

Bethel Membership Covenant

Bethel's Membership Covenant is born out of our love for Christ, the church body (His Bride) and its individual members. We hope Bethel's members will experience the fullness of joy and purpose found only in the presence of the Lord. The primary purpose of this covenant is to serve as a teaching document with three functions:

- to clarify the biblical responsibilities and expectations for both leaders and individual members of Bethel's church body.
- to establish teaching and doctrinal frameworks for the church body of Bethel.
- to serve as a tool for personal and corporate reflection and growth toward holiness.

What is a Covenant?

Webster's Dictionary defines *covenant* as "a written agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action". Covenants ranging from wedding vows to iTunes agreements are made on a regular basis. God's Word records a number of covenants, some are between God and man while others were made between individuals. In most of the covenants found in Scripture, both parties bound themselves to an obligation. If one of the covenant members failed to meet the conditions, the other was released from the obligation.

That is the nature of the following covenant:

We, the existing Bethel family, covenant with new members to fulfill certain responsibilities and, at the same time, new members promise to meet or comply with certain biblical imperatives. Together, our covenant serves as a tool for living out the transformational truth of the Gospel in a way that both honors Christ and makes Him known.

LEADERS COVENANT

The leadership of Bethel (pastors, elders, and deacons) have been charged with the care and guidance of those people that God brings to Bethel. This charge includes protecting, leading, and caring for the individual and the whole church body. We take seriously the requirements God has assigned to us, and we have listed below an overview of those responsibilities.

We, the leaders, covenant to...

- prayerfully select and affirm elders, deacons, and staff according to the criteria set forth in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- prayerfully and humbly shepherd and oversee all God has given to our local church family (1 Timothy 3:1-13, 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- prayerfully steward the resources God gives to the best of our abilities (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- pray for the growth of the Kingdom by making disciples by baptizing and teaching (Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:15-16, Colossians 1:28, James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- provide Biblical teaching and counsel (Acts 20:27-28, 1 Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 2:1)
- equip Bethel's members for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- diligently guard against false teaching and teachers (Matthew 7:15, Acts 20:28-31, 1 Timothy 1:3-7, 1 John 4:1).
- exercise discipline, when necessary, with redemptive purposes of glorifying God and restoring biblical fellowship to the individual and the church (Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5, Galatians 6:1, James 5:19-20).
- be examples in conduct and daily living while carrying out the individual and corporate elements of the covenant between church and members (Philippians 3:17, 1 Timothy 4:12, Titus 2:7-8, 1 Peter 5:3).

MEMBERS COVENANT

Having been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and subsequently baptized, being in agreement with Bethel's doctrinal statement, mission, and values, I desire to unite myself to the local church family of Bethel. In this, I commit to God, Bethel's leadership, and the Bethel family in the following ways:

I covenant to build the church and myself...

- by participating in the ordinances prescribed to Christ's Church:
 - by being baptized after my conversion
 - by regularly remembering and celebrating the work of Christ through communion
- by submitting to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues
- by pursuing the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of spiritual disciplines
- Psalm 119, Luke 18:1, Acts 17:11, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Ephesians 5:1-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22, 2 Timothy 3:14-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21

I covenant to strive for unity and peace...

- by acting in love toward other members of Bethel and her guests
- by refusing to gossip
- by submitting to the leaders of the church
- Romans 14:19, Ephesians 4:1-3, Ephesians 4:29, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Peter 5:5

I covenant to share the responsibility...

- by praying for its growth (both depth and breadth).
- by inviting the unchurched to attend.
- by warmly welcoming those who visit.
- by engaging in biblical community outside of this church
- Luke 14:23-24, Acts 2:42-47, Romans 15:7, 1 Thessalonians 1:2, Hebrews 10:23-25

I covenant to serve...

- by discovering and using my spiritual gifts
- by prayerfully developing a servant's heart
- by contributing my time both cheerfully and sacrificially
- Matthew 25:14-30, Ephesians 4:11-12, Philippians 2:3-4, 1 Peter 4:10

I covenant to protect the testimony of Bethel...

- by attending and participating faithfully
- by living a godly life characterized by holiness, character and wisdom
 - pursuing purity and abstaining from sexually immoral practices such as, but not limited to adultery, premarital sex, pornography (Romans 13:11-14, 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, Ephesians 5:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Hebrews 13:4)
 - preserving the sanctity of marriage by seeking biblical reconciliation before pursuing divorce (Matthew 19:1-2, Mark 10:1-12, Luke 16:18, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11)
- by understanding the responsibility of Christian freedom
 - by refraining from illegal drug use and drunkenness and other sinful behavior as the Bible dictates (Romans 1:28-32, Romans 13:13, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:18, James 3:3-18)
- by giving generously and joyfully
- Leviticus 27:30, Romans 12:1-2, Romans 14:14-23, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Philippians 1:27, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Peter 1:13-16, 1 Peter 4:1-3

Signature

Date