

Community Baptist Church

Church Covenant

We are persuaded that the biblical relationship between the believer and the local church is best described as a covenant relationship in which we join together as a local body for the purpose of mutual love, encouragement, and accountability. The influences of our present culture have advanced a biblically inaccurate understanding of the believer's relationship to the local church in the minds of many professing Christians. Scripture teaches that there is an aspect of our sanctification that can't be realized apart from a biblically meaningful participation in the local church. Steadfast, biblically faithful relationships anchored in the commitment of NT community provide some of the most immediate opportunities for applying the gospel on a daily basis through the joys and challenges that they bring.

We are further persuaded that an explicit, covenant-oriented approach to church membership is both the wisest and most effective means by which we affirm our submission to the headship of Jesus Christ, and affirm a gospel-enabled commitment one to another. In addition to the Scriptural indications that the early church recognized membership explicitly, establishing a church covenant helps us guard the authenticity of gospel conversion among our constituency, and thus uphold the sanctifying mission of the local church among the saints. Establishing a church covenant also helps us consciously identify and confront our flesh's propensity for self-rule, whose deeply entrenched pattern of thinking is exasperated by the sinful, over-developed preoccupation with the extreme individualism, personal autonomy, and contempt for authority that saturates the mindset of our contemporary culture.

Therefore, by God's steadfast faithfulness and grace, through the sacrifice of the Son, and through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, we solemnly and joyfully covenant with one other, declaring:

- We are a people surrendered to and transformed by the only essential message in all of history: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that He was raised on the third day (1 Cor.15:3-4). Through this gospel, though we are many, we are one body in Christ, individually members one of another (Rom.12:5), so that we would faithfully illustrate the preeminence of Jesus Christ in all things – striving to be increasingly gospel-centered and cross-centered in everything we do and think (Gal.6:14). We covenant together with the desire that our lives and voices would faithfully proclaim the authentic gospel of Jesus Christ through an ever-deepening understanding of, admiration for, and dependency upon the cross and person of Jesus Christ.
- We will cultivate a lifestyle of increasing intimacy, fellowship, and love for our God and a joyful response to His love toward us (Matthew 22:37). We will not be satisfied with merely knowing *about* God but will strive to know the *person* of God (Philippians 3:8-14), and to be continually transformed through our knowledge of His character and the power of His gospel (Rom.12:2).
- Fully persuaded that the blood of Christ has purified our souls for a sincere brotherly love (1 Peter 1:22), and that the love of the brethren is a chief mark of genuine salvation (1 John 3:14), we will strive to love one another earnestly from a pure heart, pursuing a love for one another that cannot be explained by our own natural inclinations and temperament, but instead is explained solely by the ongoing, transforming ministry of the Holy Spirit through the Word (Rom. 12:2; 1 John 4:10-11).

- We will pursue meaningful, authentic relationships, growing in our trust and transparency with each other (Rom.12:9a). We will reach out to one another with all humility, gentleness, and patience (Eph. 4:2), submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph.5:21).
- We will exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require. We will rejoice at each other’s happiness, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other’s burdens and sorrows. We will earnestly seek to encourage one another and build one another up (1 Thess. 5:11), ever striving to do so more and more (1 Thess. 4:10).
- We will not avoid biblically appropriate conflict in the name of “unity”. When offended, we will privately seek out our offender, humbly and respectfully seeking reconciliation (Matthew 18:15-17). In lesser matters, we will strive to have ‘short memories’ with each other, bearing with one another and, if any has a complaint against another, forgiving each other just as the Lord has forgiven us (Col.3:13).
- We will not use our tongue for ‘restless evil’ (James 3:8). We will do nothing from rivalry or conceit (Rom. 12:16; Phil. 2:3); we will cast aside all forms of quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, and all other types of disorder and pettiness (Romans 13:12; 2 Cor.12:20).
- We will work together for the continuance of a faithful cross-centered ministry in this church, in dependence upon Christ’s Spirit in and through us to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel in our immediate community and throughout all nations.
- We will live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that through the power of the gospel in both our salvation and our sanctification, we will conduct ourselves with personal holiness (Titus 2:11-12; 1 Peter 1:13-16).
- Convinced that God has called a people from every tribe, language, people, and nation, (Revelation 5:9), and that God has a particular affection for the poor and disenfranchised (Matthew 11:25-26; James 2:5), we will strive to be a congregation whose membership adorns the power of the gospel across all cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, and life experiences.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.
Amen.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Signature

Date