

# ***Church Covenant – Example and References***

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*\*Material from The Church Constitution Guide by NAMB*

A church covenant defines relationships and is an objective document that Baptists can use to make decisions relating to membership.

## **EXAMPLE:**

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**WE, THE MEMBERS OF NAME OF CHURCH, DO HEREBY COVENANT WITH EACH OTHER BEFORE GOD TO:**

**BE FAMILY; TO BE COMMITTED TO EACH OTHER; TO LOVE, ACCEPT, AND FORGIVE EACH OTHER UNTIL DEATH OR GOD'S CALL CAUSES US TO PART.**

**LIVE IN JESUS CHRIST AND TAKE HIS COMMANDS SERIOUSLY.**

**HELP ONE ANOTHER GROW TOWARD CHRISTIAN MATURITY BY BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS, ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER, EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER, PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER, CONFESSING OUR SINS TO ONE ANOTHER, SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE TO ONE ANOTHER, ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER, BUILDING UP ONE ANOTHER, TEACHING ONE ANOTHER, COMFORTING ONE ANOTHER, SUBMITTING TO ONE ANOTHER, SERVING ONE ANOTHER, PATIENTLY BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER, BEING HOSPITABLE TO ONE ANOTHER, GREETING ONE ANOTHER, LIVING IN PEACE WITH ONE ANOTHER, REGARDING ONE ANOTHER AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN OURSELVES, CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER, EXERCISING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER, BEING KIND AND TENDERHEARTED TO ONE ANOTHER, BEING DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER, ACCEPTING ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, LOVING ONE ANOTHER.**

**WE INVITE FELLOW MEMBERS TO PRAY FOR US, TEACH US, CORRECT US, OR REBUKE US, IF NECESSARY, IN A SPIRIT OF GENTLENESS AND HUMILITY SHOULD WE STRAY FROM OUR LORD'S COMMANDS, BECAUSE THE THING WE DESIRE MOST IN LIFE IS TO SERVE CHRIST. WE VOLUNTARILY SUBMIT OURSELVES TO ONE ANOTHER AND TO THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH. SUCH DISCIPLINE WILL ALWAYS BE FOR THE LOVING PURPOSE OF RESTORATION—RESTORATION TO THE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH THE COVENANT COMMUNITY – AND IT WILL ALWAYS BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH MATTHEW 18:15-22.**

**BRING HONOR TO THE BODY OF CHRIST BY MAINTAINING A GOOD TESTIMONY.**

**WE ENTER INTO THIS COVENANT BECAUSE WE HAVE THE COMMON PURPOSE OF OBEYING JESUS CHRIST, AND BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT WE NEED ONE ANOTHER'S HELP TO DO THIS.**

**AS BELIEVERS, AND DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, WE HAVE ENTERED INTO A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB – WITH THE GOD WHO REVEALED HIMSELF IN JESUS. SINCE THE BLESSINGS AND PROMISES OF THE COVENANT HAVE BEEN FREELY EXTENDED AND GIVEN TO US, OUT OF WONDER, LOVE, THANKSGIVING, AND REVERENCE, WE HEREBY ACCEPT AND TAKE UP THE COVENANT RESPONSIBILITIES THAT GO WITH SUCH A PRIVILEGE. THIS IS OUR REASONABLE SERVICE, AND WE SHOULD DO NOTHING LESS.**

**GOD HELPS US ALL! WE RELY ON HIS GRACE AND HOLD FAST TO HIS PROMISE THAT THERE IS NOW NO CONDEMNATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST JESUS.**

*A new congregation should take the following steps toward adopting a covenant:*

- Step 1:** Develop sensitivity to the Lord's leadership. There come a time when the Lord "births" His church. At that point, the covenanting process should begin.
- Step 2:** Lead the congregation in a study of Scripture. Concentrate on the "one another" passages. Examine the New Testament for characteristics of Christians' relationships to each other in a local church.
- Step 3:** Identify the relational elements that are indispensable in the church. Structure these elements into a document that includes statements of introduction and conclusion.
- Step 4:** Secure unanimous and personal agreement by every church member. The covenant is a statement that defines the relationships into which new members are received.

*Focus on the "One Another" passages of the New Testament.*

*It also becomes a clear statement for discipline.*

*A covenanting service should be a significant event in the life of a new church. It is not a goal to achieve. It is an outward expression of a church's internal awareness of its status before God and its spiritual birth as a local expression of the body of Christ. A church should celebrate its covenant often.*

**"One Another" passages in the New Testament are:**

Mark 9:50, John 13:34, John 13:35, John 15:12, John 15:17, Romans 13:8, 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 3:11, 1 John 3:23, 1 John 4:7, 1 John 4:11, 1 John 4:12, 2 John 1:5, Romans 12:10, Romans 12:16, Romans 15:5, Romans 14:19, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 15:7, Romans 15:14, Colossians 3:16, Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Peter 5:14, 1 Corinthians 12:25, Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 4:2, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:18, Hebrews 3:13, Hebrews 10:25, Hebrews 10:24, James 5:16, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 Peter 4:9, 1 Peter 4:10, Romans 14:13, Galatians 5:15, Galatians 5:26, Colossians 3:9, James 4:11, James 5:9