

# Redemption Community Church

## Our Church Covenant

taken from Capitol Hill Baptist Church

### Foundations for our Church Covenant

The Bible clearly teaches us that it matters to God how you live your life! The book of James from the New Testament warns:

*"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight reign on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless."*

~ James 1:26

In other words, if you profess to be a Christian, but you don't live a changed life, you should take no comfort in your faith. The Apostle John writes,

*"We know that we have come to know him **IF** we obey his commands."*

~ 1 John 1:3

In short: How we live matters. Living in covenant with one another is an attempt on our part, to say that how you live matters. More specifically, we are claiming that it is dangerous for the Christian to attempt to live outside the church and it is positively encouraging and good to live inside the church, to grow up in Christ within the family of God just like children grow up in a family. In this effort we're particularly focused on how we live together as members of a local church and how we believe the local church is far more central in the individual Christian's life than perhaps you've thought before.

The document that summarizes how we're to live is known as a church covenant. Let's begin by defining what a church covenant is.

### What is a Church Covenant?

#### **A church covenant is a promise.**

- A promise made to God.
- A promise made to a local church.
- A promise made to one's self.

#### **A church covenant is a summary of how we agree to live.**

- While our Statement of Faith is a good summary of what we believe, our church covenant is a summary of how we agree to live – more importantly; it is a summary of how God would have us live. It does not include every explicit command regarding obedience, but it does give a general summary of what it means to live as a disciple of Christ.

### **A church covenant is a sign of commitment.**

- A sign of commitment to God.
- A sign of commitment to His church.
- A sign of commitment to personal holiness.

### **A church covenant is an ethical statement.**

- One church historian wrote this,  
*“A church covenant is a series of written pledges based on the Bible which church members voluntarily make to God and to one another regarding their basic moral and spiritual commitments and the practice of their faith.”*  
(Baptist Church Covenants, Charles W. DeWeese)
- One theologian calls church covenants the “ethical counterpart to confessions of faith.” A church covenant can be an important part of applying a Christian worldview to every aspect of our lives. Inherent in the purpose of a church covenant is the understanding that church membership involves being held accountable to live in a manner consistent with a common understanding of Scripture.

### **A church covenant is a biblical standard.**

- A covenant is helpful in a church that is practicing Biblical church discipline. Simply put: As members of this church, we exhort one another to live holy lives, and we challenge brothers and sisters persisting in sin. We need a biblical, agreed upon standard by which to rightly judge and exhort each other when unrepentant sin exists in the church.

## **Who can sign the RCC covenant?**

Churches are to be composed of people who are truly born again. This is what we call *regenerate church membership*. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century men and women of deep conviction broke away from the Roman Catholic Church to form congregations, which understood the importance of the doctrine known as *Justification by Faith Alone in Christ Alone*.

- No longer did baptism or membership bring supposed Redemption Community.
- Joining and being a part of a church was no longer a civic duty or just a part of growing up, it was finally recognized for what it has always been – **a response to faith.**

**So who can sign the Redemption Community Church covenant?** It is those people who have been born again. It is also those who agree to be held accountable by this particular body of believers, this local representation of Christ's church. Likewise, it is those who agree to hold others in this body of believers accountable. To hold accountable simply means to “take responsibility for.” A church covenant void of this responsibility is a worthless document.

## Redemption Community Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine Grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with each other—the members of Redemption Community Church.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life. Therefore we will maintain personal and family devotions; educate our children in the Christian faith; walk carefully and uprightly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments, exemplary in our conduct, and encouraging in our conversation; to be always seeking the Lord's help in order to be making progress toward Christ-likeness; to avoid all gossip and excessive anger; to abstain from all drugs, food, drink, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we 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 through all nations.

We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

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.

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Name

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Date