

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER FAMILIES: Pray for all those who need healing, or have health issues. Specifically, pray for Clarine Nelson who is struggling with Cancer, Karen Dolsey and others. Also continue to pray for those in Ukraine and other areas of the world where people are suffering.

FUNERAL SERVICES: For Elaine Know will be held at the church on January 5th. Visitation will be from 10am to 11:30am. The Funeral Service will begin at 11:30am.

MISSION OUTREACH: Is collecting bingo prizes for nursing homes in BRF. Suggested prizes can be found by the gift box & on the Mission Outreach bulletin board. Donations will be collected through January 4. Thank you for sharing the spirit of the season.

UMC of WISCONSIN'S VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION: Is putting together a group to go to Marion Alabama, February 4-12, 2023 to partner with a Marion group to do home repair. More information available on the mission outreach bulletin board. If interested contact Charlene Galston, 715-896-9055.

SCRIP CARDS: When you are thinking of ideas for gift giving or personal use, consider Scrip cards. Stop at the gathering area on Sundays or call Marcia at 715-284-3346

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CONNECTIONS: resume January 11th. 4:45pm – 6pm

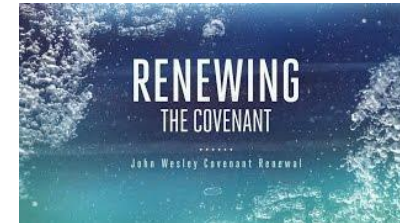
CHILDREN'S SCHOOL: begins Wednesday, January 11th, at 6-6:45pm

USHERS/GREETERS:

THIS WEEK AT THE CHURCH:

Wednesday: Pre-Con	5-6pm
The Youth	6-7pm
Choir Practice	6-7pm
Bell Choir Practice	7-8pm
Saturday: United Methodist Men	8am

Black River Falls United Methodist Church



UMC Mission Statement:

“To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

PASTOR
ORGANIST
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rev. Inwha Shon
Matthew Schluntz
Amanda Lang

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brfumc at YouTube

WESLEY COVENANT SERVICE

First Sunday after Christmas

January 1, 2023

9AM

Liturgist: Chuck Devendorf

In 1775, John Wesley introduced a covenant service as an important part of spiritual life in the Methodist Societies. This renewal service was a time for the Methodists to gather annually in a time of self-examination, reflection, and dedication, wholly giving up themselves and renewing covenant with God. Repentance through confession and commitment was a key focus of the service, demanding humility from those willing to submit themselves to the dynamic words stated within the liturgy.

According to Wesley's journal, though the covenant renewal service was held on various occasions throughout the year, by the end of his life, the service was observed typically on or the Sunday nearest January 1st. The covenant renewal service is a practice that continues in churches and Christian communities today, often near the beginning of the new year. It has undergone many revisions and adaptations, but its purpose as an evocative ceremony of commitment to ongoing discipleship and Christ-like character has always remained intact.

PRELUDE

Matthew Schluntz

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Leader: It's a new year, Lord. Thank you for the grace you showed us last year. As we begin this New Year, we want a new relationship with you, a relationship status update, a fresh re-commitment to you help us take our today's prayers seriously. Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout the years.

Name the sins in your life. Reflect on whether you are willing to choose Christ's holy laws and strict commands. Be sure you are clear in all of these so you do not lie to God!

Leader: Second, uphold a serious spirit of holy awe and reverence.

People: Third, claim God's covenant. Do not trust in your own strength and power but rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength. In this way, He will empower you to keep your promise.

Leader: Fourth, be determined to be faithful. You have given your heart and life to God. You have opened your mouth to dedicate yourself to the Lord. With God's power, never go back to your former way of living.

People: And last, be prepared to renew your covenant with God. Fall on your knees. Lift your hands. Open your hearts.

HOLY COMMUNION

#13-15

HYMN OF SENDING FORTH

Here I Am, Lord

#593

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Leader: May our God, who establishes covenant relationship with those who seek to enter the Kingdom, be with you always. May Jesus Christ, who seals the new covenant with his blood on the cross, bring you peace. May the Holy Spirit guide your life both now and forever. Go in peace to serve the Lord!

