DANIEL 4.LAMENTATIONS 5.ZEPHANIAH</p>
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# POST BOY ROBBED. 1817.

Friday, 5, November. A daring robbery was committed between Ramsgate and Sandwich near Cliffs End, by two footpads, \* who attacked a post boy belonging to Mr. Fowler named Challis, the young man with intrepidity made a highly creditable resistance. The first villain knocked him down, when an accomplice rushed forward and brought the post boy to the ground. They beat him most unmercifully and succeeded in robbing him of near five pounds. The villains escaped with their booty. A few nights afterwards two men stopped a labourer near Minster and enquired of him the hour and on his replying "he did not know having no watch" they left him from their appearance it is supposed they were the same persons who robbed the post boy before mentioned.

\* A footpad. A highway robber on foot as opposed to a highway man who was mounted.



Thanks to David Richards for this glimpse into the past.



# Covenant

Made at the Memorial Service for General William Booth,  
Olympia, Wednesday, August 28, 1912



**H** GOD, my Father, my Preserver, and my King, through Jesus Christ my Precious Saviour, with fear and reverence I come into Thy Sacred Presence, resolved, by the help of Thy Holy Spirit, to make a Solemn Covenant with Thee, which with all my heart I desire shall never be broken.

Here and now, Blessed Lord, I again take Thee to be my God;

Here and now, Blessed Christ, I again take Thee to be my Saviour;

Here and now, Blessed Spirit, I again accept Thee as the Sanctifier, the Guide, and the Guardian of my soul.

Blessed Jesus, the world despises Thee, but I glory in Thee;

The world hates Thee, but I adore Thee;

The world rejects Thee, but I welcome Thee to the throne of my heart.

Oh, my God, bowed before Thee once more, in this solemn assembly, and in the presence of the Holy Angels, I lay myself, and all I possess or hope for, unreservedly at Thy Feet, to be used for Thy Glory, for the extension of Thy Kingdom, and for the Salvation of a poor perishing world.

And here again, my Gracious Lord, I promise to love Thee with all my heart, to obey Thee with all my strength, to follow Thee all the way to my life's journey's end, to trust Thee in prosperity and adversity, in joy and in sorrow, so long as life shall last.

By Thy Grace, I will and do now trust Thee, my Saviour, to cleanse my soul by Thy Precious Blood from all unrighteousness, and rely upon Thee to keep me pure for evermore; and by Thy Grace I trust Thee, my Father, whose Providence has brought me thus far on my way to Heaven, to overrule all things for my good, and to keep and guide me to the end; and by Thy Grace I Promise and Covenant with Thee to be faithful. And now, oh, my Lord, Thou hast my all. Thou art my God, and I am Thy servant, Thy soldier, and Thy child.

Glory be to the FATHER, and to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST; and let the Covenant I here make on earth be registered in Heaven.

'High Heaven, that hears this solemn vow,  
This vow renewed shall daily hear,  
Till in life's latest hour I bow,  
And bless in death a bond so dear.'

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual Disciplines – February 2021

Since the beginning of the Church, Christians have made a link between the love we have for God and neighbour, and some ‘intentional practices’. Things like reading our Bibles, praying, meeting together for worship and teaching. It has always been true that the desire the early Christians had to know and love God prompted a commitment to ‘spiritual disciplines’. To keep company with Jesus.

I heard of a dog walker the other day, (it was not Major John!) who told of about all the accidents their dog had. He’d scratched his cornea on a branch, been bitten twice by other dogs, and had broken his leg by falling in a ditch. ‘He’s so accident-prone,’ said her owner.

A rabbi taught that experiences of God can never be planned or achieved.  
“They are spontaneous moments of grace, almost accidental.”

His student asked, “Rabbi, if God-realisation is just accidental, why do we work so hard doing all these spiritual practices?”

The rabbi replied, “To be as accident-prone as possible.”

The man’s dog wouldn’t have scratched his eye unless he went exploring in the undergrowth. He wouldn’t have been bitten unless he was playing with other dogs. He wouldn’t have broken his leg unless he went leaping over ditches. Obviously, all of these were painful and undesired experiences. But, they illustrate something of the rabbi’s quote. Fido (not his real name!) was accident-prone because he went to places where he might meet ditches, branches, and ‘bitey’ dogs. Spiritual disciplines are intentional ways of meeting with God. Of opening our eyes and ears to see and hear what God is doing there and then.

