

# FAIRFIELD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

January 1, 2017

1st Sunday after Christmas Day

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**Prelude**

*Sheep May Safely Graze*

Bach

**Chiming of the Hour**

**Introit**

**Call to Worship**

L: Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**P: You are the one true God who reigns forever.**

**Hymn** (insert)

*Anniversary Thoughts*

**Opening Prayer & The Lord's Prayer**

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.

Now as God's dearly loved children, let us pray together:

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

**Hymn** #236

*As with Gladness*

**Scripture Lesson**

John 15: 1-8

Pew Bible p. 109 -New Testament

**Message**

“Time to Start Again”

Dr. Steve Starzer

## **The Proclamation**

Dearly loved brothers and sisters, the Christian life is a life found in Christ, redeemed from sin, and consecrated to God. We are those who have entered into this life and have been admitted into the new covenant of Jesus Christ. He is the Mediator of this covenant. He sealed it with His own blood so it would last forever.

On one side of this covenant stands God, who promises to give us new life in Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Every day God proves His goodness and grace to us, showing us that His promise still stands firm.

On the other side, we stand as those who promise to no longer live life for ourselves but instead to only life for Jesus Christ because He has loved us and given His life for us.

There are times in our lives when it is important for us to remember and reaffirm our promises and vows. In this same way, we come today to renew our covenant with God. Many generations have done this before us. Today we make the covenant our own, renewing with both joy and sincerity the covenant that binds us all to God.

## **The Confession**

**P: 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. 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.**

**L:** 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.

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

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

### **Words of Assurance & Pardon**

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.

### **The Invitation**

L: Jesus Christ, we offer You this prayer:

**P: 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.**

L: 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.

**P: 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 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.**

### **The Covenant Prayer**

L: Let us pray together:

**P: My righteous God, for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, see me now as I fall down before You. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done your will. You promise mercy if I turn to You with my whole heart.**

L: God requires that you rid yourself of every idol in your life.

**P: From the bottom of my heart, I here and now renounce every idol in my life, covenanting with You that I will not commit any known sin. By turning against Your will I have turned my love toward the world. In Your power I will watch for any temptation that will lead me away from You.**

L: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God again, if you allow Him to be.

**P: Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I**

**vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be Your servant and to serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.**

**L:** Jesus Christ is the only way and means to God. God has given us Jesus as the way and means to salvation.

**P:** **Jesus, I here and now accept You and the only new and living Way. I join myself in covenant with You. I come to You hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of Your servants. With all my power, I accept You as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own unworthiness, 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.**

**L:** Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

**P:** **Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with You and accept whatever comes in life. Through Your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from You.**

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

**P:** **I here and now willingly take on Your yoke and burden. All Your laws are holy, just, and good. I accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.**

**L:** The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart.

**P:** **O God, You know that we have made this covenant today in sincerity, without deceit or reluctance. If You find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right. And now, glory be to You, God the Father. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my God and Father. Glory be to You, God the Son. You have loved me and washed me from my sins in Your own blood. From this day forward, I shall look upon You as my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to You, O God the Holy Spirit. By Your almighty power, You have turned my heart from sin to God. From this day forward I shall look upon You as my Comforter and Guide. O mighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through Your infinite**

**grace, have become Your covenant servant. You are mine and I am Yours. So be it. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.**

**Offering**

*(Please sign and pass the Friendship Pads during this time)*

**Offertory**      *Carol of the Bells, We Three Kings*

arr. Smith

**\*The Doxology #44**

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Hymn #233**

*We Three Kings of Orient Are*

**Dismissal with Blessing**

L: 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 for ever. Go in peace to serve the Lord!

**P:      Amen!**

**Postlude**

*The Hills are Bare in Bethlehem*

arr. Felix