



ERSKINE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

For Christ and His Church



COVENANT

A RENEWED BEGINNING FOR THE NEW YEAR

Erskine Covenant Renewal Service
Bowie Chapel
11:00 – 11:45 a.m.
Tuesday, Feb 10, 2015

ERSKINE COLLEGE & THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
FOURTH ANNUAL COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE

February 10, 2015 11:00AM

PRELUDE Dr. Brad Parker, Associate Professor of Music, Erskine College

PRELUDE MEDITATION (Please read during the Prelude)

“How do we receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on his only Son, not for Christ’s private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men? First, we must understand *that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value to us.* To communicate to us the blessings which he received from the Father, *he must become ours and dwell in us.*” (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.1.1.)

CALL TO WORSHIP Dr. Terry Eves, Professor of Old Testament, Erskine Seminary

LEADER: Our help is in the name of the Lord

PEOPLE: **who made heaven and earth**

LEADER: Let us pray:

PEOPLE: **O God, searcher of all our hearts, you have called us as your people and claimed us for your own. As we come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant with you, let your Holy Spirit imprint your truth on our inmost being, and by your grace alone bind us afresh to that calling and claim on our lives. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior, Mediator, and Lord. Amen.**

OPENING HYMN “Come, Let us Use the Grace Divine” Charles Wesley

(Sung to the tune of *O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing*)

Let us partake of grace divine,
And all, with one accord,
In a perpetual cov’nant join
Ourselves to Christ the Lord:
Give up ourselves, through Jesus’ pow’r,
His name to glorify;
And promise, in this sacred hour,
For God to live and die.
The cov’nant we this moment make
Be ever kept in mind:
We will no more our God forsake,
Or cast his words behind.
Forever we will rev’rence here
Our God who hears our vow:
And if You are well pleased to hear,
Come down, and meet us now!
To each the cov’nant blood apply,
Which takes our sins away;
And register our names on high,
And keep us to that day!

CALL TO CONFESSION Psalm 106: 1-6

“Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. *If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, therefore you are feared.* I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.”

WORDS OF ASSURANCE Psalm 106:7-8 Dr. Terry Eves

“Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. *He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.*”

SCRIPTURE Nehemiah 9:16-17, 32-37 Rev. Paul Patrick, Campus Pastor

HOMILY “The Hope of Covenant Renewal: Yahweh Restores our Ruins”
Rev. Paul Patrick

INVITATION TO RENEWAL

Dr. Stephen D. Lowe, Professor of Christian Education, Erskine Seminary

LEADER:

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.

Each worship event offers opportunity to renew our covenant with God, especially when we reaffirm the Baptismal Covenant and gather at the Lord's Table. Today, at the beginning of a new year and a new semester let us renew the covenant that binds us to God.

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 prestigious, others are more difficult and humbling. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both. In some, we may please Christ and please ourselves. Then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.

It is necessary, therefore, that we re-consider what it means to be a servant of Christ. Let us, therefore, go to Christ in prayer. O righteous God...

LEADER: God requires that you shall put away all your idols.

PEOPLE: **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.**

LEADER: Through his grace, God offers to be your God.

PEOPLE: **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.**

LEADER: God has given his Son as the only way and means of coming to himself.

PEOPLE: **Jesus, I do here, 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.**

LEADER: Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

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

Rev. Dr. Chris Wisdom, Vice President, Erskine Seminary

"I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live. *How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.* I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people." Psalm 116:1-2, 12-14

COMMUNION MUSIC

Dr. Brad Parker

Collect For the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