Christians have always been intentional since the beginning of church - deliberately giving space in their lives to keep company with Jesus. But these spiritual disciplines are not ways of scoring brownie-points with God. They are

not coins in a vending machine of miracles. They are not the way to Heaven. There's nothing you can do to make God love you more, just like there's nothing you can do to make God love you less!

Spiritual Disciplines, simply, put us in a place where we notice God at work. A place where we can keep company with Him. And when we do that, we discover what we are living for! What covenant partnership work we've got to do. We discover what God says to us about our identity, about how loved we are.

I wonder what your go-to spiritual disciplines are. What are the practices you engage in to keep company with Jesus? How do they help you keep company with God?

In today's Bible Passage, Jesus gives us a great model. He spends the night praying – keeping company with his Father. Then he goes to spend time in community – with his disciples. And then he meets people who have come to hear his message of good news or have come to be healed.

We find Luke's account of 24 hours with Jesus here. He spends the night in solitude. Then in the morning, he forms a community. In the afternoon, with them, he preached the gospel and healed the sick.

Author Richard Foster divides the spiritual disciplines into Inward disciplines – practiced in the privacy of our intimate walk with Jesus. Outward disciplines – affect how we live with the world. Corporate disciplines – practised with others. These are helpfully demonstrated by Jesus here in Luke 6.

We are sharing in a Year of Spiritual Disciplines.

We are going to introduce a different one each month for you to practice and follow. For this last month, we shared the practice of the Examen (an inward discipline) which is a way of reflecting on and reviewing the past day prayerfully.

The Examen requires you to be vulnerable before God. Days you'd prefer to forget – running through them is not always a comfortable experience. Yet, that's what makes it powerful. Simply, the Examen is choosing to stop and reflect and listen to what God might be saying to you about that day. Have you had moments of clarity – God gently telling you something about your character, or revealing something of himself and of faith, or of comfort. Have you had evenings where you couldn't be bothered!

Hopefully you have found a moment at the end of every day, in the company of Jesus, to reflect on the day just past.

***If you have tried it over the last month, let me know your thoughts!***

The next month we will be practising the spiritual discipline of compassion (an outward discipline). I'd encourage you to pick something up for February.

The only criteria is that it is something that helps you keep company with Jesus! Make a plan. And keep to it for the next month.

Here's God's promise: 'Come near to God and he will come near to you.'  
(James 4:8)

Here's a plan for practising compassion. Work out what the purpose of your spiritual discipline is – how will it help you keep company with Jesus? And then how will you do it?

What is it?

We need a compassion revolution at the moment. The world is a competitive place. Just look at the rows over vaccines this week, or think back to the panic-buying of the first lockdown. Human beings compete over resources, opportunities, education, jobs, relationships and the basic essentials. This cut-throat, dog eat dog, survival of the fittest business inflicts pain. The world is full of the walking wounded. These wounds can be self-inflicted, or come

from others, or the system they find themselves in. And people are overlooked.

The Biblical word for compassion is 'rakhum'. The word is related to the Hebrew word for 'womb' – 'rekhem'. Compassion comes from our core. It's like the maternal care for a vulnerable infant. We read that Jesus was 'moved with compassion' when he met people who were overlooked – the walking wounded. He felt it from his very core. When, in Luke 7, a religious leader judges a woman he doesn't even know, Jesus says, 'Simon, do you see this woman?' Simon sees only appearances. He didn't feel any compassion. Jesus really sees the hungry, the poor, the grieving, the mentally ill, the physically sick, and the marginalised. It doesn't stop there. He then acts: feeds the hungry, welcomes the children, heals the sick, restores the marginalised. The early church took the spiritual discipline of compassion very seriously. They shocked the Roman empire with their compassion in the midst of plagues and war and persecution.

This month, intentionally practise compassion. Aim to offer others a taste of God's life-changing love.

How might you do it?

1. When you read the Bible, try and see the story from one of the character's perspectives. How would it have felt to be them? What can you see from this person's perspective? What might their prayer have been?
2. Choose one way to show compassion to someone this week. After you have done this, talk to God about how it felt to do this.
3. Draw up a list of people who serve you: colleagues, medical professionals, refuse collectors, postman, supermarket staff. Reflect on how it is for them to do their jobs at the moment, in this lockdown. Is there any way of showing them compassion? What is God saying to you through that list?
4. Is God reminding you about someone who is often overlooked? How can you show them compassion?