People: Amen.

Stewardship Message

Mature givers are not careless, impulsive or lazy.
Instead, they are self-denying, systematic, and heroic

"On the first day of each week, you should put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait... to collect it all at once."

1 Corinthians 16: 2

ourselves to Christ as his servants. Let us give ourselves to Him so that we may fully belong to Him. Jesus Christ has left us with many services to be done. Some of these services are easy and honorable, but some are difficult and disgraceful. Some line up with our desires and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we please both Christ and ourselves, but then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Jesus Christ, we offer You this prayer:

People: Let me be Your servant. Let me follow your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. I give myself completely to your will.

Leader: The power and strength to live as true servants is given to us in Christ. We accept the place and work that He gives us, acknowledging that He alone will be our reward.

People: I am not my own. I am Yours alone. Make me into what You will. Rank me with those You will. Put me to use for You. Put me to suffering for You. Let me be employed for You. Let me be laid aside for You. Let me be lifted high for You. Let me be brought low for You. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have all things or let me have nothing. With a willing heart, I freely give everything to Your pleasure and disposal.

Leader: Christ is Savior to those who are His true servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. To be His servant is to consent fully to His will. Christ accepts nothing less. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Now confirm this truth in holy covenant. Make it a reality in your life in these three ways:

People: First, set apart time in your day, more than once, to be spent alone with the Lord. Seek to perceive God's special care for you and gracious acceptance of you. Carefully think through the words of this covenant and its conditions. Examine your heart, even if you have freely given your life to Christ.

People: You have been, and will be, the one true God who reigns forever. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER *(in unison)*

Almighty God, you search our hearts and you see every part of us. All our desires are known to you, and from you no secrets are hidden. By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts so we may perfectly love you and glorify your holy name. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OPENING HYMN *Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine* #606

CHILDREN'S TIME

JOYS & CONCERNS, PASTORAL PRAYER, LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, holy is Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today Your daily bread. And forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the Kingdom, the power, and glory are Yours, both now and forever. Amen.

THE CONFESSION

Leader: We are those who seek to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ, but sometimes we fall short. Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and submitting our hearts so that we do not deceive ourselves and cut ourselves away from God. Let us pray:

People: Father God, You have set forth the way of life through Your Son Jesus Christ, whom You love dearly. We shamefully confess that we have been slow to learn of Him and have been reluctant to follow Him. You have spoken and called to us but we have not listened. You have revealed Your beauty to us, but we have been blind. You have stretched out Your hands to us through our friends, but we have passed by them. We have accepted Your gifts and offered little thanks. We are unworthy of Your unchanging love.

Leader: We now confess to you our sins.
Please forgive us for the poverty of our worship...
for the selfishness of our prayers...
for our inconsistency and unbelief...
for the ways we neglect fellowship and Your grace...
for our hesitation to tell others about Christ....
for the ways we deceive others...

People: Forgive us for when we waste time and when we misuse the gifts you have given us. Forgive us for when we have made excuses for the wrong things we have done and when we have purposefully avoided responsibility.

Leader: Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good and that we have not been ready to carry our cross. Forgive us that we have not allowed Your love to work through us to help others and that we have not made their suffering our own. Forgive us for those times when instead of working for unity we made it hard for others to live with us because of our lack of forgiveness, inconsiderate judgment, and quick criticism.

People: Forgive us for when we have not tried to reconcile with others and when we have been slow to seek redemption.

Leader: Forgive us also for these sins that we silently confess to you now. ...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND PARDON

Leader: God, the Father of all mercies, is faithful to cleanse us from our sins and restore us to Christ's image. Praise and glory be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then

the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.”

HYMN OF PRAISE *Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy* #340

SERMON *“Holy Covenant, Transformed Love”*
Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

GIVING THANKS WITH OUR OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC Matthew Schluntz

OFFERTORY PRAYER

THE INVITATION

Leader: Let us gathered here before the Lord now in covenant commit