

# A Relational Covenant

We, as the family and household of God, each have a personal and corporate responsibility to live our lives by the work of the Holy Spirit in such a way that we honor our Lord in what we do, and in how and why we do it. Grounding ourselves first and always in the Word (*see Psalm 119:105, James 1:23-24, Colossians 3:16-17, etc.*), we at First Covenant Church commit to hold love as our prime operating principle (*John 13:35*), to pray for one another (*2 Thessalonians 1:11-12*), and to strive when interacting with one another to:

- 1. Consciously create a safe, church family environment by**
  - being characterized by love and grace (*Matthew 7:12, Colossians 4:6*)
  - encouraging and supporting all levels of personal growth (*2 Timothy 2:2, 1 Corinthians 8, 1 John 1:8-9*)
  - deciding to prefer respecting one another over demanding our personal preferences (*Philippians 2:3, Romans 14*)
  - recognizing and embracing that others' personalities and God-given gifts are neither "above us" nor "beneath us" within the Body (*Romans 12:3-5, 1 Corinthians 12:4-27, Mark 9:33-37, Romans 12:16*)
- 2. Actively strengthen and build up one another by**
  - developing genuine relationships across demographics (*1 Timothy 5:1-3*)
  - seeking opportunities to help one another succeed (*Hebrews 10:24-25*)
  - recognizing our personal responsibility to encourage, invest ourselves in, and sincerely support the church family, particularly those involved in ministry and leadership (*1 Timothy 2:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:14-18*)
- 3. Intentionally conduct ourselves with a spirit of humility, grace, and peace by**
  - seeking and living out God's will with one another, rather than leaning on our own understanding (*Proverbs 3:5-6*)
  - offering our views constructively with charity and humility (*Romans 12:16-17, Philippians 2:3-4*)
  - striving for unity and peace within the church family (*Ephesians 3, Psalm 133:1*)
- 4. Lovingly speak truth to one another in times of conflict by**
  - accepting disagreement as natural, acknowledging it when it exists, and working together in a timely manner toward a healthy solution, without bitterness (*Ephesians 4:25-27*)
  - listening carefully and patiently, without defensiveness (*James 1:19, Ephesians 4:2-3, Proverbs 10:19-21*)
  - communicating directly with the other party and not complaining to others (*Matthew 18:15-17*)
  - challenging one another with the complete truth, both doctrinally and personally (*Ephesians 4:15,25,29, Proverbs 12:19*)
  - believing the best of each other without assuming the motivations of others, judging others, or intimidating others (*1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 12:15, Galatians 6:2, 1 Peter 5:2-3*)
  - sharing correction in love and not out of self-centeredness, and accepting correction in love and not with defensiveness (*Colossians 3:8-17, 1 John 4:7-8*)
  - extending and accepting full and genuine forgiveness and resolution (*Ephesians 4:32*)
  - making decisions based on Biblical wisdom instead of emotional manipulation (*Proverbs 2:1-6, Proverbs 14:29*)
- 5. Genuinely commit to our fellowship and minister alongside one another by**
  - committing to and participating together in shared sacrifice of time, talent, and treasure (*Acts 2:44-45*)
  - working as individuals to serve others selflessly and meaningfully (*Matthew 25:37-40, Ephesians 2:3-5, James 2:14-17*)

At every stage, we will ask ourselves, "Does this draw us closer to God and to one another, or does this push us farther away?" and seek, pursue, and—as far as it depends on us—live in peace (*Romans 12:18, 1 Peter 3:10-11*).