



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

907 West Lake Drive, PO Box 530, Taylor, Texas 76574
512-352-2593

For updates sent via text message: please text @fumctaylor to number 81010
Email: office@fumctaylor.org

WORSHIP SERVICE
10:30 am Traditional

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE
www.facebook.com/fumctaylor
YouTube #fumctaylor

PRAYER, DEVOTION, JOYS AND CONCERNS
9:30 am via [ZOOM](#)
Meeting ID: 982-9669-2304
Phone# 346-248-7799

First United Methodist Church

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

January 3, 2021 –10:30 A.M.

Happy New Year!

Covenant Renewal Service

Welcome! Thank you for worshipping with us this morning. Whether you are a first-time visitor or long-time member, we are glad you are here.

(Stand, if able.)*

GATHER IN ANTICIPATION & PRAISE OF GOD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP (Respond in Bold)**

Rev. Sela Finau

Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten.

We come together early in this new year to join in a covenant service. Our purpose is to be reminded of our deep need of God's grace.

Every person must recognize their sinful condition and remember that they cannot experience forgiveness outside the grace of God.

Then we must acknowledge that our need of God's grace is deeper than forgiveness for wrong acts, but goes to the cleansing work of God's spirit, the very core of our beings.

So we embrace, today, an opportunity for a fresh experience of God's grace. Let us rededicate ourselves to the covenant relationship provided for us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

***OPENING PRAYER (In Unison)**

Rev. Sela Finau

O God, Searcher of all our hearts,
you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own.
As we come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace,
and to enter anew into covenant with you,
reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us.
Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being,
and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus
Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN**

“Angels from the Realms of Glory”

UMH # 220

CHILDREN’S TIME

Tiffany Charles

JOYS & CONCERNS *(Currently shared during Zoom gathering at 9:30 a.m.)***PASTORAL PRAYER**

Rev. Sela Finau

The Lord’s Prayer (In Unison)

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

HYMN

“What Child Is This?”

UMH #219

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Tiffany Charles

Magnificent God, you created the universe, and your wisdom shines Through the laws of nature that we discern. In the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, you worked a miracle to bring salvation. Through your awesome deeds, you light an inextinguishable hope in our hearts. Help our congregation to work together in new ways to tell others your amazing good news. May our tithes and offerings support your work through our outreach ministries. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH #95

Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Tiffany Charles

Let us give thanks for all of God's mercies.

O God, our Covenant Friend, you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives. We thank you for your loving care, which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

We praise your holy name, O God.

You have given us life and reason, and set us in a world filled with your glory. You have comforted us with family and friends,
and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.

You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you, and have given us your peace. You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit **and the witness of your Church.**

You have been our light in darkness and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation. You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys **and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.**

You remembered us when we forgot you. You followed us even when we tried to flee from you. You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.

For all your patience and overflowing grace.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Brian Gray

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and your Word proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today as we recommit ourselves to you in 2020. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

2 Kings 23:1-3

Brian Gray

Then the king directed that all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem should be gathered to him. ² The king went up to the house of the LORD, and with him went all the people of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. ³ The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. All the people joined in the covenant.

1 Peter 1:13-16

Brian Gray

¹³ Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. ¹⁴ Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. ¹⁵ Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; ¹⁶ for it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

HYMN

“A Charge to Keep I Have”

UMH #413

HOMILY

Rev. Sela Finau

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God. Through baptism, we have entered this life and

have been admitted into the new covenant of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator. He sealed it with his own blood, that it might last forever. On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ, the Source and Perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we are pledged to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us.

From time to time we renew our covenant with God, especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord's table.

Today, however, we meet, as the generations before us have met, to renew the covenant that binds us to God. Let us make this covenant of God our own.

INVITATION

Clayton Cobb

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants. Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. Some are more easy and honorable, others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.

It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.

Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

Let me be your servant, under your command. I will no longer be my own. I will give up myself to your will in all things.

Be satisfied that Christ shall give you your place and work.

Lord, make me what you will.

I put myself fully into your hands: put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and with a willing heart give it all to your pleasure and disposal.

Christ will be the Savior of none but his servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. Christ will have no servants except by consent; Christ will not accept anything except full consent to all that he requires.

Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Confirm this by a holy covenant.

To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

First, set apart some time, more than once, to be spent alone before the Lord; in seeking earnestly God's special assistance and gracious acceptance of you; in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant; in searching your hearts whether you have already freely given your life to Christ. Consider what your sins are. Consider the laws of Christ, how holy, strict, and spiritual they are, and whether you, after having carefully considered them, are willing to choose them all. Be sure you are clear in these matters, see that you do not lie to God.

Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant, rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength, so you can keep your promise. Trust not your own strength and power.

Fourth, resolve to be faithful. You have given to the Lord your hearts, you have opened your mouths to the Lord, and you have dedicated yourself to God. With God's power, never go back.

And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord. Fall down on your knees, lift your hands toward heaven, open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

COVENANT PRAYER (Respond in bold)

Marsha Beckermann

O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, see me as I fall down before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will, for you have promised mercy to me if I turn to you with my whole heart.

