



Covenant for Presbyterian Congregations

Individually or in congregations, we are a covenant people—with God and with each other. A covenant acknowledges that something beyond us is more important than ourselves. It is only in the keeping of such commitments however, that meaningful communities are formed and life in the church flourishes. When one part of the Body rejoices, we all rejoice and when one part suffers, we all suffer: *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.* (1 Corinthians 12: 12, 27)

1. **Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** (Philippians 2: 9-11)

Because Jesus Christ is Lord, we will seek to be subject to him in all areas of life: (Matthew 22: 37-40)

2. **You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.** (1 Corinthians 6: 19b-20)

Because our lives are not our own...

- we will take responsibility for our thoughts and actions: (1 Timothy 6: 11b-12)
- we will make the glory and enjoyment of God our focus: (Westminster Larger Catechism, Q-1)
- relying on the Holy Spirit, we will rejoice in the Lord at all times: (Philippians 4: 4-7)
- Scripture will be our final authority in all decisions, choices, and actions: (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

3. **Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.** (Acts 20:28)

Because the church is not our own...

- we will actively support, pray for, and encourage the ordained leaders of our congregation, serving when called in accordance with our spiritual gifts: (Hebrews 13:7)
- we will fulfill our part of the baptismal covenant, nurturing children and those new in the faith: (Deuteronomy 6: 6-9)
- we will hold personal preferences lightly and guard the good of the whole: (Philippians 2: 1-4)

4. **The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it; the world, and all who live in it...** (Psalm 24:1)

Because the world is not our own...

- we will commit to a biblical tithe, joyfully giving additional offerings whenever and wherever possible to support the work of the gospel and the welfare of God's people. (2 Chronicles 31:12)

- we will consider our tithes and gifts as an expression of gratitude to the One who has been extravagantly generous toward us: *(Psalm 116: 12, 17)*
- we will be faithful stewards of God’s creation; we will treat the creation as a gift to be cared for and used in ways which honor and glorify the Creator: *(Genesis 2:15)*
- we will behold the creation as a ‘theater of God’s glory’, praising God for every reminder of his presence and love: *(Psalm 19:1)*
- we will honor the sanctity of human life above the claims of human freedom: *(Psalm 8: 4-5)*
- we will treat others with respect, honoring the image of God in them, however broken; we will seek God’s peace and biblical reconciliation in all times and places: *(1 Peter 2:17)*
- we will sacrificially provide for the needs of the poor and the oppressed, the neglected and the abused, the widow and the orphan: *(Isaiah 58:6-7)*

5. **The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.** *(Galatians 5: 22-23)*

Because the Holy Spirit nurtures new and fruitful lives...

- we will yield to the work of the Spirit to be transformed from the inside out: *(Romans 12:1-2)*
- we will pray that God’s transforming work in our lives will serve him: *(Ephesians 2:10)*
- we will set our eyes upon Jesus so that we may become what we see in him, for the good of the church and the glory of God: *(2 Corinthians 3: 18)*

6. **Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.** *(Hebrews 12: 1-2a)*

Because we do not journey through this life alone, but in the company of others and under a great cloud of witnesses...

- we will be an encourager of our brothers and sisters: *(Hebrews 3: 13)*
- we will gather regularly with our brothers and sisters for worship, hearing the word of God, participating in the sacraments and preparing to be sent into God’s world: *(Hebrews 10: 24-25)*
- we give others who sign this covenant permission to both nurture and admonish us as we strive to keep the promises we make here to the glory of God: *(Proverbs 1:5)*

We, the Session of _____
Church

_____ enter into this covenant on behalf of our congregation.
City State

Moderator Date

Clerk of Session Date