

# Behavioral Covenant

In our work and conversations as \_\_\_\_\_, we realize that there can be conflict, disagreements, and misunderstandings. We can be guided by healthy norms in order to maintain clear communication and personal assumptions. Therefore, we covenant together in these guidelines for loving relationships and values to guide our ministry.

1. We promise to value each other as gifts from God and will work to live and work in respectful relationship. John 13: 34, Romans 12:10
2. We promise to value, as a team, the ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ under the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_. Hebrews 13:17, 1 Thess. 5:13
3. We promise to make our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ, to express criticism and negative feelings first, to the person, not to others, and seek reconciliation as far as possible. Romans 12:18. 2 Cor. 10:5
4. We promise to maintain relationships of confidentiality in matters of personal and professional matters.
5. We commit to process major strategies and decisions as a team, allowing for emergency situations to be addressed by email or phone. Isa. 1:18 , Eph. 4:3
6. We accept disagreement, conflict and evaluation as normal and natural. In this regard, we will seek to deal constructively with disagreements or conflicts by practicing Matthew 18:15-17. Matthew 5:23,24
7. We promise to lead by following the example of Christ. 1 Cor.11:1, Titus 2:7
8. We promise to be good stewards of our together for the benefit of one another and the churches we serve.
9. We, as those forgiven by God, seek also to be a forgiving team, offering God's forgiveness to one another and others with whom we have opportunity to share the forgiving nature of Christ. Col. 3:13
10. We promise to support one another and the work of the commission through prayer. Col. 4:2

# 's Covenant of Grace

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## G**ratitude with Humility**

We are grateful for the blessings of church and community with which God has graced us. With contrite hearts, we acknowledge that we have fallen short of the desires of our Lord for our church. We are thankful for God's grace and love as we acknowledge our shortcomings and seek to follow His direction for our church's renewal in love for God.

## R**elationships that are God-Honoring**

In every way, by thought, word, and deed, we seek to build God-honoring relationships with each other. We will build each other up and not tear down. We will respect everyone's participation and contribution as a joyful response in expressing love for God.

## A**lways Gentle, Loving, and Open Communication**

Our approach to dealing with difficult issues will be gentle and loving. Whenever any of us has a disagreement with or criticism of another, we will communicate directly with that person, we will speak for ourselves only, and we will do so in the Christ-honoring and compassionate spirit of this covenant. We accept disagreement and conflict as normal and natural.

## C**onsiderate and Respectful, Graceful, and With Empathy**

We will constantly strive to be respectful of one another's point of view, graceful in our manner of communication, and always acting with empathy and understanding of another's ideas or position. We will listen, with an open mind, to the opinions, ideas, and concerns of others and respond with thoughtfulness and sensitivity. We will focus on issues and not personalities.

## E**veryone Seeking Unity through Sacrifice**

We recognize that we are in a church built on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ and that He is the head as well. We will seek unity by willingly sacrificing our own desires to those of our risen Lord in faithfully building the church He desires for us to be.

***Upon passage, each person in the congregation is authorized to remind each other of our commitment to abide by this covenant whenever we find ourselves in an interaction that does not represent the relational grace to which we have agreed.***

# Covenant Church

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*To make a lasting impact upon the community around us with the gospel message of Jesus Christ!*

## Behavioral Covenant:

The Leadership Team and Staff are deeply concerned with, and committed to the unity of purpose for our congregation. Our vision is to make a lasting impact upon the community around us with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ! We seek, therefore, to guide our actions with the words of Colossians 3:12-17 and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-26. In as much we seek to present our plans, dreams and ideas through the Leadership Team to the congregation in an open and forthright presentation seeking the advice and consent of our congregation.

As the people of \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church, we covenant together to...

- Build each other up and not tear down. I Thessalonians 5:11
- Respect and honor the leadership of the church; the Church Staff, Leadership Team as well as other lay leaders. I Thessalonians 5:12
- Seek to communicate clearly, completely and directly. Ephesians 4:14-16
- Offer our opinions with clarity and humility. Colossians 3:12-14
- Make positive investments in each others lives. Colossians 3:15-16
- Seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for us or for some small group in the church. Philippians 2:3-6
- Accept disagreement, conflict and evaluation as normal and natural. Philippians 4:2-3
- Walk hand in hand even though we may not always see eye to eye. Colossians 3:14-15
- Believe the best of each other and give each other the benefit of the doubt. Phil 4:8-10
- Seek to be, as a body, in prayer and submission to the Holy Spirit. I Thess 5:16-19
- Commit to being inconvenienced for the sake of the Gospel. Philippians 2:5-11

Behavioral Covenant for the Pastoral and

## Office Staff at \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church

Behavioral Covenants—Holy Manners for a Faith Community: A behavioral covenant is a written document developed by leaders, agreed to and owned by its creators and practiced on a daily basis as a spiritual discipline. The Covenant answers the question, “How will we behave (how will we live together?) when we don’t understand each other and when we don’t agree?” – Gil Rendle, Behavioral Covenants in Congregations

Guidelines for Loving Relationships and Values to Guide Our Interaction (These guidelines should be bathed in a spirit of prayer.)

Colossians 3:12-17, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-26

At \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church...