God requires that you shall put away all your idols.

I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life. Against your will, I have turned my love toward the world. In your power I will watch all temptations that will lead me away from you. For my own righteousness is riddled with sin, unable to stand before you.

Through Christ, God has offered to be your God again if you would let him.

Before all heaven and earth, I here acknowledge you as my Lord and God. I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion, and vow to give up myself, body and soul, as your servant, to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

God has given the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way and means of coming to God.

Jesus, I do here on bended knees accept Christ as the only new and living Way, and sincerely join myself in a covenant with him. O blessed Jesus, I come to you, hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants. I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own worthiness, and vow that you are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom, and take you for my only guide. I renounce my own will, and take your will as my law.

Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

I do here covenant with you, O Christ, to take my lot with you as it may fall. Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death shall part me from you.

God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

I do here willingly put my neck under your yoke, to carry your burden. All your laws are holy, just, and good. I therefore take them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising that I will strive to order my whole life according to your direction, and not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

The almighty God searches and knows your heart.

O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today without guile or reservation. If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright. And now, glory be to you, O God the Father, whom I from this day forward shall look upon as my God and Father. Glory be to you, O God the Son, who have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood, and now is my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit, who by your almighty power have turned my heart from sin to God.

O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through your

infinite grace, have become your covenant servant. So be it. And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

You are advised to make this covenant not only in your heart, but in word; not only in word, but in writing. Therefore, with all reverence, lay the service before the Lord as your act and deed. And when you have done this, sign it. Then keep it as a reminder of the holy agreement between God and you that you may remember it during doubts and temptations.

SOLO

Lynn Bedard

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION —All are welcome at the Lord's Table.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,

always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,

and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ,

in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection

you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,

and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,

gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,

gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,

poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

(Please remain seated while communion is being served. Each family will receive 1 roll and 1 juice bottle. Please notify an usher if you need gluten free elements. Communion offering for January will go towards Benevolent Giving.)

HYMN

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

UMH #218

***SENDING FORTH**

COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE

In 1663 Richard Alleine, a Puritan, published Vindiciae Pietatis: or, "A Vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of It". In 1753, it was again published in John Wesley's A Christian Library. Wesley used one chapter, "The Application of the Whole," on Monday, August 11, 1755, in what probably was the first real celebration of the Covenant Service in the Methodist movement.

Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, as expressed in his Journal: "Many mourned before God, and many were comforted" (April 1756); "It was, as usual, a time of remarkable blessing" (October 1765). "It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences ... I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterwards many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or for a fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings" (January 1, 1775). In London these services were usually held on New Year's Day. Around the country the Covenant Service was conducted whenever John Wesley visited the Methodist Societies.

After the time of Wesley several versions of the Covenant Service were developed, gradually giving Wesley's material less place in the total service. The present service follows our Basic Pattern of worship, enables the congregation to participate more fully, and updates language. Most significant, the liturgy beginning with the Invitation is taken directly from Wesley's service of 1780.

The heart of the service, focused in the Covenant Prayer, requires persons to commit themselves to God. This covenant is serious and assumes adequate preparation for and continual response to the covenant. Leaders of worship must take seriously the need to prepare the congregation for this service, possibly through study sessions and prayer.

The leaders must also assume responsibility to assist persons to be faithful to the covenant, possibly through meetings for spiritual discipline.

The Covenant Service is most commonly held on New Year's Eve or Day and therefore is sometimes called a Watch Night Service. Historically, a Watch Night Service would be three hours or longer, including readings from Scripture and hymn singing. This Covenant

Service would also be appropriate on one of the Sundays After the Epiphany, during Lent, on a church anniversary, or during a revival or preaching mission. Ideally, the service should be used only once a year on the same Sunday. Red is an appropriate color for paraments and vestments.

Individual copies of the Covenant Service are recommended for all worshipers so that they may sign and keep them as reminders.

Ways you can give:

1. Contact your bank to setup autodraft.
2. Mail a check to FUMC, P.O. Box 530, Taylor, Texas 76574.
3. Give online at www.fumctaylor.org/give.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Sela Finau, Pastor
Debby Vester, Organist & Director of Music Director
Lynn Bedard, Soloist
Marsha Beckermann & Brian Gray, Liturgists
Tiffany Charles, Children's Time & Liturgist
Clayton Cobb, Communion Server & Liturgist

HOW TO JOIN FUMC TAYLOR

Are you being led to become a part of this fellowship of believers? Do you desire to grow in the likeness of Jesus Christ? We invite you to join as a full member of the FUMC family! While the closing hymn is sung, you may come forward and make a commitment to follow Jesus through his local body of FUMC Taylor in prayer, presence, gifts, service and witness. Please also send us a message to office@fumctaylor.org.

For Pastoral emergencies, outside of office hours, please contact
Rev. Finau at 817-874-3533.

Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession, Words of Assurance, Offertory
Prayer credit to Ministry Matters and UMC Discipleship.

CCLI Copyright License
20143302

CCLI Streaming License
20143319