5. Ask people close to you these 3 questions: What is it like to be with me? When I'm in a group, do I show an interest in others? Do I mostly talk about myself? Reflect on what you've learnt about yourself?

"Ask me not where I live and what I like to eat. Ask me what I am living for and what I think is keeping me from living fully for that." —Thomas Merton

"Perhaps somewhere in the subterranean chambers of your life you have heard the call to deeper, fuller living. You have become weary of frothy experiences and shallow teaching. Every now and then you have caught glimpses, hints of something more than you have known. Inwardly you long to launch out into the deep." —Richard J. Foster

### Church at Home 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020



#### Covenant Week 4: Saved to Serve

You are here, moving in our midst  
I worship You, I worship You  
You are here, working in this place  
I worship You, I worship You

*You are way maker, miracle worker, promise keeper,  
Light in the darkness  
My God, that is who You are -You are*

You are here, touching every heart  
I worship You, I worship You  
You are here, healing every heart  
Healing every heart  
Oh, I worship You, Jesus, I worship You

You're turning lives around  
You are here, oh, turning lives around  
I worship You, I worship You  
You mended every heart  
You are here, and You are mending every heart  
I worship You, yeah, I worship You

Even when I don't see it, You're working  
Even when I don't feel it, You're working  
You never stop, You never stop working)

His name is above depression  
His name is above loneliness  
Oh, His name is above disease  
His name is above cancer  
His name is above every other name - Yes it is  
  
That is who You are.

### **Psalm 117**

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples.

<sup>2</sup> For great is his love toward us,  
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

Praise the LORD.

## **An opening prayer**

Heavenly Father,

We are gathered in your name and know you are among us.

Help us to be fully present here,  
attentive to your word and Spirit,  
awake to the needs of your world.

As we meet with you, transform us to be more like you.

As we see your hope, make us a hopeful people.

As we see your mercy, make us a merciful people.

As we see your love, make us a loving people.

As we see your vision, make us a visionary people.

We ask all of this for your glory in the name of Jesus

Amen.

### **Song Number 241**

And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died he for me who caused his pain,  
For me who him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

2 He left his Father's throne above,  
So free, so infinite his grace,  
Emptied himself of all but love  
And bled for Adam's helpless race.  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For, O my God, it found out me.

3 Long my imprisoned spirit lay  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;  
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.  
My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

4 No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in him, is mine.  
Alive in him, my living head,

And clothed in righteousness divine,  
Bold I approach the eternal throne  
And claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

### **A time of prayer – this week using our hands**

To aid our focus whilst praying, we will make and hold physical positions with our hands. We do this to engage our bodies within our prayers, allowing our minds to focus more freely on what we are praying about.

#### **Praying Hands**

First place your palms and fingers flat together, with your hands pointing upwards; in the position traditionally adopted to pray

*We come to be still before God*

*Our hands together, stopping us undertaking physical work.*

*We take up the work of an intercessor, bringing our earthly concerns before our Heavenly Father*

‘Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness.

You set me at liberty when I was in trouble;

Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.’

[Psalm 4.1]

#### **Fists**

Separate your hands, and clench them together to form fists.

Hold them as tightly as you can, so that your focus is on your fists.

*We pray for those parts of the world afflicted by violence.*

*We remember those in violent relationships.*

*Where talking has been replaced by fighting.*

*Where peace has been replaced by aggression and unrest.*

#### **Wounded hand**

Open both your fists. Hold your left hand so your palm faces towards you.

Take the index finger on your right hand and push it hard into the centre of your left palm.

**Jesus’ hands were pierced as he was crucified**

**‘He was the one who carried our sicknesses  
and endured the torment of our sufferings.’ (Isaiah 53:4)**

*We pray for those suffering, sick, depressed, grieving, anxious,  
disappointed, and in pain*

### **Open hands**

Open both of your hands, hold them open in front of you with your palms facing upwards.

*We recognise that all of humanity needs to receive good things.  
God provides for each of us physically, emotionally and  
spiritually*

*We ask God now for the things we need, and the things needed  
by others.*

### **Holding hands**

Turn over your left hand, with your right hand gently take hold of your left as if holding someone else's hand.

