



## Purpose of Our Family Covenant

This covenant is founded upon a love for the people of the church at Mission Fellowship and the desire of its elders and deacons ("Leadership") to help each of its individual members "stand mature and fully assured in the will of God." The primary purpose of this covenant is to serve as a teaching document with four functions:

1. To give reasoning and parameters around what the Bible defines as *covenant membership* and why it is helpful to build a healthy church.
2. To clarify the biblical obligations and expectations for the elders and deacons leading Mission Fellowship, and the individual members of the body of Mission.
3. To establish the teaching and doctrinal parameters for the Mission Fellowship church body.
4. To serve as an ongoing tool for individual members to grow in holiness.

As the church of Mission Fellowship grows, we desire that all we are and do is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ and His character (Ephesians 2:20). With that in mind, each of the items within this agreement have been prayerfully and thoughtfully filtered through the wisdom of Scripture by the Leadership of Mission Fellowship for the benefit of the individuals within the church, the unity of the body, to the glory of Jesus Christ.

## Biblical Definition of "The Church"

We believe that the church is God's growing family by which He speaks to the world of His love and pursuit. It is made up of imperfect people increasing in deep relationship with God, and with one another. As we mature in Christ, we believe that love, hope, and faith will become more apparent in our relationships with one another. By pursuing, following, and imitating Jesus Christ in growing fashion, we evangelize to the world around us by our covenantal love, one for another. The love and activity of the church within the world is God's stated method of spreading the good news that He is real and is capable of justice, restoration, and reconciliation (Matthew 28:18-20, John 15:12-17, Romans 5:1-5, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2:19-22, 4:4-6, Philippians 1:27, Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 John 4:7-12).

"The Church" (all believers everywhere) is the means by which individual believers partner with God and His people in His present mission in which He is preaching the gospel of His Son and giving a foretaste to the

world of the eventual fullness of the Kingdom to come. Participation within "The Church" for the individual happens at a local level within their local church body (a particular group of believers in a particular locale with a particular gathering). Mission Fellowship attempts to fulfill this call by way of "Making disciples of Jesus Christ by teaching, equipping, and sending" its members. We do this locally (in our families, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, etc.) and internationally (in our cooperation with local churches in other countries), for the glory of God and the advancement of the good news that His Kingdom has been established and His people have found His salvation. By our corporate activity as a church body and by individuals therein, we are taking part in the redemptive call of God to the world that He has created.

## Biblical Definition of a "Covenant"

The word "covenant" can be defined simply as "an agreement that brings about a relationship of commitment." While it is not explicitly stated in any one place, the idea of covenant membership is found throughout the New Testament as the church is described and instructed. It also follows upon the Old Testament ideal of God's covenant community. Covenants between both God and man and between two parties can be found throughout Scripture. In the case of God covenanting with His people, we see that a covenant can be solely binding to one individual, much like a "promise" (Genesis 6, 9, 15; Ezekiel 20; Hosea 2; Jeremiah 31; Matthew 26). But we also see covenants in which both parties are equally bound in responsibility (1 Samuel 18; 2 Samuel 5). While Christ's New Covenant with His universal church is an example of a solely binding covenant, this document is binding on both the congregation and Leadership of Mission Fellowship. All covenant responsibilities outlined within this document arise out of our response as a corporate body to the covenant faithfulness of Jesus Christ toward His church. This covenant is open to anyone who fulfills the qualifications of covenant membership as noted below. If at any time either party feels as though the other party is not living up to their covenant obligations, it is the responsibility of the offended party to go to the offending individual or group and seek reconciliation based upon the commands of Jesus, our King (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6:1-11). It is the continual call of anyone within Christ's Church to enter into covenant relationship within the body of Christ in their local church (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 2:19, 3:6, 4:25, 5:30).

## Why Should We Enter Into Covenant?

Entering into a covenant with a church body is a very serious and weighty decision. Covenant membership is hard for our generation to understand because it is so foreign to our individualistic and autonomous culture. We, the Leadership of Mission Fellowship feel that this covenant can assist us as a tool to help us walk in obedience to the call to be members of one another. Here are the reasons Mission Fellowship views it as a necessity to exist within an explicitly stated covenant with one another.

