

## Relational Covenant

Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-26

The mission of Covenant Grove Church is to transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ (John 15:5). We laugh together, eat together, encourage each other, have fun together, serve each other, and forgive each other. We are a family, and life is better together. Everyone is welcomed and loved; everyone is challenged to follow Jesus selflessly. As we live out that mission with Jesus, in community, it is important to have mutually agreed upon, biblical guidelines that guide our actions, attitudes, and communication. This is known as a Relational Covenant.

*A Relational Covenant is a written document developed by leaders, agreed to and owned by its creators and practiced on a daily basis as a spiritual discipline. The Covenant answers the question, "How will we behave (how will we live together?) when we don't understand each other and when we don't agree?" - Gil Rendle, Behavioral Covenants in Congregations*

- We seek the Lord in prayer and live for His Kingdom. Matthew 6:33.
  - We desire to love others with Christ's love. John 15:12
  - We commit to being inconvenienced for the sake of the Gospel. Philippians 2:5-11
  - We are authentic about our faith and our failures. We honestly share our mistakes as an example of His grace and forgiveness. Matthew 26:75
- We build each other up and do not tear each other down. 1 Thessalonians 5:11
  - We make positive investments in each other's lives. Colossians 3:15-16
  - We seek to communicate clearly, completely, and directly. Ephesians 4:14-16
  - We offer our opinions with clarity and humility. Colossians 3:12-14
  - We give each other the benefit of the doubt. Philippians 4:8-10
  - We do not slander or gossip about each other. James 4:11
- We respect and honor the leadership of the church; the Church Staff, Leadership Council, and other ministry leaders. 1 Thessalonians 5:12
  - We seek to discover what is best for our church as a whole, not what may be best for us or for some group in the church. We sacrifice for the sake of God's mission. Philippians 2:3-6

We accept disagreement and conflict as normal and natural (Philippians 4:2-3). We understand conflict as an opportunity to grow in Christ and in healthy, authentic relationships with one another. Our goal is understanding, forgiveness, and reconciliation. We listen with charity, confessing any areas where we are wrong (Galatians 6:1-5). We pursue genuine peace (Proverbs 9:8; Romans 12:18; 2 Corinthians 5:11-21). We begin one on one. If needed, we have an agreed upon third party meet with the conflicted persons. If the matter needs further attention, we bring the matter to church leadership (Matthew 18:15-20). *The exception to this process is situations of abuse, which should be brought directly to church leaders (1 Tim 5:19-21).* We follow the above Relational Covenant in matters of conflict. We commit to:

1. **Pray first.** (Luke 11:4; Proverbs 20:3, 22-23; James 4:1-3)
  - We start by talking with God, honestly processing our hurt and frustration, and humbly confessing areas of fault.
2. **Be direct.** (Matthew 18:15-17; Proverbs 17:14)
  - We go directly to the person with whom we have the conflict. We do not gossip, avoid the issue, or act in passive-aggressive ways. We find a good time and deal with the issue.
3. **Be constructive.** (Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 15:1; 20:1)
  - We don't tear people down or unload on them. We cover one issue at a time and speak kindly, clearly, and constructively.

I have read and understand this Relational Covenant and commit myself to put this into practice in all my relationships at Covenant Grove Church, including Pastoral and Office Staff.

*"To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ."*