

THE PARKWAY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The Parkway Church membership covenant is birthed out of our love for the church body and its individual members, whom we hope will experience the fullness of joy found in the presence of the Lord. The primary purpose of this covenant is to clarify the biblical obligations and expectations for both the elders of The Parkway Church and the individual members to The Parkway Church body. In addition, it is intended to serve as a tool for reflection and growth toward holiness.

Both of these functions are in accordance with the document's overall vision to provide an accessible explanation of the Scriptures in hopes that The Parkway Church would grow in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

The Parkway Church membership covenant is comprised of a section on the nature of covenants, the obligations of The Parkway Church elders to The Parkway Church body, and the obligations of members to The Parkway Church body.

WHAT IS A COVENANT?

A covenant is generally defined as “a written agreement or promise, usually under seal between two or more parties, especially for the performance of some action.” Within the Scriptures, we find a number of examples of covenants; some are between God and man (Genesis 6, 9, 15; Ezekiel 20; Hosea 2; Jeremiah 31; Matthew 26), while others are solely between men (1 Samuel 18, 2 Samuel 5). In some covenants one party binds him or herself to fulfill the obligations of both sides of the agreement. In others, the parties are reciprocally bound to adhere to the obligations. While God’s covenant with the Church universal is an example of the former, the local church covenant represents the latter. If at any time one of the parties of this church covenant continues in a state of unfaithfulness to its provisions, the other is released from certain obligations. The covenant of The Parkway Church contains conditions that are merely general Christian obligations. For example, all Christians, whether members of The Parkway Church or elsewhere, are required to submit to the Scriptures, pursue holiness, steward resources, etc. Such requirements are universal obligations for the Christ-follower regardless of any failure on the part of local church to live up to her covenant obligations.

If at any time an individual member feels as though the church is not remaining faithful to the requirements of Scripture (as expressed in our statement of faith and covenant), it is the responsibility of the individual member to lovingly and humbly express concerns to the leadership of the church to assess the validity of those feelings. If the church elders are truly pursuing unfaithfulness and unwilling to change and pursue covenant fidelity then the member is freed from his or her membership obligations and is encouraged to seek membership elsewhere given the church’s disobedience. In addition, certain circumstances may provide sufficient and righteous grounds to transfer membership elsewhere.

While focusing primarily in language on the responsibilities between the individual parties, the corporate church body, her elders, and her individual members, the covenant is first and foremost an

acknowledgement of general Christian obligations and an agreement to enter into those duties for God's glory and the good of the body and bride of His Son.

BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE ELDERS TO THE PARKWAY CHURCH BODY

As shepherds and overseers of a local church, elders are entrusted with protecting, leading, equipping and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is an overview of the requirements for elders as contained within the Scriptures.

The elders covenant...

- to appoint elders and deacons (including any staff members who serve in these offices) according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to prayerfully seek God's will for our church community and steward her resources to the best of our ability based on our study of the Scriptures and following of the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to care for the church and seek her growth in grace, truth and love (Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:15-16 Colossians 1:28; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- to provide teaching and counsel from the whole of Scripture (Acts 20:27-28; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 2:1).
- to equip the members of the church for the work of discipleship and ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- to be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 John 4:1).
- to lovingly lead the church in exercising discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, the good of the one disciplined, and the health of the church as a whole (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).
- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated below (Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 5:3).

BIBLICAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE MEMBERS TO THE PARKWAY CHURCH BODY

Covenant membership carries with it certain obligations and responsibilities both theological and ethical.

The Parkway Church desires to be a people who exult in and exalt the glory of biblical truth. Everything we do and hope to be is tethered to our treasuring of truth. It is the foundation and framework of each and every sermon, class, community group and anything else we do. Rather than diluting truth, we want to revel in it and feast upon it.

As members, we affirm the following foundational truths.