- We seek to build each other up and not tear down.
- We respect and honor the office of all pastors, staff members and other lay leaders.
- We seek to communicate clearly and completely.
- We offer our opinions with charity and humility.
- We make positive investments in each other's lives.
- We seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for us or for some small group in the church.
- We accept disagreement, conflict and evaluation as normal and natural. In this regard we will seek to deal constructively with disagreements or conflicts by utilizing one or all of the following (Matthew 18:15-17):
  1. Going directly to the person with whom there is a disagreement or conflict.
  2. Having an agreed upon third party meet with the conflicted persons.
  3. Agree to meet with an assigned committee to work out the disagreement or conflict.

I have read and understand this behavioral covenant and commit myself to put this into practice in all my relationships with Pastoral and Office Staff at \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church.

Signature

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Date

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## A COVENANT FOR OUR LIFE TOGETHER\*

### COVENANT CHURCH

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we are called to live together, treat one another, and respond to conflict in ways that are remarkably different from the ways the world does the same. In all dealings with one another, our goal is to glorify God, allowing Scripture, especially Colossians 3:12-17 and I Thessalonians 5:12-26, to guide our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. To this end, at \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church, we commit to a life together in which...

### OUR POSTURE TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

*Phil. 2:3-4, Col. 3:12-17, James 1:2-4, 19, 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1, Luke 6:27-36, Gal. 5:19-26, Rom. 8:28-29, 1 Peter 3:10-17, John 13:34-35*

1. We maintain a posture of openness and humility toward one another, giving one another the benefit of the doubt, always seeking to build each other up and not tear down. To this end:  
-We make positive investments in one another's lives. -We seek to communicate clearly and completely, listening charitably and sharing honestly, without assumption and gossip.
2. We honor and support the office of pastor and other lay leaders, always seeking to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for any one individual or small group in the church.

### HOW WE HANDLE CONFLICT

*Matt. 5:9, Matt. 6:12, Matt. 18:15-20, Matt. 25:14-21, Gal. 6:1, Col. 3:13, Eph. 4:1-6, 31-32, Rom. 12:18, 1 Peter 2:19, 1 Peter 4:19*

3. We accept conflict as normal and natural part of life in community. We understand conflict as an opportunity to grow in Christ and in healthy authentic relationships with one another. As a Christian Community we do no fear or ignore conflict, but with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we work through conflict toward resolution.
4. We are self-reflective, confessing our sin to those we wrong. We will actively and graciously pursue genuine peace and authentic reconciliation, carefully using mediators when appropriate. We will seek just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.

With God's grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an opportunity, not an accident. We will pray that our life together, the way in which we treat one another and handle conflict, will bring praise to our Lord and lead others to know God's infinite love.

\*Adapted from "The Peacemaker's Pledge," produced by Peacemaker Ministries.

**Covenant Church**

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**“Holy Manners”**

*Embracing the concept that we have been born again into the kingdom of God in Christ, and that the Holy Spirit is transforming us to be like Christ...*

*Recognizing that the church is not our idea but God’s idea, and that His Spirit wants to guide us,*

*We commit to the following ways of working together:*

Because this is the Lord’s work, we will be determined to pray, so that we are in step with Him. (Acts 2:42)

We will speak the truth – in love – to one another. (Eph. 4:15)

We will each take responsibility for peace and unity, while also recognizing it is not our responsibility alone. (Rom 12:18; Eph 4:3)

We will go the extra mile to get through conflict to find understanding on the other side. (Eph 4:2; 1 Cor. 13: 5-7)

We will discipline ourselves to listen to one another actively, and to choose listening above getting angry. (James 1:19)

When we don’t understand, we will ask for help to understand.

We can agree to disagree without rancor, recognizing that no one has a corner on truth and that there is always more we can learn. (Rom 12:3; Sixth Covenant Affirmation)

We will refuse to create factions within the congregation. (Eph.4:3; 1 Cor. 1:10)

Mindful of the plank in our own eye, we will not too quickly point out the splinters in others’ (Matt 7:4).

Forgiveness is a mark of Christ among us; as forgiven people, we will choose to forgive one another. (Eph 4:32)

God gives us leaders as a gift; we will pray for them and extend to them honor and trust. (Heb. 13:7, 17-18)

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## Covenant Church Behavioral Covenant

*(Drafted by the VERITAS Implementation Team and recommended by the Executive Board)*

Q: How will we behave and live together, especially when we don't understand or agree with each other?

A: The people of \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant Church will:

1. Honor and affirm each other as people created in God's image
2. Communicate with each other by listening and speaking openly, honestly, and respectfully;
3. Seek and extend grace and forgiveness in relationship with each other;
4. Love, care, and pray for each other.

### **Scripture References**

**I Thessalonians 5:12-26** Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil. May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.

**Philippians 2:3-4** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

**Colossians 3:12-17** Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**James 1:2-4, 19** Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything...My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

**1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1** So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved...Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

**Luke 6:27-36** But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

**Galatians 5:19-26** The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

**Romans 8:28-29** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

**1 Peter 3:10-17** For, whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

**John 13:34-35** A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

**Matthew 5:9** Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

**Matthew 5:23-24** Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

**Matthew 6:12** Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

**Matthew 25:14-21** Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

**Galatians 6:1** Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

**Colossians 3:13** Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

**Ephesians 4:1-6, 31-22** As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all...Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**Romans 12:18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

**1 Peter 2:19; 4:19** For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God...So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.