

STANDING ON THE PROMISES



A NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE KNOX, THEDFORD
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2017

This service is based on six foundational promises of God, found in His Word, the Bible. They give believers hope, confidence, and reason to trust the Lord for what has been in 2017, and what will be in 2018. This is a new journey into new territory. The unknowns ahead are challenging and adventurous, and our need of assurance and security is very great. The last Sunday of the year is a perfect time to centre ourselves on the faithful care of our God, to trust Him more deeply, and stand on His promises!

GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

Welcome, Announcements, Greeting

WE PREPARE

in a story

in song *“How Great is our God”*

TO WORSHIP THE LORD

Call to Worship *from Psalm 90*

One: Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.

Before the mountains were born,
before You gave birth to the earth and the world,
from eternity to eternity You are God.

**ALL: For a thousand years in Your sight are like a day,
like yesterday that has gone by, or like a watch in the night.**

**Teach us to number our days in such a way
that we bring a heart of wisdom.**

**Satisfy us in the morning with Your mercy,
so that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days..**

Let Your deeds be seen by Your servants and Your majesty by their children.

May the kindness of the Lord our God rest upon us.

Establish the work of our hands for us.

Yes, establish the work of our hands.

Response *“O God Our Help in Ages Past”* v.1,2 6

Prayer of Approach and Confession

Loving God, You created heaven and earth out of nothing.
You uphold and rule heaven and earth by Your eternal counsel and providence.
We give You praise, almighty God.
God of eternity, You not only created each of us,
but You sustain and form each of us with Your Holy Spirit.
We worship You, Creator God.
You provide whatever we need for body and soul.
You guide us and guard us.
We trust in You, God, our Maker; Jesus, our Mediator; Holy Spirit, our Comforter.

**Merciful God and Father in heaven, You are faithful and just; You are willing to forgive our sins. Before You and our sisters and brothers, we look back over this year, this last week, and know we need Your mercy.
We have spoken many empty words
and have at times broken even our most sacred vows.
We have been unkind, uncaring, uninvolved, unmoved.
We have disregarded Your Word, Your will, and Your way
in our living and thinking.
Our sins grieve You, our Holy God and disrespect You;
our sins give cause for disbelief and pain before a watching world,
and they have caused deep hurt in our relationships, communities
and our own souls.**



*Lord, have mercy,
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy on me. (repeat)*

**Through our Lord Jesus may we begin this New Year with the joy of knowing we belong to You, with the freedom of being forgiven, and with the healing which Your grace alone can bring. In the name of our blessed Saviour we pray, AMEN
The Good News of God's Grace and Mercy**

Hymn of Praise *"God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen"*

The Foundations of our Faith *The Apostles' Creed*

For Younger Worshippers

“God is Watching Over You”

GOD SPEAKS TO US OF HIS FAITHFUL PROMISES

Hymn

“Standing on the Promises”

v. 1,2

⊕ **Forgiveness** *1 John 1 and 2, selected verses* **The Message**

⁶⁻⁷ If we claim that we experience a shared life with Jesus Christ, and continue to stumble around in the dark, we’re obviously lying through our teeth—we’re not *living* what we claim. But if we walk in the light, God Himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God’s Son, purges all our sin.

⁸⁻¹⁰ If we claim that we’re free of sin, we’re only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—He won’t let us down; Jesus will be true to Himself. He’ll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing.

²We have a Priest-Friend in the presence of the Father: Jesus Christ, righteous Jesus. When He served as a sacrifice for our sins, He solved the sin problem for good—not only ours, but the whole world’s.

Response

“Every Promise of His Word” v. 1,2

⊕ **Eternal Life** *John 3:16; John 14:1-3*

This is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in Me. ²There is more than enough room in My Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.



Response *Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 22*

Q. How does "the resurrection of the body" comfort you?

A. Not only my soul will be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head, but even my very flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.

Q. How does the article concerning "life everlasting" comfort you?

A. Even as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, so after this life I will have perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no man has ever imagined: a blessedness in which to praise God eternally.

Hymn *"When We All Get to Heaven"* v.1,2

⊕ **Prayers Heard**

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. Isaiah 65: 24

But in my distress I cried out to the LORD; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from his sanctuary; my cry to him reached his ears. ~Psalm 18:6

We are confident that the Lord hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases Him. *1 John 5:14*

⁷ "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹ "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? ¹⁰ Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! ¹¹ So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him. ~ Matthew 7:7-11

Response *"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"* v.1,2

Prayers of the People

As we turn toward the promise of a new year,
allow us to look back and to look ahead,
to see the places in the past where Your promises have upheld us,
and to look to an unknown future with confidence and trust in You.