I affirm:

- the Scriptures are inspired, inerrant, authoritative and sufficient (Ps 19, 119; 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Pet 1:19-21)

- there is only one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt 3:16-17; 28:19-20; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4-6)
- all things exist for the glory of God who is absolutely sovereign and good (Isa 43:7; Ps 19:1; Rev 4:11).
- all humanity—Christ excluded—is sinful by natural descent and willful action (Gen 3:1-7; Rom 3:9-18; Rom 5:12-19).
- the deserved penalty for sin is physical and spiritual death (Gen 2:17; Rom 6:23; John 3:18).
- Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully human (John 1:1-3; 1:14; Luke 1:34-35; Col 1:15-20).
- Jesus Christ died as the sacrificial substitute to pay the penalty for sin (1 Cor 15:3; 1 Pet 2:24; Col 2:14).
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and will one day physically return (Luke 24:39; 1 Cor 15:4; Eph 1:20-23; 1 Thess 4:16-18).
- there will be a future physical resurrection of the dead (Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2; Luke 14:14; 1 Cor 15:21-22).
- those who turn from sin and to Jesus in faith and repentance will be raised to eternal reward while those who do not turn from sin and to Jesus will be raised to eternal punishment (Matt 25:46; John 3:16-18; 2 Thess 1:9).
- only through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ and repentance from sin can one be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy (Matt 11:28-30; Acts 17:30; Eph 2:8-9).

For a more comprehensive consideration of our belief, please consult our Statement of Faith on our website.

As those who have experienced the grace of a life changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have the opportunity to reflect the character of Christ through the pursuit of certain attitudes and actions and the rejection of others. The requirements of this membership covenant are in no way intended as an addition to the biblical obligations of a believer. All believers are called to each of these responsibilities as members of the Church universal. This covenant simply expresses the hope and desire to submit to the Word of God and pursue faithfulness to these biblical expectations within this particular local church.

I covenant...

- to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
- to pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and the practice of other such spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
- to follow the command of Christ by participating in the ordinances prescribed to His Church:
 - by being baptized after my conversion.
 - by regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Christ through communion.
- to regularly participate in the life of The Parkway Church by attending weekly services,

engaging in gospel-centered community, and serving those within and outside of this church (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Titus 3:14).

- to steward the resources God has given me, including time, talents, spiritual gifts, and finances. This includes regular financial giving, service, and participation that is sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary (Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
- by God's grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk in holiness in all areas of life as an act of worship to Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13-16, 4:1-3). Believers should strive to put certain attitudes and actions to death, while stirring and stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit. Below are a few examples of actions addressed in the Scriptures:
 - I will practice complete sexual abstinence unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Abstinence and fidelity means, among other things, that regardless of my marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices such as adultery, premarital sex and pornography (Romans 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).
 - I will seek to preserve the gift of marriage and agree to invite the pastors into any major marital conflict, especially involving conversations of abuse, adultery, or potential divorce or separation (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; for the role of the church in the process of divorce, see Paul's concern for the resolution of legal matters within the assembly of the church in 1 Corinthians 6).
 - I will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gossip, divisiveness, and other sinful behavior as the Bible dictates (Romans 1:28-32, 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18; James 3:3-18).
- to take seriously the responsibility of Christian freedom, especially actions or situations that could present a stumbling block to another (1 Corinthians 8:1-13).
- to submit to the discipline of God through His Holy Spirit by:
 - following the biblical procedures for church discipline where sin is evident in another -- the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration.
 - receiving righteous and loving discipline when confronted by fellow believers (Psalm 141:5; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Hebrews 12:5-11).
- to do the following when I sin :
 - confess my sin to God and to fellow believers .
 - repent and seek help to put my sin to death (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5; James 5:16; 1 John 1:6-10).
- to submit to the elders and other appointed leaders of the church and will be diligent to strive for unity and peace within the Church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).
- to do the following should I leave the church for righteous reasons:
 - to notify the leadership of the church
 - to seek another like-minded church with which I can carry out my biblical responsibilities as a believer

Having read this covenant and the statement of faith, I do hereby desire to enter into covenant membership with The Parkway Church.

Signature

Date

For more information, e-mail: info@theparkwaychurch.com