



## **Worship at Home Covenant Service**

*'Praise the LORD because he is good! His faithful love will last forever! (Psalm 118:1)*

Welcome to worship, may you know the loving embrace of God, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

### **1 Hail to the Lord's Anointed,**

great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
his reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free,  
to take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.

2 He comes, with succour speedy,  
to those who suffer wrong;  
to help the poor and needy,  
and bid the weak be strong;  
to give them songs for sighing,  
their darkness turn to light,  
whose souls, condemned and dying,  
are precious in his sight.

3 He shall come down like showers  
upon the fruitful earth;  
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,  
spring in his path to birth;  
before him, on the mountains,  
shall peace the herald go;  
and righteousness, in fountains,  
from hill to valley flow.

4 Kings shall fall down before him,  
and gold and incense bring;  
all nations shall adore him,  
his praise all people sing;  
to him shall prayer unceasing  
and daily vows ascend,  
his kingdom still increasing,  
a kingdom without end.

5 O'er every foe victorious,  
he on his throne shall rest;  
from age to age more glorious,  
all-blessing and all-blest.  
The tide of time shall never  
his covenant remove;  
his name shall stand for ever,  
his changeless name of Love.

*James Montgomery (1771-1854) from Psalm 72*

### **Let us pray.**

Glory to the Father, the God of love,  
who created us;  
who continually preserves and sustains us;  
who has loved us with an everlasting love,  
and given us the light of the knowledge of his  
glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

**Blessèd be God for ever.**

Glory to Jesus Christ our Saviour,  
who, though he was rich,  
yet for our sake became poor,  
and was tested in every way as we are,  
yet without sin;  
who proclaimed the good news of the kingdom,  
and was obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross;  
who was raised from the dead and is alive for  
ever,  
and has opened the kingdom of heaven  
to all who trust in him;  
who is seated at God's right hand in glory,  
and will come to be our judge.

**Blessèd be God for ever.**

Glory to the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
by whom we are born into the family of God,  
and made members of the body of Christ;  
whose witness confirms us;  
whose wisdom teaches us;  
whose power enables us;  
who will do for us more than we can ask or  
think.

**Blessèd be God for ever.**

To the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be praise and glory for ever. **Amen.**

### *The Collect*

God of grace,  
through the mediation of your Son,  
you call us into a new covenant.  
Help us therefore to draw near with faith  
and join ourselves in a perpetual covenant with  
you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Prayer of confession**

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.

### *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.**

### **1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine:**

O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God;  
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood:

2 This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Saviour all the day long.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Saviour all the day long.

3 Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture burst on my sight;  
angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love:

4 Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Saviour am happy and blest --  
watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with his goodness, lost in his love:

*Frances Jane van Alstyne, (Fanny Crosby) (1820-1915)*

### **Reading: John 15.1-10**

Jesus said to his disciples: <sup>1</sup> 'I am the true vine,  
and my Father is the vine-grower. <sup>2</sup> He removes  
every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every  
branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it  
bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been  
cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.  
<sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the  
branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides  
in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in  
me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches.  
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much  
fruit, because apart from me you can do  
nothing.

<sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away  
like a branch and withers; such branches are  
gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

<sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you,  
ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done  
for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you  
bear much fruit and become my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As  
the Father has loved me, so I have loved you;  
abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my  
commandments, you will abide in my love, just  
as I have kept my Father's commandments and  
abide in his love.

## **A Seed Reflection**

The word abide is used no less than ten times in our passage from John. This running theme is clear for all to see and key for what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. To we witness thousands of football fans singing the hymn 'Abide with me' at the FA Cup final and thousands more take comfort from the words of the hymn at funeral services. Obviously, the hymn is based upon this passage and whilst it offers comfort to those who mourn and rouses the football crowds, it speaks about who we stand with and for; it speaks about who strengthens, enables, and gives us life and whom our life is held safe.

As we approach praying the covenant prayer, we begin by recognising to whom we belong and who we serve, God. The year ahead might include uncertainties and things unknown, yet with God we can depend. We place ourselves to fully trusting God and seeking to do God's perfect will. We look to God to lead us because when we have doubts or questions uncertainty, such as, 'who knows?' we can recall that God knows. So, why would we not place ourselves in God's hands. So let us abide in Jesus, the true vine, that we are fruitful with the fruits grown in and through the love of God. Amen.

## **The Covenant**

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.**

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 holy catholic 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 . . .

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 your servants' prayers  
according to their 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.**

**1 Take my life, and let it be**  
consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days,  
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 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.

3 Take my voice, and let me sing  
always, only, for my King;  
take my lips, and let them be  
filled with messages from thee.

4 Take my silver and my gold,  
not a mite would I withhold;  
take my intellect, and use  
every power as thou shalt choose.

5 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.

6 Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
at thy feet its treasure-store;  
take myself, and I will be  
ever, only, all for thee.

*Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879)*

**1 Come, let us use the grace divine,**  
and all, with one accord,  
in a perpetual covenant join  
ourselves to Christ the Lord:

2 Give up ourselves, through Jesu's power,  
his name to glorify;  
and promise, in this sacred hour,  
for God to live and die.

3 The covenant we this moment make  
be ever kept in mind:  
we will no more our God forsake,  
or cast his words behind.

4 We never will throw off his fear  
who hears our solemn vow;  
and if thou art well pleased to hear,  
come down, and meet us now.

5 To each the covenant blood apply,  
which takes our sins away;  
and register our names on high,  
and keep us to that day.

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

The blessing of God,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you for ever.  
**Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
In the name of Christ. **Amen.**