**'The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone.'**

**Genesis 2:18**

*We pray over all of us who are missing human interaction, for  
the lonely and the isolated.*

### **Praying hands**

We return our hands to the first position we held. Palms and fingers flat together, hands pointing upwards; the position traditionally adopted for prayer.

We remember God's promise to hear our prayers

Praying to the Father, in the name of the Son by the power of  
the Holy Spirit.

### **Song Number 243**

Before the throne of God above,  
I have a strong, a perfect plea,  
A great High Priest whose name is Love,  
Whoever lives and pleads for me.  
My name is graven on his hands,  
My name is written on his heart;  
I know that while in Heaven he stands  
No tongue can bid me thence depart,  
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

2 When Satan tempts me to despair,  
And tells me of the guilt within,  
Upward I look and see him there

Who made an end to all my sin.  
Because the sinless Saviour died,  
My sinful soul is counted free;  
For God the just is satisfied  
To look on him and pardon me,  
To look on him and pardon me.

3 Behold him there! the risen Lamb,  
My perfect, spotless righteousness;  
The great unchangeable I Am,  
The King of Glory and of grace!  
One with himself I cannot die,  
My soul is purchased with his blood;  
My life is hid with Christ on high,  
With Christ my Saviour and my God,  
With Christ my Saviour and my God

### Message

What happened on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 1986?

I know you think that was the date of my birth ...oh no some of you know that was not true especially as I read in the newsletter that my birthday is today!!!

It was a very exciting day for me though and one that I remember feeling extremely nervous about. Maybe it was the huge crowd of people I was to face but I think it was due to the extremely serious vows I was going to make. **I CALL UPON THESE PERSONS HERE PRESENT TO WITNESS THAT I, Heather , DO TAKE THEE, Carl. , TO BE MY LAWFUL WEDDED HUSBAND, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and**



**to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and this I declare upon my honour as a true soldier of Jesus Christ.**

And then we exchanged rings

. ...a sign of everlasting love.

This actually is my third ring....I've lost two...fortunately not lost Carl and now I have a ring so tight fitting that I can hardly get it off!

Everlasting love.... That sounds like God's love!

And the rest: to have and to hold, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part....well actually God promises much more than that and in our reading from Hebrews today we discover that.

Many times God likened his relationship to his people as a marriage and last week in our reading from Jeremiah 31: 32 *They broke my covenant though I have been a husband to them.* ‘

Over the last few weeks we have looked at covenants God has made with his chosen people. Great promises were made God and in return by the people committing themselves to abide by the covenant. (Exodus 19:8, ‘We will do everything the Lord has said.’) However, for each group of people the keeping of the covenant was often short-lived. In fact time after time the people broke God's heart by abandoning him and choosing to go their own way, often worship idols and living lives that were totally against the way God intended. His relationship with his peoples was not a happy relationship. The wife was unfaithful in every way. But God continued to love and God continued to forgive. (Jeremiah 31:34, ‘*For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.*’) and there was a promise a new covenant with his people, a covenant when the people would all know God, and would have God's law internalised by receiving God's spirit and would be forgiven for their sins once and for all.

Arthur Conan Doyle, famous for his Sherlock stories, volunteered as a Doctor in South Africa during the Boer War. He described a ‘small detachment of British

troops, surprised by an overwhelming enemy force, who fell back under heavy fire. Their wounded lay in a perilous position, facing certain death. They all realised they had to come immediately under the protection of a Red Cross flag if they wanted to survive. All they had was a piece of white cloth, but no red paint. So they used the blood from their wounds to make a large cross on that white cloth. Their attackers respected that grim flag as it was held aloft, and the British wounded were brought to safety.’ The blood they had lost saved their lives. Bloodshed ended up being their salvation.

This is a good introduction to the new covenant which we read about in

### **Hebrews 9: 11-15 The Blood of Christ**

**<sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. <sup>12</sup> He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining<sup>1</sup> eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup> The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. <sup>14</sup> How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.**

#### **Song Number 526**

What can wash away my sin?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
What can keep me always clean?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

*O precious is the flow  
That makes me white as snow!  
No other fount I know,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

2 For my cleansing this I see,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
For my pardon this my plea,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

3 Nothing can for sin atone,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Naught of good that I have done,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

4 This is all my hope and peace,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
This is all my righteousness,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
*Robert Lowry (1826-1899)*

We are not sure who wrote Hebrews or who the audience is.