1. As noted above, it is biblical to live in a mindset and lifestyle as members of one another, and therefore obedient to God's Word. The majority of Paul's letters were written to local churches made up of a body of believers, not individual Christians. While we must apply these teachings individually, it is important to remember we must apply them in the midst of the body of Christ acted out within our own local congregation. As stated above, we believe a mutually agreeable covenant to be a tool to help us walk in this obedience.
2. Covenant membership makes a bold statement that an individual is devoted to a local expression of the world-wide body of Christ. That church can then state clearly that they agree that this person represents the heart of Christ in the world. In an age where many state to be followers of Christ but declare otherwise with their lives, this is an important step in reflecting Christ truthfully. It states to the world that we desire to serve more than to be served (1 Corinthians 12-13; Philippians 2:1-7; Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10).
3. While salvation is something that is given by Christ to the one seeking Him, living as a covenant member of the body of Christ can provide affirmation to the believer that their life does indeed give evidence of citizenship within the Kingdom of God (Matthew 7:15-20, 16:19, 18:15-20, John 20:23; 1 John 3:18-20, 4:6-7, 4:12-13).
4. Membership states to your covenant family that you desire to be held accountable to a walk that reflects Jesus (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25-26) and a desire to be submitted to biblical, loving, leadership (Hebrews 13:17).
5. As Christians, we submit to a covenant God who is in covenant with His people, and we are part of an institution (the church) that is the steward of the covenant commitment of marriage. Covenant membership is part of how God has instructed His Church to demonstrate His character of covenant love to the surrounding world (John 15:8-14).
6. Covenant membership provides certain intangible benefits to the believer:
  - A knowledge of belonging.
  - Mutual trust within Community and Discipleship Groups based upon covenant promise.
  - Accountability to live a truly christian lifestyle within covenant faithfulness.
  - Living life together in a covenantal manner.
  - Truthful reflection of the gospel community of God's Kingdom to the world around them.
  - Spoken and aligned expectation between Christ's Word, Church Leadership, and the congregation which will assist in limiting conflict.
7. While we as a church will care, counsel, and minister to anyone as the Holy Spirit gives us discernment, we as the leadership of Mission Fellowship are committed and devoted to leading, pastoring, and caring for our covenant members so that we can ensure certain tangible benefits to them in the midst of membership:
  - Ownership within the areas of overall church budget, leadership, and covenant membership.
  - Safe relationships (that are not perfect but strengthened by covenant) in which sanctification, growth, and healing can occur when mistakes are made.
  - Ability to participate in Leadership roles and within the liturgy (including any public reading or public worship).
  - The knowledge that Leadership is held just as accountable as the congregation, if not more so.
  - Regular pastoral care through Community and Discipleship Groups.
  - A voice for all within the church - not limited by life-stage, gender, or proximity to Leadership.
  - Mentoring and discipleship within the community.
  - Connection to information on upcoming activity and events.
  - Eligibility to be enrolled in benevolence.
  - Eligibility for pastoral counseling.
  - Eligibility to be married under the officiation of a Mission Fellowship pastor.
  - Dedication of children within the covenant family of Mission Fellowship.
  - Regular visitation by pastoral leaders.
  - Regular prayer by pastoral leaders by way of the covenant family directory.

## Qualifications of Covenant Membership

1. Possess a saving faith in Jesus as Emanuel (God with us), Lord and King (Highest Authority), and personal Savior (Atoning sacrifice for my sins).
2. Live a life in which your relationships and stewardship of time, talents, treasure (finances), and participation within the body show evidence to the already-existing covenant membership of Mission Fellowship that you have received, and are growing in the regenerating grace of God.
3. Be baptized through believer's baptism, follow Jesus' example in ever-increasing measure, and obeying His commands as you learn and are disciplined in them.
4. Agree with the doctrine (Basic Beliefs stated below), vision, and values of Mission Fellowship.

## Statement of Basic Beliefs

At Mission, we desire that all we believe and all we act upon is centered around the meta-narrative of God's divine grace and restoration known as the gospel, or "good news" provided through His Son, Jesus the Christ. This story is one of His faithful and enduring love to rescue, redeem, and restore His fallen creation that rebelled against Him. In light of this amazing love and reconciliation, we desire to repent in our allegiance, values, and stewardship to the praise of His name. These beliefs mold all that we preach, teach, and practice.

