

In the beginning was the Word...

An Advent & Christmas Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Covenant

Sunday 24th December 2023



Embroidery of Luther Rose

Scripture: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

- 1 Your love, O LORD, for ever will I sing; *
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.
- 2 For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; *
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.
- 3 “I have made a covenant with my chosen one; *
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:
- 4 ‘I will establish your line for ever, *
and preserve your throne for all generations.’”
- 19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people: *
“I have set the crown upon a warrior
and have exalted one chosen out of the people.
- 20 I have found David my servant; *
with my holy oil have I anointed him.
- 21 My hand will hold him fast *
and my arm will make him strong.
- 22 No enemy shall deceive him, *
nor any wicked man bring him down.
- 23 I will crush his foes before him *
and strike down those who hate him.
- 24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, *
and he shall be victorious through my Name.

25 I shall make his dominion extend *
from the Great Sea to the River.
26 He will say to me, 'You are my Father, *
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'”

To reflect:

Today's word for reflection 'covenant' is taken from the third verse of Psalm 89. A covenant is an agreement and in the Bible a covenant is a sacred agreement between God and God's children. Covenants between God and humanity include with Noah after the flood, with Abraham, with Moses and David (the one in this Psalm). There is the new covenant that is spoken of in Jeremiah (31:31-34) and Luke 22: 14-23. We use this language to speak of Jesus and a new covenant, a new promise of God, showing God's love for humanity, the covenant that occurs because God became Incarnate, Emmanuel – God with Us in the shape of Jesus. The one who was born to save us and on this day – both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve we turn our gaze to, from waiting with expectation to greeting the joyous birth.

Psalm 89 part 1 by Isaac Watts

The faithfulness of God.

My never-ceasing songs shall show
The mercies of the Lord;
And make succeeding ages know
How faithful is his word.

The sacred truths his lips pronounce
Shall firm as heav'n endure;
And if he speak a promise once,
Th' eternal grace is sure.

How long the race of David held
The promised Jewish throne!
But there's a nobler cov'nant sealed
To David's greater Son.

His seed for ever shall possess
A throne above the skies;
The meanest subject of his grace
Shall to that glory rise.

Lord God of hosts, thy wondrous ways
Are sung by saints above;
And saints on earth their honours raise
To thy unchanging love.

To listen

Promises by Maverick City Music

<https://open.spotify.com/track/4uEgHHcmkiHaEq4oXm1r8g?si=a5a1f4c1b0d742ce>

Joy to the World, one version is by The Cambridge Singers

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0tKQ3h7CemmhpoLFVrv9Px?si=14351b003ebc46ee>

The word for each day (3-25 December is taken from Advent Word 2023 #adventword).

...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.