

Church Covenant

First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C.

In the Baptist tradition, each local congregation of believers reserves the right to govern itself and practice scripture according to their understanding of God. The Church Covenant is the statement by the congregation that sets out those practical things which are important to a relationship with God and a relationship with those in the congregation. While there is no reference in the New Testament to church covenants and not all Baptist churches have them, they can serve as a sign of Christ identity, as a declaration of unity and an agreement around which a church is constituted and build community.

Our Church Covenant begins with an affirmation of faith brought about by Divine Grace, resulting in baptism and leading to unity in Christ. The rest has less to do with belief and more to do with the resulting behavior and practice as we lead new and holy life in relation to God and one another. When new members join they are expected to abide by the behavioral boundaries set out in the covenant for the individual and the group in order that together we might walk in Christ-like love and glorify God who as called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

The Covenant

Having been brought by Divine Grace to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give up ourselves to Him,

And remembering that as we have been voluntarily baptized and united in Christian experience, so there is on us a special obligation, henceforth, to lead a new and holy life,

We do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly covenant with one another:

That we will walk together in Christ-like love as becomes the members of a Christian church;

That we will exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require;

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others;

That we will endeavor to bring up those under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and lovely example to win our kindred and acquaintances to the Savior, to holiness, and to eternal life,

That we will rejoice in one another's happiness, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear one another's burdens and sorrows;

That we will seek by Divine aid to live circumspectly in the world, practicing and advocating temperance, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;

That we will strive together, and contribute of our means for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry, and for the spread of the Redeemer's Kingdom among all persons;

And that through life, amidst evil report and good report, we will humbly and earnestly seek to live to glorify Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.