We believe...

- that there is only one true Creator God and that He will exist throughout eternity in the three persons of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1, 14, 18; Colossians 2:2, 9; 1 Timothy 3:16)
- that God the Father is the source of all things and all things are for His glory and enjoyment. He is the Authority over all things and the Great "I Am" that is spoken of throughout the Old Testament. He is spirit and love and is therefore actively involved in our lives and eternally sovereign in His creation. The Bible pictures Him as a Loving Father desiring relationship with His creation and implementing a gracious eternal plan to reconcile all of that creation to Himself. (Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; 1 Corinthians 15:27-28; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 4:8)
- that Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the eternal Son of God the Father. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was crucified, buried, raised on the third

day, was seen by many witnesses, and ascended into heaven, all according to the Scriptures. He then poured out the Holy Spirit to dwell within the individual believer and within His Church. He is both fully God and fully man. He is our King, Lord, Savior, Friend, and ultimate Disciple Maker. All things were made through Him and for Him. (Matthew 1:18-25, 28:18; John 1:1-3, 14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Ephesians 2:22; 3:17; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:16, 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 5:11)

- that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune God. The work of the Holy Spirit is to unite God's children with Him and one another in love, convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, continue the process of growth into the image of Jesus, comfort us in Christ, and empower us in service to one another. (John 15:26-27, 16:8-11, 16:13-15, 20:22; Luke 11:13; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
- that the Bible is true, inspired, inerrant, authoritative, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. It is the story of God's loving pursuit of mankind in spite of our faithlessness, a description of His character, and a discipleship manual for how to respond to His love. (Psalm 40:7-8, 119; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:25; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
- that all of creation, including humanity, was created to bring God glory. We do this by joining together with Him in His mission and work in the world. We go about this work through worship, relationship, and working together to bring about justice as we have the opportunity. Our distrust of God led to division with God and one another. God's gracious pursuit throughout history will eventually end in a restoration of His creation and a new relationship with His people. We believe that Jesus will usher in the fullness of this reconciliation with His imminent return. Those who are called by God and are in relationship with Jesus will enter into eternal life with Him and those that do not will enter into eternal separation away from Him. (Genesis 1:26-28, 3:1-13; Matthew 25:31-46; John 6:44; Romans 1:1-2:11, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, Ephesians 1:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:2-3; Revelation 20:1-7, 11-15, 21:1-8)
- that sin is anything that causes division between God and man. It is the faithlessness of man in response to God's faithful love and holiness, including rebelling against his reign of righteousness and justice in lawlessness. All humanity, Jesus excluded, was born and lives in sin and separation from God and one another. As the perfect God-man without sin, Jesus is

the only one who could redeem all of mankind from the punishment of sin through His voluntary sacrifice on the cross. He then proved victorious over sin and death with His resurrection and exaltation. (Genesis 3:1-7; Acts 4:12; Romans 1:18-32, 3:23, 5:12-14, 19, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Ephesians 2:1-4; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:2; 1 John 3:4)

- that because Jesus was victorious over sin and death, it is only by entrusting our lives to His gracious gift of salvation that we can be assured the hope of eternal life. His acceptance, justification, and regenerating work by the Holy Spirit cannot be attained through any effort of our own. This does not remove our responsibility, however, to respond to His love and grace through cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the progressive work of sanctification. Therefore, the marks of transformation in the Christian are a heart that actively seeks to love and accomplish justice, growth in the study of God's Word and discipleship, and zealotry for advancing the Kingdom of God among men. (John 14:15-15:17; Romans 3:21-26, 5:6-11; Ephesians 2:4-10; Titus 2:11-14; James 2:22; 2 Peter 1:5-8; 1 John 5:1-5)
- that, as stated above, the Church is God's growing family by which He speaks to the world of His love and pursuit. It is made up of imperfect people increasing in deep relationship with God, and with one another. As we mature in Christ, we believe that love, hope, and faith will become more apparent in our relationships with one another. By pursuing, following, and imitating Jesus Christ in growing fashion, we evangelize to the world around us by our covenantal love, one for another. The love and active work of the Church to bring about justice within the world is God's stated method of spreading the good news that He is real and is capable of justice, restoration, and reconciliation. (Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:12-17; Romans 5:1-5; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 2:8-10, 19-22, 4:4-6; Philippians 1:27; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 John 4:7-12)

