

*I bind unto myself this day  
 The strong name of the Trinity.  
 I humbly praise the awful name:  
 The three in One, the One in three,  
 Of whom all nature hath creation –  
 Eternal Father, Spirit, Word.  
 Praise to the God of my salvation!  
 Salvation is of the Lord.*

*I bind this day to me for ever  
 by power of faith: Christ's incarnation;  
 His baptism in the Jordan river;  
 His death on the cross for my salvation;  
 His bursting from the spiced tomb;  
 His ascension up the heavenly way  
 And His return on Judgement day*

*O God, You have been good;  
 You have been faithful;  
 You have shown us Your love  
 Not just in the year that is past  
 But through all the years of our lives.  
 You have given us life and reason,  
 And set us in a world which is full of Your glory  
 In darkness You have been our light,  
 in adversity and temptation a rock of strength.  
 You are the source of all our joy  
 And all the reward we ever need.  
 You remembered us when we had forgotten You,  
 Followed us when we ran away,  
 Met us with forgiveness  
 Whenever we turned back to you.*

*Teach us Your ways, O Lord,  
 And let us walk in Your truth.  
 We pledge to put behind us  
 Our stubborn independence,  
 And turn again to You.*

*Now let us willingly fasten ourselves  
 To the God of covenant:  
 That we be Christ's  
 And Christ be ours.  
 For it is He who strengthens us,  
 And comes to help us when we are weak.*

## OPENING PRAYER

## HYMN

Our God, our help in ages past,  
 Our hope for years to come,  
 Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
 And our eternal home;

Under the shadow of Thy throne  
 Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
 Sufficient is Thine arm alone,  
 And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,  
 Or earth received her frame,  
 From everlasting Thou art God,  
 To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
 Are like an evening gone,  
 Short as the watch that ends the night  
 Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
 Bears all its sons away;  
 They fly forgotten, as a dream  
 Dies at the opening day.

Our God, our help in ages past,  
 Our hope for years to come,  
 Be thou our guard while troubles last,  
 And our eternal home.

Isaac Watts, 1674–1748; based on Psalm 90:1–5

## READING – PSALM 103

*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!*

“Admiring gratitude shines through every line of this hymn to the God of all grace, for which the next psalm, 104, seems to have been written as a companion... Together the two psalms praise God as Saviour and Creator, Father and Sustainer, ‘merciful and mighty’. In the galaxy of the Psalter these are twin stars of the first magnitude.”

Kidner, Derek (1975, repr.1977); *Psalm 73–150*; Leicester, Inter-Varsity Press

### CONFESSION

*God is a holy God and we can only come to Him if we confess our sins.*

silent confession

*O God of Grace, You have imputed our sin to our substitute, and have imputed His righteousness to our soul, clothing us with a bridegroom's robe, decking us with jewels of holiness.*

*But in our Christian walk we are still in rags; our best prayers are stained with sin; our penitential tears are so much impurity; our confessions of wrong are so many aggravations of sin; our receiving the Spirit is tinctured with selfishness.*

*We need to repent of our repentance; we need our tears to be washed;*

*We have no robe to bring to cover our sins, no loom to weave our own righteousness. We are always standing clothed in filthy garments, and by grace are always receiving change of raiment, for You always justify the ungodly.*

*We are always going into the far country, and always returning home as prodigals, always saying, "Father, forgive us". And You are always bringing forth the best robe.*

*Every morning let us wear it, every evening return in it, go out to the day's work in it, be married in it, be wound in death in it, stand before the great white throne in it, enter heaven in it shining as the sun.*

*Grant us never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, the exceeding wonder of grace.*

adapted from "Continual Repentance" in *The Valley of Vision* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1975)

### HYMN

Take my life and let it be / consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days, / let them flow in endless praise,

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.

Take my voice and let me sing / always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be / filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect and use / every power as Thou shalt choose.

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.

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, 1836–79

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### READING – A CELTIC PRAYER

(taken from *I am Giving Thee Worship With my Whole Life*)

*I believe, O God of all gods,*

*That Thou art the eternal Father of life*

*And Thou art the eternal Father of love.*

*I believe, O Lord and God of all peoples,*

*That Thou art the creator of high heaven*

*Of the skies above and the oceans beneath;*

*That Thou art He who created my soul and set its way.*

*Father eternal and Lord of all people,*

*I believe Thou gavest Thy beloved Son in covenant for me,*

*And purchased my soul with the precious blood of Thy Son;*

*I believe that Thou didst pour on me the Spirit of grace.*

*Therefore together we give you praise*

*And worship with our whole being.*

and we all may say, **Amen**

### WHY WE COVENANT TO GOD, TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE CHURCH

a short exposition

### COVENANT PRAYER

see words on page 4

### HYMN – MAY THE MIND OF CHRIST MY SAVIOUR

Katie Barclay Wilkinson, 1859–1928

### COVENANT COMMITMENT

*I am no longer my own, but yours.*

*Use me as you choose;*

*Rank me alongside whoever you choose;*

*Put me to doing, put me to suffering;*

*Let me be employed by You, or laid aside by You,*

*Raised up for You, or brought down low for You;*

*Let me be full, let me be empty;*

*Let me have all things, let me have nothing.*

*With my whole heart I freely choose to yield*

*All things to Your ordering and approval.*

*So now, God of glory,*

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit,*

*You are mine, and I am your own.*

Amen

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