

8:15 and 9:30 Services



Greetings and Announcements

(Please pass the attendance pads at this time.)

We welcome you to our service today and invite you to greet each other with words of grace and peace. May God's blessing be upon us all as we worship together in spirit and truth.

Prelude

"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

M. Burkhardt

*** Call To Worship**

Leader We are here to praise God because Jesus Christ has set us free to live.

People We are here because in Christ we are forgiven and made whole.

Leader We are gathered because Jesus Christ has united us into one family of faith.

People We will witness to the good news: Jesus Christ frees and unites. Praise God! Alleluia! Amen.

*** Opening Hymn**

"Jesus Shall Reign"

No. 157

First Scripture Reading

Deuteronomy 6:4-9,20-23; 10:17-22

Children of UMCL

Children's Message

Rev. Dr. Jamie Hanna Williams

Second Scripture Reading

Matthew 25:31-46

Cathy O'Brien and Wendy Holliman

Solo

"The Greatest Among Us"

Sally DeFord

Karilee Marcikic & Lynmari Taylor

Pastoral Prayer ~ The Lord's Prayer

No. 895

Offering / Offertory

"If You But Trust in God to Guide You"

P. Manz

Third Scripture Reading

John 15:1-17

Reflection

"2015: Christ's Joy in You"

Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Williams

Covenant Renewal

Covenant Renewal Service ~ January 4, 2015

In 1663 Richard Alleine, a Puritan, published a service, *A Vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of It*.

Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, and used it in his congregations. He wrote 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.

OPENING PRAYER

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.

(David Tripp, England, 20th Century)

QUIET REFLECTION AND PRAYER

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

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 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.*

*Today, 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.

WESLEY'S COVENANT SERVICE INVITATION

*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 salvation to all who trust and obey him.

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.

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,

With God's power, never go back.

Open your hearts to the Lord, as we pray:

COVENANT PRAYER

*O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
see me as I bow in my heart 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.*

In your power

*I take you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion,
to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.*

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

*O blessed Jesus, I do come to you,
Humbly, hungry, sinful and blind,
unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants.*

I do here, with all my power, accept you as my Lord and Head.

Christ has told us that we 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.*

*And now, O mighty God, the faithful Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
you have become my Covenant Friend.*

And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant.

So be it. Now 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.

Celebration of Holy Communion (Page 13 Hymnal) *Gluten free wafers are available. All those seeking the grace of God are welcome to share in the sacrament of Holy Communion. The Communion Rail is also open for prayer.*

* **Closing Hymn**

“What Child Is This”

No. 219

* **Benediction**

Postlude

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

M. Burkhardt



News & Notes

PRIME TIME will meet Monday, January 5, 2015 at 12:00 PM. There is a \$5 charge for lunch and please RSVP to the church office no later than Friday, Jan. 2, 10 A.M. We will have fun after lunch playing games to celebrate the New Year. Please bring your favorite game to share!

AD BOARD MEETING—Our Administrative Board meets on Saturday, January 10, at 8:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. All members are welcome to attend!

NEW SUNDAY CLASS! “The Jesus Lifestyle,” a 6-week Sunday morning class begins Jan. 11 at 10:30 AM. Do you feel strong in resolve on Sunday morning but challenged to live a Christian lifestyle as you move into Monday? Join speaker Nicky Gumbel (from the Alpha series) for this class to explore the ways that Jesus words’ can reverberate in our very real and messy lives. Contact Kathy Locke (klocke@ameritech.net) or Jim Stewart (jstewo819@aol.com) for more information, or just show up!

NEW SUNDAY CLASS starts soon: Do you crave simplicity and yearn for peace? Do you struggle to break free of the “too many good and important things” that flood your life? Then join us for the eight-week study titled “Spiritual Simplicity: Doing Less, Loving More” by Chip Ingram starting January 11 at 9:30 AM. This DVD-based study will help you experience a shift from complex to simple, from hurried to peaceful, from ‘never enough time’ to ‘time enough for those you love’. This study is open to all adults—no advance preparation needed, and drop-ins are welcome. Contact Scott Allen (Scott.R.Allen@jci.com) for more information.

SATURDAY MORNING MEN’S STUDY GROUP resumes meeting on Jan. 10, 8:00-9:00 AM. The new class will be based on “Ethics 101, There’s only one Rule for Making Decisions” by John Maxwell and will run approximately 7 weeks. The group will be using video as well as the book to explore how to apply the Golden Rule in life and in leadership positions. To join or if you have questions, please contact Luis Villa-Arce at lou12sue13@gmail.com.

TEACHERS NEEDED! Our Sunday School and Kids Own Worship classes are in need of teachers for 2015. We ask volunteers to commit for a month at a time, or find a friend to share a month with. Please sign up at the bulletin board across from the nursery or contact Amanda Seibert at Amanda.Seibert@umcl.org

News & Notes Continued

SOUPER SATURDAY is a fun and flavorful multi-generational afternoon planned for Saturday, January 31, 12:00-3:00 PM. Bring your favorite game to share and a crock pot of your favorite soup – prizes awarded to the top 3 favorite soups! We will have games from scrabble to Nintendo Wii and everything in between. Please sign up in narthex or email Amanda.Seibert@umcl.org.

FROM THE CHURCH FINANCE OFFICE

BOXES OF 2015 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available in the Heritage area of the foyer. Please pick up your box, making sure to verify your name and address. Please contact the Finance Office if you have questions or have trouble locating your offering envelopes.

NEW ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTION—The next phase of our electronic giving implementation will be electronic transfers from your bank account to ours. To participate, you'll need to complete an authorization form. Those forms and the details on this new capability are available from the Finance office and will also be mailed with your 2015 commitment confirmations. The current capability of making your contribution through an online bill paying system will continue to be available for those who prefer that method. Questions? Please contact Ruth Ross, our Business/Operations Manager, at the Church (847-362-2112) or via email (ruth.ross@umcl.org).

PADS HELP NEEDED especially for overnight shifts (11:00 PM—3:00 AM or 3:00-6:30 AM) or clean-up (5:30-7:15 AM) and to make lunches (a good project for a group). Sign up in the PADS book on Sundays or call Cathy O'Brien at 847-367-8062.

STEPHEN MINISTRY MINUTE—The New Year is a time for new beginnings and the celebration of life. If you would like to talk with a Stephen Minister, please contact Kevin Garren (847-816-7374), Mary Spooner (847-548-3703) or the Pastors.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP—If you would be willing to help with Sunday morning Coffee Time, please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall! Questions? Call Shirley Mason at 847-362-0

ALTAR FLOWERS AND WORSHIP GREETERS—Sign up on our website (www.umcl.org/worship) or call the church office if you would be willing to serve as a Sunday worship greeter or would like to donate altar flowers in honor or memory of special people or events. Questions? Contact Joannie Foley (foleyszoo@aol.com).

JANUARY SECOND MILE GIVING will support: 1.) **Lake County United**—This broad-based non-profit citizen organization, comprised of churches, synagogues, mosques, civic, and labor groups has been addressing common goals since April 2003. Last fall the group joined United Power in a meeting with the governor to discuss expanding affordable housing across the state. For updates please go to www.lakecountyunited.org or call 630-743-9649. 2.) **Panama Mission Trip**—Our church helps sponsor this trip and several members of this church volunteer to go to Panama every winter for a week of hard but rewarding work. The volunteers, which include physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and nurses, see hundreds of patients every trip and provide much-needed care to those in remote regions of Panama. Watch the church bulletins and MEMOs for updates!

United Methodist Church of Libertyville

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Rev. Dr. Jamie Hanna Williams Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Williams