

Unite with some other church

...Carry out your own salvation with fear and trembling. God is the one who enables you both to want and to actually live out his good purposes.

Philippians 2:12b-13

Goal for Church Covenant Study

To embrace and fulfill our covenant relationship with God (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) and each other.

Objective

As a result of participating in this Covenant Discipleship Group learning experience, we will be able to discuss the importance of uniting with another church when we relocate.

Covenant Emphasis for this Session

When we move from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

As Christians we affirm that our God offers us a relationship with God's self and that that relationship is experienced transcendentally and imminently.

When we speak of God as being transcendent we have reference to God being other than, different than, beyond us. This is God as described in Isaiah 6:1-3

In the year King Uzziah died, "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings; with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." (NRSV)

This is God as we experience God in the mystery of God's revelation of God's self to us in God's action as the Holy Trinity. This is what we seek to describe when we speak of God relating to us personally, i.e. God talks with me, God moves me through the Holy Spirit to experience God ecstatically, God guides and directs me etc.

When we speak of God as being imminent, we have reference to the many ways that God relates to us through us. This is in part what the incarnation is about. Jesus is "Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." (Matt. 1:23b NRSV) The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the disciples that the presence and power of the resurrected Christ may live and continue to work their evangelistic, mission, and ministry efforts. (see Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:3-8; John 21:22-23) When we speak of God as being imminent we have reference to what is identified in the Apostles Creed as being the work of the third person in the Trinity:

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sin..

The Holy Spirit is God bringing us together and sharing God's self with us as God empowers us to minister to each other and the world. This means that the Church is where we experience and live out our relationship with God through our interaction with each other. This is why it is difficult if not impossible to be a Christian and not be a part of the Church.

This is why we affirm in our Church Covenant Statement that once we are led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, profess our faith, and are baptized in the Name of Trinity, we do in the presence of God, angels and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

This is why each paragraph of the Covenant Statement specifies ways that we are to behave in relation to each other and others so as to allow God through us to bless us and keep us, to cause his face to shine upon us and

be gracious unto us, and to lift up the light of his countenance upon us and give us his peace.

This is why in this concluding paragraph we promise that we will not separate ourselves from God by separating ourselves from the Church when we move from one location to another. We also affirm in this closing paragraph that our ongoing work in the church wherever we are geographically located is to carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

The benediction that concludes our covenant takes us back to the beginning of our covenant by reminding us that we are incapable in and by ourselves of keeping this covenant. If we are to keep this covenant we must have the help of the Lord our God. Therefore we remind ourselves of who the Lord our God is;

Our God is the God of peace who brought again from the dead, the great Shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even of Lord Jesus Christ

We ask our Lord Jesus Christ, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to make us perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight that he may be glorified in all that we do by keeping this covenant.