### Biblical Obligations of Individual Members Within Mission Fellowship To One Another

#### Obligation of Mission Elders To Members

The elders are to be a group of disciple-makers who individually model a relationship with Jesus and His people. We must understand the healthy responsibility we have to oversee with character, compassion, and humility. Our example will lead in the following ways (Philippians 3:17, 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and 1 Peter 5:1-5):

1. *Mission* - Keep our focus on Jesus and reaching the world with His gospel.
2. *Discipleship* - Be active in relationships within the covenant family of Mission, and within our own immediate families, in which we are both disciples and making disciples.
3. *Prayerfulness* - Seek the will of God in everything personally and corporately.
4. *Studiosness* - Faithfully pursue God's Word and guard it against false teaching.
5. *Community* - Encourage an environment of family among the congregation.
6. *Stewardship* - Spend our personal and corporate resources wisely and with missional focus.
7. *Service* - Lead in caring for the body's needs.

We, the elders of Mission Fellowship, covenant...

- to appoint elders and deacons who serve in these offices, according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures. Further, we accept the responsibility to continually be looking to raise up and train new leaders for the church. (1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- to prayerfully seek God's will for our church family and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To do so willingly, eagerly, lovingly, and humbly. (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-5)
- to live with the body in an understanding, gracious way based on the ultimate law of Christ's love. (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Galatians 6:1-2, James 2:8, 5:19-20)
- to do our best to equip the body for the work of ministry as disciples of Jesus. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- to be ready to reason from the whole of Scripture together and let this inform and guide all that we do in teaching, preaching, and counseling. (Acts 20:27-32, 1 Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, and Titus 2:1)
- to lead the body in an environment of transparency and truthfulness so that sin can be dealt with quickly and effectively, and restoration and peace can occur. (1 John 1-2)
- to provide correction and lovingly exercise church discipline, when needed, for the good of the church and the good of the one being corrected. We further covenant to do so wisely and in reflection of the love

of the Father and always with the end goal of restoration. We as individual elders submit to this same process. (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20)

- to be on guard against false teachers and teachings and to identify them should the necessity arise. (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1)
- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below. (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3)

### Obligation of Mission Deacons To Members

In the early church, deacons were selected to meet the practical needs in serving the church body. They were to be looked to for an example of maturity in Christ and for practical pastoral care. This is still needed for our church today. While deacons serve our church as a whole and within our corporate gatherings, deacons especially serve within the context of their local Community Group. They are the shepherds of that group, meeting the needs of their small covenant community as the first line of pastoral care, disciple-making, and leading in service of one another. (Acts 6:1-7; Romans 16:1-2, 1 Timothy 3:8-13)

We, the deacons of Mission Fellowship, covenant...

- to co-labor with, and in submission to, the elders of Mission Fellowship to live with the body in an understanding, gracious way based on the ultimate law of Christ's love (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Galatians 6:1-2, James 2:8, 5:19-20) and to do our best to equip the body for the work of ministry as disciples of Jesus. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- to be ready to reason from the whole of Scripture together and let this inform and guide all that we do in leading and serving the congregation through Community Groups and Discipleship Groups. (Acts 20:27-32, 1 Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, and Titus 2:1)
- to lead the body in an environment of transparency and truthfulness so that sin can be dealt with quickly and effectively, and restoration and peace can occur. (1 John 1-2)
- to foster a sense of community and family within our smaller gatherings of the overall church body of Mission Fellowship as we meet "from house to house," and live life in concert together. (Acts 2:42; Colossians 4:15)

- to make serving the pastoral needs of the covenant members within our Community Groups a priority, second only to our personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the needs of our immediate families. (Acts 6:1-7)
- to provide the early steps of correction within the model given to us by Christ for church discipline, when needed, for the good of our Community Group and the good of the one being corrected. We further covenant to do so wisely and in reflection of the love of the Father and always with the end goal of restoration. (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20)
- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below. (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3)

### Obligation of Members to One Another

Within the letters that circulated throughout the churches that make up most of the New Testament, there is an ongoing set of expectations presented for one who proclaimed to be a follower of Christ within the local church. The obligations stated below are not meant to replace or subvert any of those obligations, nor the obligations found in the rest of Holy Scripture. These are simply stated as the items that are easily accessible for anyone within our congregation. These are genuine responses to the gospel of Christ that show evidence of participation within His body.

