



### January 6th 2018 - Covenant

May I wish you a blessed and happy New Year and offer you some thoughts on the Covenant that many of us make at this time.

Most of us have made promises at one time or another, as Brownie or Guide, in Girls Brigade, at a wedding or a baptism. A promise is an intention we want to keep. Sometimes we are able to do so sometimes we find ourselves in a quandary when we can't.

But Covenant Sunday, part of our Methodist tradition, is an opportunity for us to start the New Year with a clean slate, and if you are musical and like a song to sing you may like to try the following to the tune of Three Blind Mice!

*God loves us, (x2) And cares for us too, (x2)  
He keeps all promises made to us  
and we in him can always trust,  
for nothing can change his love for us.  
God's promises are true.*

I hope that doesn't stay in your mind as you go about your day now, but the sentiments are definitely worth remembering. We have a God who keeps his promises and who reaches out to us in the most amazing way offering forgiveness and the opportunity to try again.

Our promise to follow God is a bit like making a New Year's resolution and in our Covenant prayer we remind ourselves that we belong to God and that we will do whatever God asks of us, with people we like and perhaps with people we find hard to get on with. We will do this without moaning, and we will be prepared to be busy or not! We will be content when we have everything and when we don't. We will give our lives to serve God, where he chooses! We will thank and bless Him for being the Father, the Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit because He is our God and we are his children.

Most people find it quite hard to say this and really mean it. The Covenant Prayer is uncomfortable and challenging. It asks questions of our faith and demands that we examine our relationship with God, but more than that, the Covenant Prayer represents a commitment to being a disciple and putting God first in our lives and in everything about our lives: what we do, what we say and who we are.

Can I challenge you to get a copy of the Covenant Prayer in the original or in a modern translation and read through the prayer slowly, a line at a time. Look at what jumps out at you? What you find easy to say - What you find difficult to say. Then think how it might apply to your life – the whole of your life.

What things might God be asking you to stop?

What might God be asking you to continue?

And what new things may God place in your life in 2018?

***Faithful God, you remember your promises and never turn away from me, help me to be faithful to you. Generous God, you give me all I need, help me to use my gifts to serve you. Loving God, you guide me through life, give me a listening heart and the courage to answer your call. Lord, help me to trust in you for all things and keep the promises I have made to you and myself. Amen***