

A Covenant of Renewal

Entered into by the undersigned in the year of our Lord 2010

The Bonners Ferry congregation of Seventh-day Adventists hereby seek Your face O God to help.

WE REPENT OF OUR SINS

- Acknowledging that we have often failed to model biblical singleness and marriage
- And admit that some of our relationships had their beginnings in sin
- And ask that you forgive our broken covenant vows and help us in heart and mind to forsake every god of our own making and convert us again

WE REMEMBER OUR COMMITMENTS AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION

- That we be Your people and You be our God
- To maintain the sexual purity of our lives in witness to Your righteousness
- To echo Christlike behavior and to live the very highest Christian standards

WE SURRENDER AND COOPERATE IN THE POWER OF YOUR SPIRIT

- So that we may become other- rather than self-serving
- So that we remember in prayer and in concrete ways encourage those disciples in this congregation who are biblically single
- So that we may become peacemakers whose own families are first in our ministry of reconciliation
- So that in our homes we give to our children the premium example of Christian marriage
- So that we may experience Your ability to keep us from falling, that we may live and give Your Present Truth Message to souls who are perishing
- So that Jesus may be our first love once again

Amen

Why a Covenant of Repentance and Renewal?

The history of God's people includes many incidents of apostasy and failure, but also of pointed repentance, confession and renewal. When God's people have lost their way morally, they are ripe for judgment. In order to heal us He may first wound us (Deuteronomy 32:39; Job 5:18; Hosea 6:1). He often tests His people in order to "know what to do" with us (Exodus 33:5).

To enter into covenant with the holy God is a decision of some gravity. His blessing, His cursing are involved. And on our side too there is a question mark. Is heaven cheap enough? We cannot and dare not try to earn salvation. At the same time, what do our lives—personally and as a congregation—illustrate? Angels are watching us, but also our neighbors. Is God's house a house of prayer for all people, or a house of immorality for all? Without adding to God's sacrifice for us, still, where are our hearts? For our own spiritual health, we should recognize that the less invested we are in God's kingdom, the less surely are our hearts on God's side. David's repentant statement in 2 Samuel 24:24 is also for us: "I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing."

I urge every member of the Bonners Ferry church to join me in prayerfully rereading in the Bible the short book of Lamentations (found just between Jeremiah and Ezekiel), and seeking God in prayer. The question we might ask is, If sin is sin and if we as a congregation have been not wholly faithful to God concerning biblical singleness, marriage, divorce, and sexual purity, can we change course? Can we ask Him to heal us and strengthen us to change our behavior? Can we enter into covenant with Him seeking His help to repent, remember, and cooperate with His grace going forward?

Here are texts for prayerful exploration:

Urgently Recommended
Lamentations chapters 1-5

Some selections for additional Study
Ezra 9:1-10:17
Daniel 9
Isaiah 1
Jeremiah 31:21-40
Matthew 10:32, 33
Hebrews 12:26-29
Revelation 12:11

Dear brothers and sisters, I believe that in His strength this congregation can turn a corner. A line can be drawn in the sand where we say "This people is on God's side." In seeking the Lord in prayer, I have come to understand that heaven is extending opportunity to us to rebuild the Christian credibility and the evangelistic potential of this congregation. We have much to do and no time to spare! May we seek Him and find Him and see a new day for the Bonners Ferry Seventh-day Adventist Church.

—Pr. Larry Kirkpatrick