I, therefore, covenant...

- to submit to the authority of Scripture as the final authority on all issues. (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)
- to pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular (done in a fashion that is frequent and constitutes a consistent and definite pattern) Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of additional spiritual disciplines. This includes, for parents, the regular application of family worship within my home (Deuteronomy 6:7-9; Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22)
- to follow the command and example of Jesus by participating in the ordinances prescribed to His Church:
  - By being baptized after my conversion, through believer's baptism.
  - By regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Jesus Christ through

communion. Part of this process is confessing any known and unconfessed sin that has caused division between you and another covenant member, beginning the work of restoration, prior to receiving communion. (Matthew 5:23-25; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

- to regularly and eagerly participate in the life of Mission Fellowship by prioritizing attendance and service at weekly corporate worship gatherings and member meetings. Additionally, I acknowledge that participation within some form of small group is highly encouraged and will lead towards spiritual and emotional health. (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14)
- that within member meetings, I will use my vote wisely, based on sound biblical knowledge and not just personal opinion, to affirm appointed elders and deacons, as well as new members as part of the covenant family, and any financial decisions that are deemed necessary for a vote by the elders. For the sake of the glory of God and the good of my brothers and sisters, I will further use my vote wisely and humbly when the situation of removing a member from the covenant community unfortunately arises. At no time will I use my vote for any personal vengeance or for selfish purposes. (Acts 6:1-7; 15:22)
- to steward the time, talents, and treasure (finances) that God has freely and graciously given to me. This includes regular and generous giving first inside my local church and then, as the Spirit directs me, within His greater Kingdom. In addition, I will participate within the community through voluntary and cheerful service in both the large and small gatherings in as many capacities as I am able. (Malachi 3:6-12; Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
- to recognize that the life that I live in response to the imputed and imparted righteousness of God shows to the world the Kingdom in which I reside and the King that I submit to. This means living a life of righteousness and justice in serving the vulnerable and oppressed of my family, neighborhood, the greater surrounding community, and God's entire creation as I search out and am presented with the opportunity. (Genesis 18:19; Isaiah 56:1; Jeremiah 22:3; Amos 5:24; Micah 6:8; Matthew 25; James 1:27)
- that my only ability to obey Christ and walk in holiness is through the cooperating grace of the Holy Spirit. He works in concert with my ability to put in place godly boundaries and accountability and to bring all thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

(Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:5-6) To do so is an act of worship and core to my ability to reflect the character and image of God to the world. That means turning from and putting to death all of my old allegiances, values, ethics, and priorities and turning to embrace and uphold an allegiance to Christ alone within his values, ethics, and priorities. Those issues that are most obviously countercultural in attempting to reflect the image of Christ are noted below but are not exhaustive:

- I will practice complete chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Complete chastity and fidelity means, among other things, that regardless of marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, homosexuality, premarital sex of any kind, and pornography. (Romans 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)
- I will seek to preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation at Mission before pursuing divorce from my spouse. (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11) I recognize that if there is abuse within my marriage (whether verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, or spiritual), I will verbalize this issue to at least one of the elders of the church or my Community Group leader. I realize abuse is taken very seriously by God and His church in his defense of the oppressed, and thus, it is the elder's duty to intervene once informed.
- I recognize that my words and attitude have the ability to bring life or death, unity or division, and encouragement or discouragement. I further realize that my words speak to the content of my heart and its regenerate nature. To that extent, I will do my best to refrain from gossip, coarse jesting, slander, obscene talk, and sowing any form of discord or division. This includes conducting myself in a way that honors Christ within my online and social media presence. When I have bitterness or anger towards another member of the local body, I will speak with that member about the activity that has caused these feelings so that we can work towards reconciliation and unity at all times. (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-23; Ephesians 5:4-7, 18; Colossians 3:5-10; James 3:3-18)
- I will refrain from illegal drug use and drunkenness and other sinful behavior as the

