

Leader: Christ is Savior to those who are his true servants. He is the source of all salvation to those who obey. To be his servant is to consent fully to his will. Christ accepts nothing less. Christ will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Now confirm this truth in holy covenant. Make it a reality in your life in these three ways:

First, set apart time in your day, more than once, to be spent alone with the Lord. Seek to perceive God's special care for you and gracious acceptance of you. Carefully think through the words of this covenant and its conditions. Examine your heart, even if you have freely given your life to Christ. Name the sins in your life. Reflect on whether you are willing to choose Christ's holy laws and strict commands. Be sure you are clear in all of these so you do not lie to God!

Second, uphold a serious spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant. Do not trust in your own strength and power but rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength. In this way, he will empower you to keep your promise.

Fourth, be determined to be faithful. You have given your heart and life to God. You have opened your mouth to dedicate yourself to the Lord. With God's power, never go back to your former way of living.

And last, be prepared to renew your covenant with God. Fall on your knees. Lift your hands. Open your hearts.

The Covenant Prayer

Leader: Let us pray together:

People: **My righteous God, for the sake of your son Jesus Christ, see me now as I fall down before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done your will. You promise mercy if I turn to you with my whole heart.**

Leader: God requires that you rid yourself of every idol in your life.

People: **From the bottom of my heart, I here and now renounce every idol in my life, covenanting with you that I will not commit any known sin. By turning against your will I have turned my love toward the world. In your power I will watch for any temptation that will lead me away from you.**

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God again, if you allow him to be.

People: **Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be your servant and to serve you in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.**

Leader: Jesus Christ is the only way and means to God. God has given us Jesus as the way and means to salvation.

People: **Jesus, I here and now accept you and the only new and living way. I join myself in covenant with you. I come to you hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, and naked, unworthy even to wash the feet of your servants. With all my power, I accept you as my lord and head. I renounce my own unworthiness, 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: **Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with you and accept whatever comes in life. Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from you.**

Leader: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

People: **I here and now willingly take on your yoke and burden. All your laws are holy, just, and good. I accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts, and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.**

Leader: The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart. Let us stand in body or spirit as we respond:

\*People: **O God, you know that we have made this covenant today in sincerity, without deceit or reluctance. If you find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right. And now, glory be to you, God the Father. From this day forward, I shall look upon you as my God and Father. Glory be to you, God the Son. You have loved me and washed me from my sins in your own blood. From this day forward, I shall look upon you as my Savior and Redeemer. Glory be to you, O God the Holy Spirit. By your almighty power, you have turned my heart from sin to God. From this day forward I shall look upon you as my Comforter and Guide. O mighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant. You are mine and I am yours. So be it. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.**

+Hymn

*"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"*

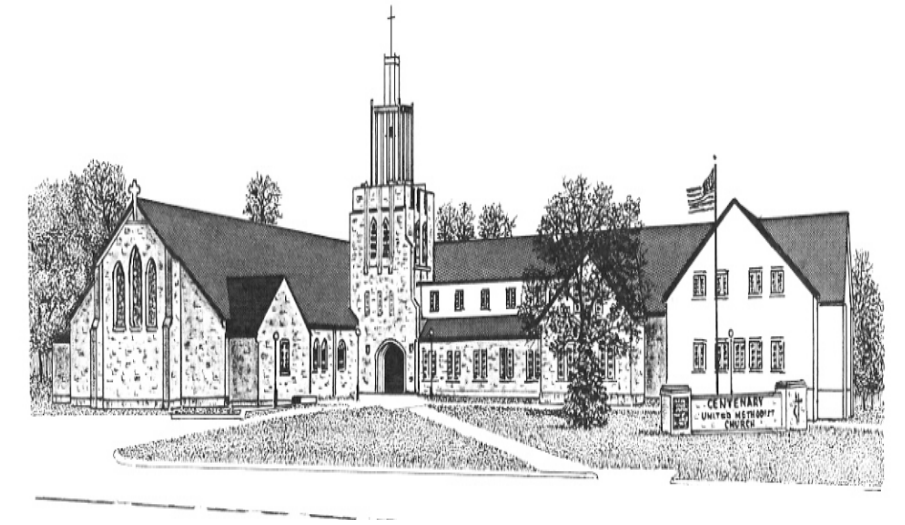
Hymnal no. 240 (vs. 1 & 2)

+Prayer Requests and Opportunities and Announcements

+Benediction and Response

*"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"*

Hymnal no. 240 (vs. 3)



Effingham Centenary United Methodist Church  
203 E Grove Ave ♦ Effingham IL 62401  
217-342-2030 ♦ www.ffmpegcumc.com

**December 30 & 31, 2017**

**5:45 p.m. Saturday Worship Service**

**9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service**

**10:00 a.m. Connection Time**

**10:15 a.m. Sunday School**

**Rev. Christine Cunningham, Directing Pastor**

618-251-4879

christine@effinghamcumc.com

**Rev. Jessica Baldyga, Associate Pastor**

342-2644

jessica@effinghamcumc.com

**Ann Roedl, Music Ministries Coordinator**

ann@effinghamcumc.com

**Chris Prince, Handbell Choir Director**

663-0804

chris@effinghamcumc.com

**Linda White, Organist**

**Chris Prince, Office Manager**

chris@effinghamcumc.com

**Kim Mersman, Secretary**

kim@effinghamcumc.com

**Jeanlyn Stockman and Andrea Sills, Nursery Staff**

**Connie Wieck, our United Methodist Covenant Partner  
Missionary**

# Centenary United Methodist Church

## Welcome to Worship!

### Greetings

*(Please complete the pew pad and pass to center aisle.)*

*(If you wish, please fill out a Prayer Request card to place in the offering plate.)*