Early on in the letter the author says he had a first-hand relationship with the disciples who were around Jesus ..so we know it is anchored in the teaching of the apostles.

As to the audience, we don't know who they are or where they live . We do know that the writer assumes they have knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures , especially the first five books which make up the Jewish scriptures, the Torah. The writer assumes knowledge of the story of Abraham and his family, the Israelites Exodus from Egypt and the journey through the Wilderness. It is thought then that this letter was written to Jewish Christians who we gather are suffering persecution for their belief in Jesus and are tempted to give up their faith and go back to their old ways.

Hebrews main message is to elevate Jesus as superior to anyone and anything else and to show that he is worthy of total trust and devotion. The other main purpose of this book is to encourage the believers to remain faithful. There are many strong warnings not to abandon him.

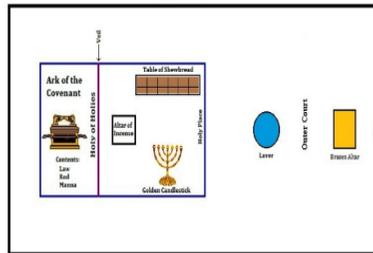
Early in letter we have seen that Jesus is superior to angels and all other messengers of God's word, he is the son of God. The son of God gave up his place

in heaven to become a human ....and even more astounding, a human that was to be killed.

Lets consider our reading in Hebrews 9: 11

The audience are reminded about Moses who led God’s people through the wilderness and who built a tabernacle for God to live in as they journeyed to the promised land

To help us have a look at the diagram of the tabernacle



This Tabernacle was a tent that housed the ark of the covenant, the place where the ten commandment tablets would be stored. It also contained Aron’s rod and a pot of manna ( food from the wilderness). It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. It was 3’9” long, 2’3” wide and 2’3” high. On top was a beautiful mercy seat made of gold with cherubim at each end facing at each other. Acacia poles overlaid with gold were used for carrying the ark through the desert. When they found a place to settle, the ark was covered by 10 strips of linen cloth, blue, purple and crimson . The tent- like structure had two rooms. The rooms were divided by a veil and the ark of the covenant was in the far section. No one was allowed in here except the high priests and them only once a year. This was where God lived.

In the other part, priests would be, looking after the twelve loaves of bread on the table and burning incense at the altar in the light of the burning wicks from the lampstand.

People could not enter the tabernacle, priests were their representatives. People would bring offerings to God and once a year on the day of atonement, animals were sacrificed and the high priest would enter the holy of holies and sprinkle blood on the ark of the covenant. In so doing he became a mediator between God and the people to seek forgiveness for their sins

Throughout Hebrew we are told that the new covenant will be better than the old and this is why...

## WE ARE SAVED BY

### 1. THE PERFECT SACRIFICE : JESUS HAS DIED ONCE AND FOR ALL

The new covenant was that Jesus would be the ultimate sacrifice once and for all. Instead of sins being placed on an animal and sacrificed every year, Jesus died for everyone's sin. His death on the cross was for the whole world, for us, for you and me. He has paid the price for whatever we do wrong.

Nicky Gumbel tells a story to help understand what this means Two people went through school and university together and developed a close friendship. Life went on and they went their separate ways and lost contact. One went on to become a judge, while the other's life spiralled downwards and he ended up as a criminal. One day the criminal appeared before the judge. He had committed a crime to which he pleaded guilty. The judge recognised his old friend and faced the dilemma, which, in effect, God faces.

He was a judge so he had to be just; he couldn't simply let the man off. On the other hand, he wanted to be merciful, because he loved his friend. So he fined him the correct penalty for the offence. That was *justice*. Then he came down from his position as judge and wrote a cheque for the amount of the fine. He gave it to his friend, saying that he would pay the penalty for him. That was an act of *mercy*, love and sacrifice.

The illustration is not an exact one. The relationship is closer – your Father in heaven loves us more than any earthly parent loves their child. And the cost is greater. It cost God far more than money – he came himself, in the person of Jesus, and paid the penalty of sin to save us from death. Jesus Christ, and pays the penalty for us. Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, God is both just and merciful.

