A Lenten Covenant 2018

**Renewing God, we seek the presence of your Spirit.**

**Be our Guide and Companion as we walk with Christ this Lenten Season. Amen**.

Covenant fills the pages of scripture; God inviting our forefathers and mothers of faith into committed relationship: Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Miriam, Barak and Deborah, Mary and Joseph, and so many more. Covenant is the bedrock of faith, the unshakeable promises that we can trust and believe in. Isaia

h 43:1b-5 captures its essence:

*I have called you by name – you are mine.*

*When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you;*

*your troubles will not overwhelm you.*

*When you pass through fire, you will not be burnt;*

*the hard trials that come will not hurt you…*

*Because you are precious to me*

*and because I love you and give you honour,*

*Do not be afraid – I am with you!*

Lent is an ancient tradition that dates back to the third century CE starting with Ash Wednesday through to Holy Week and ending in Easter celebration. Many have given up various things during this period, and contrition, fasting, almsgiving are often part of a Lenten experience. I would like to make a promise this year: to root my life in daily spiritual practice that includes prayer and scripture reading. I want to invite you into this Lenten Covenant.

The scriptures, following the Canadian Bible Society’s Daily Reading Guide 2018, are available online or in paper copies in English and French, at SouthWest Church or Mission. They can be read each day at a convenient and quiet time, with a prayerful beginning, and ending with Intercessions and the Lord’s Prayer (see reverse).

For those willing to make this covenant I would ask you to let me know via email, text, face to face or by signing the attached sheet and placing it on the offering plate during worship. I would be interested in discussing the experience with participants as it goes along. If you are too, let’s find a time to share as a small group.

As we live this lenten journey together may God lead us to new wisdom and growth. May we hold precious the gift of travelling companions and know that grace that we are never alone. May we as a community of faith discern together where God is leading us. And as we follow Jesus, may we too have the courage to live God’s way no matter the risk or where covenant leads us.

*Rev. David*

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**My Lenten Covenant/Promise**

I commit to a daily spiritual practice every day of Lent 2018.

I will read a gospel text per day and pray for my concerns, those of SouthWest, my neighbours and the wider world.

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Name in block letters

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Signature

A LENTEN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

**1)Opening my Heart**

*God of call, God of transformation,*

*God of the Lenten journey;*

*help us to discern your still, small voice.*

*Open us to change and growth*

*that we may walk with Christ. In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**2)Scripture Readings:** https://biblesociety.ca/daily-bible-reading

**3)Quiet Listening**

**4) Intercessions** **and Thanks** (personal, congregation, neighbours, wider world), Lord’s Prayer

**5)Closing Prayer**

*Gracious God,*

*bless and transform all that we offer:*

*our faltering steps,*

*our brokenness,*

*our hope, our risking, our hearts,*

*that your covenant may be written on our hearts*

*and we may be a blessed and transformed covenant people.*

*In Jesus’ name. Amen*