Prelude *Chorale Prelude on the Ancient Christmas Carol*  
*"In Dulci Jubilo"*

+Hymn *"There's a Song in the Air"* Hymnal no. 249

### Centenary Prayer

**O God Who Hears Every Prayer, we give you thanks for bringing us to this expectant moment. Transform our lives into a living prayer to you. Empower us to see how your Holy Spirit is pushing us out of our comfort zones, commanding us to take risks for your kingdom and glory. Open us to your Spirit's leading. Move us to courageous action in response to what we hear...**

Children's Sermon (Sunday) Eric Baldyga  
*"Away in a Manger"* Hymnal no. 217 (vs. 3)

Scripture: 2 Kings 23:1-3  
Pew Bible pg. 312 and Deep Blue pg. 451

### Offering

Offertory Music *Cuando El Pobre ("When the Poor Ones")*

### +Doxology

### +Prayer of Dedication

**Dear God who makes all things new, we praise you! You direct our paths, even when we do not recognize your presence. As we set out on the journey of this new year, we wonder what challenges we may face. Send your Holy Spirit, so that we may trust you completely. Direct our gifts and resources to fulfill your will for us individually and as a community of faith. We ask this through your Son who is Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.**

Scripture: John 15:1-8  
Pew Bible pg. 876 and Deep Blue pg. 1199

Prayer Song (sing twice)  
*"Emmanuel, Emmanuel"* Hymnal no. 204

### Congregational Prayer

**Almighty God, you search our hearts and you see every part of us. All our desires are known to you, and from you no secrets are hidden. By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, cleanse our hearts so we may perfectly love you and glorify your holy name. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. (Continue in silence)**

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46

Pew Bible pg. 807 and Deep Blue pg. 1102

### Introduction

### The Proclamation

Leader: Dearly loved brothers and sisters, the Christian life is a life found in Christ, redeemed from sin, and consecrated to God. We are those who have entered into this life and have been admitted into the new covenant of Jesus Christ. He is the Mediator of this covenant. He sealed it with his own blood so it would last forever.

On one side of this covenant stands God, who promises to give us new life in Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Every day God proves his goodness and grace to us, showing us that his promise still stands firm. On the other side, we stand as those who promise to no longer live life for ourselves but instead to only live for Jesus Christ because he has loved us and given his life for us.

There are times in our lives when it is important for us to remember and reaffirm our promises and vows. In this same way, we come today to renew our covenant with God. Many generations have done this before us. Today we make the covenant our own, renewing with both joy and sincerity the covenant that binds us all to God.

### The Confession

Leader: We are those who seek to live as true disciples of Jesus Christ, but sometimes we fall short. Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and submitting our hearts so that we do not deceive ourselves and cut ourselves away from God. Let us pray:

People: **Father God, you have set forth the way of life through your son Jesus Christ, whom you love dearly. We shamefully confess that we have been slow to learn of him and have been reluctant to follow him. You have spoken and called to us but we have not listened. You have revealed your beauty to us, but we have been blind. You have stretched out your hands to us through our friends, but we have passed by them. We have accepted your gifts and offered little thanks. We are unworthy of your unchanging love.**

Leader: We now confess to you our sins.  
Please forgive us for the poverty of our worship...  
for the selfishness of our prayers...  
for our inconsistency and unbelief...  
for the ways we neglect fellowship and your grace...  
for our hesitation to tell others about Christ....  
for the ways we deceive others...

People: **Forgive us for when we waste time and when we misuse the gifts you have given us. Forgive us for when we have made excuses for the wrong things we have done and when we have purposefully avoided responsibility.**

Leader: Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good and that we have not been ready to carry our cross. Forgive us that we have not allowed your love to work through us to help others and that we have not made their suffering our own. Forgive us for those times when instead of working for unity we made it hard for others to live with us because of our lack of forgiveness, inconsiderate judgment, and quick criticism.

People: **Forgive us for when we have not tried to reconcile with others and when we have been slow to seek redemption.**

Leader: Forgive us also for these sins that we silently confess to you now. (Silent Prayer)

### Words of Assurance and Pardon

Leader: God, the Father of all mercies, is faithful to cleanse us from our sins and restore us to Christ's image. Praise and glory be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

### The Invitation

Leader: Let us gathered here before the Lord now in covenant commit ourselves to Christ as his servants. Let us give ourselves to him so that we may fully belong to him. Jesus Christ has left us with many services to be done. Some of these services are easy and honorable, but some are difficult and disgraceful. Some line up with our desires and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we please both Christ and ourselves, but then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Jesus Christ, we offer you this prayer:

People: **Let me be your servant. Let me follow your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. I give myself completely to your will.**

Leader: The power and strength to live as true servants is given to us in Christ. We accept the place and work that he gives us, acknowledging that he alone will be our reward.

People: **I am not my own. I am yours alone. Make me into what you will. Rank me with those you will. Put me to use for you. Put me to suffering for you. Let me be employed for you. Let me be laid aside for you. Let me be lifted high for you. Let me be brought low for you. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have all things or let me have nothing. With a willing heart, I freely give everything to your pleasure and disposal.**