- Bible dictates. (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-23; Ephesians 5:18; Colossians 3:5-10)
- to take seriously the fact that we are to lay our lives down for our brothers and sisters and therefore to refrain from such statements, activities, or situations that might cause one of them to stumble. (Romans 14:14-23; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13)
  - to submit to the model of discipline put forth by God through His Holy Spirit by:
    - following the biblical procedures outlined in Scripture when I have been wronged by a brother or sister in Christ and/or I see obvious unrepentant or unacknowledged sin in another covenant member. I further covenant that my desire in these situations will be for the good of the "other" and the glory of God in reconciliation. (Philippians 2:1-7)
    - receiving righteous and loving discipline and instruction when approached biblically by fellow believers. (Psalm 141:5; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 12:5-11)
  - to do the following when I am convicted of an ongoing pattern of sin:
    - Confess my sin to God and to at least one other member of Mission Fellowship with which I am living in covenant.
    - Repent and seek help to put my sin to death. (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-10)
    - In cases where my sin has knowingly harmed another individual, I further commit to moving through a restoration of relationship process with the elders of the church.
  - to voluntarily submit to the elders and other appointed leaders of the church such as deacons, staff, and volunteer leads as they act within their roles, based on biblical wisdom, and with godly character and love that reflects Christ. (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5)
  - to strive diligently and consistently for unity and peace within the church on all issues. When we have questions, we will voluntarily bring them to leadership to pursue peace and unity. When doctrinally divisive items outside of those listed in the beliefs above arise, I will attempt to reason from Scripture. If there is still disagreement due to ambiguous Scripture, I will choose to find a way to live in agreement with my brother or sister in Christ for the good of the witness of Christ over and above my own opinions. (1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 4:2)
  - in the case of a member who has attempted, over the course of time, to address concerns with the church corporately with the elders, and the member perceives that the elders and the other members continue to act outside of the bounds of Scripture, and are unwilling to change and pursue covenant faithfulness, then that member is freed from his or her membership obligations and encouraged to seek membership elsewhere given that church's obedience to Christ and His Word.
  - to do the following should I desire to leave the church for righteous reasons:
    - To notify my Community Group Leaders and at least one elder and discuss the surrounding circumstances when the thought first arises.
    - To seek godly counsel from within Church Leadership throughout the process of moving towards leaving.
    - To seek another church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a believer.
  - And most of all, to devote and commit myself to other believers of Mission Fellowship as the means by which I can participate in this local expression of the world-wide body of Christ. Through this devotion, I will participate in the reciprocal process of sacrificially loving, serving, encouraging, empowering, equipping, forgiving, and building one another up all to God's glory and the proclamation of the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit through the gospel. I further recognize that this is the primary goal of covenanting with one another. (John 13:14, 34-35, 15:12, 17; Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:10, 16; 2 Corinthians 5:16-20, 13:11; Galatians 5:13, 6:2; Ephesians 4:11-16; 32, 5:19, 21; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24; 1 Peter 4:8-10; 5:5; 1 John 4:7, 11)

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Commitment To The Body of Mission Fellowship

I have read the above covenant and fully agree to all that it obligates me to do and be within our local church that is an outpost of the larger global Kingdom of Jesus Christ. I further understand that it requires me to submit to the other members of this body as Christ has called all of us to do (Ephesians 5:15-21). I accept the responsibilities outlined within this covenant and the ownership that it gives me to contribute to the body of Mission Fellowship. I will endeavor to walk within this covenant at all times, holding myself accountable to it, willing to restore it should it be broken, holding my brothers and sisters accountable to it as well, and in everything I do, always attempting to bring the ultimate glory to God for the sake of His name.

At our congregational meetings, I agree to renew my commitment to this covenant by speaking the Mission Fellowship oath of covenant commitment taken from Ephesians 4:1-6 and Matthew 28:19-20:

"As individuals under the authority of Christ, in covenant commitment to each other, we mutually agree to do our best to 'walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as we were called to the one hope that belongs to our call — one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.' And to this end, we further agree to unite as the body of Christ, His church, in the commission He has given to us to 'Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded us.' Amen."

Signature:

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Printed Name:

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Date:

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