## 2. PERFECT CLEANSING

The blood of the animals was seen as a way of purification of sin, washing, cleansing but the writer of Hebrews tells us it this bloodshed and animal sacrifice system couldn't get to the root of the problem. It didn't purify their hearts. However, Jesus not only washes away or sins but takes away guilt and shame too. It talk about reaching our inner depth of consciences, the core of who we are. I love it that God forgets our sin. We are cleansed by the fire of the Holy Spirit coming within us and empowering us for a new life, a new start, new people, new birth.

## 3.THE PERFECT SANCTUARY : GOD'S PRESENCE WITH US

He makes it possible for us to come into God's presence. As Jesus died on the cross, there was an earthquake and the huge curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom. This symbolised that Jesus was making it possible for all people to come into the presence of God. No longer was it restricted to a high priest. The holy of holies, the place where God abides is no longer restricted to a tent but is a heavenly place, not made with human hands, an everlasting place, greater and perfect place.

*Verse 24 'Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.'*

I'm sure the arc of the covenant was lovely but heaven.....wow!

And as part of this new covenant we see that those who are called, in other words , those who are forgiven and cleansed, saved. they may receive the promised eternal inheritance, everlasting life. This promised eternal inheritance might lead us to think about going to Heaven when we die; but as Jesus himself suggested, eternal life is not just about living forever but about knowing God and the quality of the life that we live now.

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.'

*This is not a future hope, but a present reality, a living of the life of Heaven here on earth, free from the sins committed under the first covenant (Hebrews 9:15).*

So we have seen how the new covenant offers us salvation.

What next? Verse 14 gives us our what next. Saved *‘so that we may serve the living God’*. Saved *so that the fractured partnership is restored*. Saved *that we can join with God in bringing His Kingdom in*.

SAVED TO SERVE.

If you are a soldier, you’ll have epaulettes marked with ‘S’ and ‘S’. Saved to Serve. And if you’re not a soldier – you’re still saved to serve the living God!

Service Augustine wrote that God was the master *‘whom to serve is perfect freedom’*. This is seems a great paradox....or does it

At the age of eighteen, Billy Nolan ran away from the merchant navy. He was an alcoholic for thirty-five years. For twenty years he sat outside a church drinking alcohol and begging for money. On 13 May 1990, he looked in the mirror and said, *‘You’re not the Billy Nolan I once knew.’* To use his own expression, he asked the Lord Jesus Christ into his life and made a covenant with him that he would never drink alcohol again. From that day on, he didn’t touch a drop. His life was transformed; he radiated the love and joy of Christ. When asked about his happiness he replied, *‘I am happy because I am free. Life is like a maze and at last I have found the way out through Jesus Christ.’*

Many people think that if they serve God they will lose their freedom. In fact, it is the very opposite. Living for ourselves is, in fact, a form of slavery. Serving God *‘in the new way of the Spirit’* (Romans 7:6) is the way to find perfect freedom – free to have a relationship with him and to be the kind of person that deep down you long to be.

However, *‘It is for freedom that Christ has set us free’* (Galatians 5:1) –

Who do you long to be?

What enslaves you?

What do you want to be free from?

I want to go back to my marriage vows just for a moment?

You see this new covenant, God becoming a human form sacrificed for us is because he loves us and wants us to be able to live with him....a marriage. However, we turn out to be! He does want to have and to hold us from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, for ever. .God wants us to have and hold him from this day forward. Of course we would be silly not to want this partnership wouldn't we. After all life with God would be better, richer, healthier.

So surely we should love and cherish him for ever. I believe that is called worship! His love is unconditional. He gives his love knowing our love will never be as strong, he gives his love freely, generously, always.

Do you believe God's love is strong enough to forgive our greatest sins? It is  
Do you believe our God's love is strong enough to keep us from sinning? It is

### **Luke 15: The Parable of the Lost Son**

<sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

<sup>13</sup> "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup> "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

<sup>21</sup> "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

<sup>22</sup> "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27</sup> ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

<sup>28</sup> “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

<sup>31</sup> “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Our Father God is a God that just wants us to be with him. This could be the story of the broken covenants over and over again but God lavishes his love on us.

Receive his love today. This beautiful worship song may be unknown to you to sing so read it out as a poem, and hear Jesus calling you.