In the year that has passed
we experienced joy and we experienced sorrow;
we felt blessed and we felt challenged.
Some things went by much too fast,
and some things lingered for far too long.

**Here in this place
we are reminded that You are present through it all.
We are reminded that we are never alone.
We are reminded that nothing can separate us from Your love.**

So at the beginning of this new year,
we pause now to reflect on the year that has passed.

**We remember the things from this past year that we are most thankful for.
We recall the moments we were the happiest.
We consider the times we felt most alive.
We recognize the times we gave and received the most love.**

(silence)

We are grateful, God, that You were present in those times.

**We also remember the things from this past year that we are least thankful for.
We recall the moments we were the least happy.
We consider the times we felt life draining from us.
We recognize the times we gave and received the least love.**

(silence)

We are grateful, God, that You were present in those times too.

**Gracious God,
at the beginning of this new year,
we also look forward to the year to come.
We are confident that You will be with us still,
when we are thankful and when we are not;
when we are happy and when we are sad;
when we feel alive and when we feel drained;
when we give and receive love and when we do not.**

God, the world we live in is messy and challenging,
it is the world of King Herod,
a world of pain,
a world of doubt,
a world of fear,
a world of jealousy,
a world of violence,
a world of domination,
a world of injustice,
a world of human failings.

We pray for the people close to us, in heart,
and those we do not know, but You see and know and love.

For those who are ill, anxious, struggling with mental illness, addictions, and fear,
we pray.

For those whose names we bring to You in silence, O Lord, hear our prayers....
(silence)

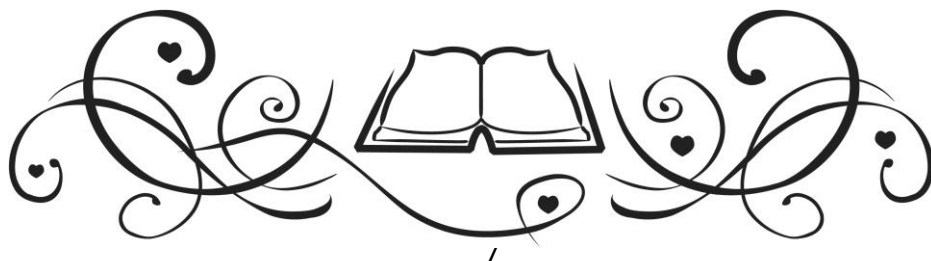
Yet, God, You are with us always.

So give us grace and give us courage to live faithfully in this imperfect world.

Remind us always of the promise of Your kingdom, where all will be well.

It is for this kingdom that we now pray, using the words Jesus taught us.

OUR FATHER...



⊕ **Help in Temptation**

If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. ~ 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

...since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for He faced all of the same testings we do, yet He did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.
~ Hebrews 12:14-16

Hymn

"It is Well"

v.1,2

⊕ **Protection**

I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. ~ Romans 8:37-39

But now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you.

O Israel, the one who formed you says,

"Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you.

I have called you by name; you are Mine.

²When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. ~ Isaiah 43:1-2

Hymn

"You Are Mine"

v.1,2 and refrain



WE RESPOND WITH TRUST

⊕ Peace and Contentment

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus... For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. ~ Philipians 4:6-7, 10

Response *Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 1*

Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

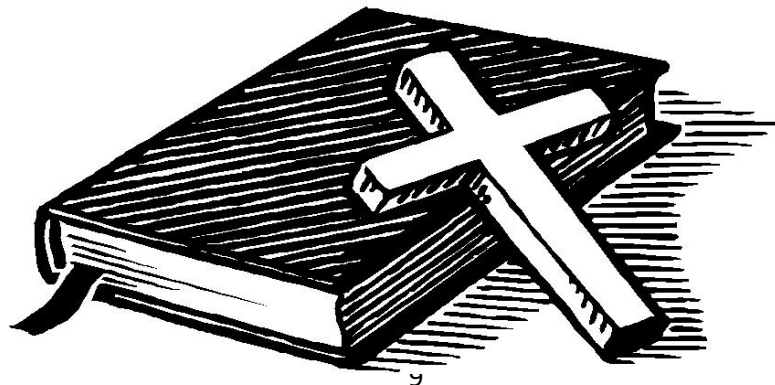
A. That I am not my own, but belong body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.

Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Hymn *"Still My Soul, Be Still"*

Offering and Dedication



⊕ **Guidance**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.
Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.

~ Proverbs 3:5-6

Hymn

"He Will Hold Me Fast"

**And the One sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!"
And then He said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." ~ Revelation 21:5**

Hymn

"Standing on the Promises" v.3,4

Benediction

Blessing

"Go Now in Peace"