Are you hurting and broken within?  
Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin? Jesus is calling  
Have you come to the end of yourself?  
Do you thirst for a drink from the well? Jesus is calling

O come to the altar  
The Father's arms are open wide  
Forgiveness was bought with  
The precious blood of Jesus Christ

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes  
Come today - there's no reason to wait. Jesus is calling  
Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy  
From the ashes a new life is born. Jesus is calling

O come to the altar  
The Father's arms are open wide  
Forgiveness was bought with  
The precious blood of Jesus Christ

Oh what a Saviour! Isn't He wonderful  
Sing alleluia, Christ is risen  
Bow down before Him  
For He is Lord of all

Sing alleluia, Christ is risen  
Bear your cross as you wait for the crown  
Tell the world of the treasure you've found

Take some time now – reflecting on what it means for you to serve God in this  
next week to come

If you're a soldier in The Salvation Army, you might like to re-read your covenant

After your time of reflection, pray about your service this week

### **Songsters sing**

See how the world groans beneath sins spell,  
Lord who will go? Lord who will go?  
Someone must care for them, someone tell,  
Tell of Christ, tell of his pow'r, to set men free.

Chorus

*Here am I my Lord,  
Send me, send me,  
I am wanting to be what you want me to be.  
Use me when and wherever and how you best see,  
Here am I my Lord, send me!*

How can I go with my sin and shame?  
Great God on high, Lord who am I?  
Cleansed now my heart, with the living flame,  
Make me pure, oh make me strong, Lord I will go!

Make me a servant to serve just you,  
Lord I'll obey, use me I pray.  
Teach me to speak may my life ring true  
All my words, and all my actions pleasing you

## **Song Number 613**

O Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end; be thou for ever near me, my Master and my Friend: I shall not fear the battle if thou art by my side, nor wander from the pathway if thou wilt be my guide.

O let me feel thee near me: the world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;  
my foes are ever near me, around me, and within;  
but, Jesus, draw thou nearer, and shield my soul from sin

O let me hear thee speaking in accents clear and still, above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;  
O speak, and make me listen, thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised to all who follow thee,  
that where thou art in glory there shall thy servant be;  
and, Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end:  
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.

O let me see thy foot-marks, and in them plant mine own;  
My hope to follow duly is in thy strength alone:  
O guide me, call me, draw me, uphold me to the end;  
And then in heaven receive me, my Saviour and my Friend.

John Ernest Bode (1816-1874) *Charitie Lees Bancroft (1841-1923)*

## **Benediction**

Eternal God and Father,  
by whose power we are created and by whose love we are redeemed:  
guide and strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may give ourselves to your  
service,  
and live this day in love to one another and to you; through Jesus Christ your Son  
our Lord, Amen

## SOLDIER'S COVENANT

HAVING accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and desiring to fulfil my membership of His Church on earth as a soldier of The Salvation Army, I now by God's grace enter into a sacred covenant.

**I believe** and will live by the truths of the word of God expressed in The Salvation Army's eleven articles of faith:

**We believe** that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God: and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

**We believe** that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

**We believe** that there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost—undivided in essence and coequal in power and glory.

**We believe** that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

**We believe** that our first parents were created in a state of innocency. but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved. and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

**We believe** that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

**We believe** that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.

**We believe** that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

**We believe** that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

**We believe** that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**We believe** in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the

general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

## THEREFORE

**I will** be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible.

**I will** make the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.

**I will** uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

**I will** maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others: my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow Salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

**I will** uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life.

**I will** be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

**I will** abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult, and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

**I will** be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.

**I will** be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.

**I will** be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of Salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

**I now** call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

# Hebrews 9: 11-15



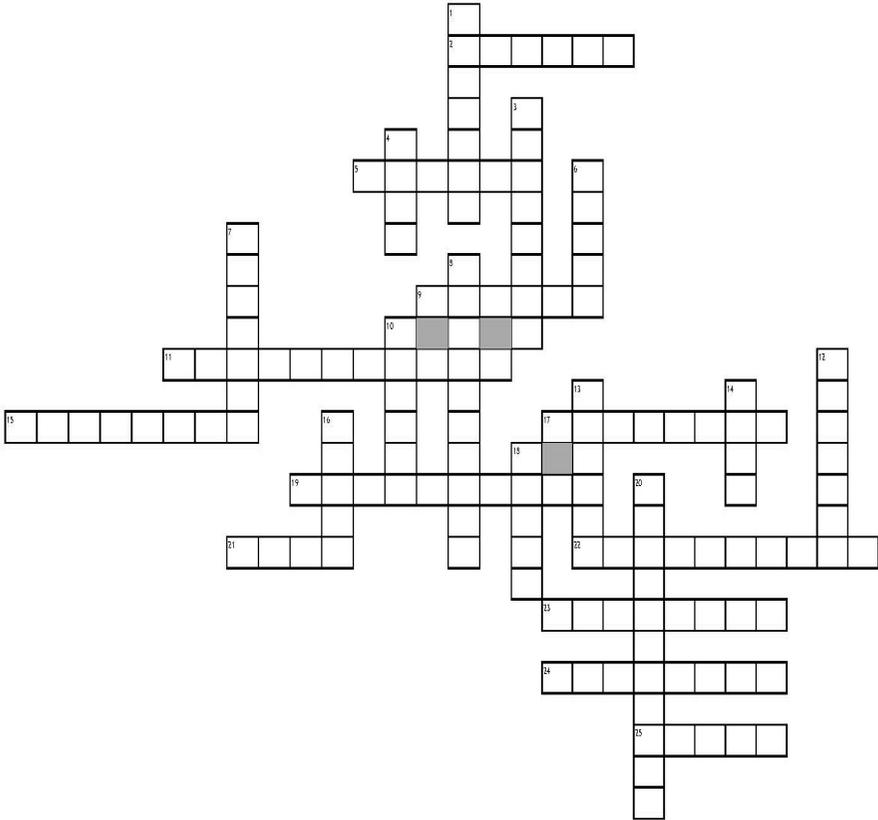
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BLOOD  
CEREMONIALLY  
CHRIST  
CLEANSE  
COMMITTED  
CONSCIENCES  
COVENANT  
CREATION  
ETERNAL  
GOD  
GOOD

GREATER  
HIGH PRIEST  
HOLY  
HUMAN  
INHERITANCE  
LIVING  
MEDIATOR  
OFFERED  
OUTWARDLY  
PERFECT  
PROMISED

RECEIVE  
REDEMPTION  
SANCTIFY  
SERVE  
SPIRIT  
SPRINKLED  
TABERNACLE  
UNBLEMISHED  
UNCLEAN

# Hebrews 9: 11-15



## Across

2. Alive now
5. The cause of an event or situation, or something suggested as an explanation:
9. A young cow that has not yet given birth to a calf
11. Has been made holy and is able to be used for religious ceremonies:
15. To scatter a few drops or small pieces of something:
17. The making of the world by God
19. The part of you that judges how moral your own actions are and makes you feel guilty about bad things that you have done or things you feel responsible for.
21. A chemical element (au) that is a valuable, shiny, yellow metal used to make coins and jewellery
22. For the Jews in ancient times, a type of tent moved from place to place and used for worship.
23. A formal agreement or promise between two or more people:
24. A person who tries to end a disagreement by helping the two sides to talk about and agree on a solution:
25. A person

## Down

1. To make something completely clean
3. To make something or someone holy
4. Something that serves to cover, conceal, or disguise.
6. A type of table used in ceremonies in a religious building
7. A substance that is burnt to produce a sweet smell, especially as part of a religious ceremony
8. When someone is saved from evil, suffering, etc.
10. Baby cows
12. Lasting forever, or seeming to be without end:
13. A person who has been trained to perform religious duties
14. The most \_\_\_\_\_ place
16. Sent around the body by the heart
18. To go in
20. Has no faults

# GOING FORWARD

# together

LIVING IN GOD'S

## Covenant



VISION & COMMITMENT 2021

“This is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”  
Jeremiah 31:33 (NIV)

**Father God, on this day we celebrate your eternal love, grace and faithfulness. You are the promise maker, the covenant keeper to your people.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for your sacrifice at Calvary, your life blood poured out to seal the new covenant that our sins may be forgiven and we can receive salvation.**

**Holy Spirit, please empower us each day to live as a covenanted people, to give our lives and our choices freely to God.**

“By the love that never ceased to hold me,  
By the blood which thou didst shed for me,  
While thy presence and thy power enfold me,  
I renew my covenant with thee.”

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed

\*Will J. Brand, SASB 634

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