

Rocky Creek Baptist Church

RCBC Covenant

LIFE EXPECTATION

The expectation is for the believer to gain a deeper understanding of the newly proposed Rocky Creek Baptist Church member covenant.



The purpose of the covenant is to guide the believer in the instructions of the Lord in their relationship with Him and with others in the body of Christ. Throughout history God’s covenants (His promises) to and ultimate goal with His people is that He would be their God and that they would be His people. “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, *to be God to you* and to your descendants after you” (Genesis 17:7). “I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). “And they shall be my people, and I will be their God...I will make with them an everlasting covenant” (Jeremiah 32:38–40; cf. Ezekiel 34:30–31, 36:28, 37:26–27). That theme is picked up in the New Testament as well: “*I will be their God, and they shall be my people*” (2 Corinthians 6:16; cf. a similar theme in vv. 17–18; also 1 Peter 2:9–10).

The *sign* of covenant (the outward, physical symbol of inclusion in the covenant) varies between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament the outward sign of beginning the covenant relationship was circumcision. The sign of continuing the covenant relationship was continuing to observe all of the festivals and ceremonial laws that God gave the people at various times. In the New Covenant, the sign of beginning a covenant relationship is baptism, while the sign of continuing in that relationship is participation in the Lord’s Supper. The reason the New Covenant is called a “covenant of grace” is that it is entirely based on God’s “grace” or unmerited favor toward those whom He redeems.” Based on this New Covenant God established His church for believers to grow and serve Him.

In this lesson we will focus on the proposed new church member covenant for Rocky Creek Baptist Church dealing with the believer’s relationship with God. The covenant focuses on God’s expectations for the believer in their relationship with Him and others in the body of Christ. As we spend time focusing on what we should be doing, time for the believer to stray from God’s commands will decrease. First of all the believer must submit to Christ as Savior and Lord, repenting of their sin believing in the finished work of Christ. Scriptures instruct believers to unite in fellowship with other believers- loving others, growing in Christ, and serving all. We must remember that as we as individuals consider our commitment to the covenant each part of the covenant is our ultimate goal, we may be stronger in certain aspects than others- striving to improve in the others. The next page details the proposed membership covenant and the subsequent pages are detailed study of each point, followed by the proposed Statement of Beliefs for Rocky Creek Baptist Church.

Rocky Creek Baptist Church

PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

God, by His grace alone, has led me to repent of my sin and believe upon Jesus Christ, trusting Him alone as my Savior and Lord. As one who has been baptized as a believer in Christ, I desire to unite with this church family. Therefore, I enter into a covenantal relationship with the members of this church. In humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit, I endeavor to do the following:

- To faithfully attend the church's worship services. *Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25*
- To diligently guard and grow in the Truth, upholding the standard of the Scriptures.
1 Timothy 3:15, 6:3-4, 20; 2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:14-15, 24-26, 4:3-4
- To wholeheartedly support loving, growing, and serving for the church's ministries and members, offering:
 - ✓ My prayers. *2 Corinthians 13:9; Ephesians 1:15-20, 3:14-21, 6:18; 1 Peter 1:22; Philippians 1:3-11; Colossians 1:3-12, 4:2-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4, 5:17*
 - ✓ My financial gifts. *Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18*
 - ✓ My service. *Ephesians 4:11-16; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 10:24; Jude 17-21; 1 Peter 2:5-12, 4:10; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31, 12:4-11, 25-26; Ezekiel 36:23b*
- To diligently promote the unity of the church, being a peacemaker with all in the body of Christ. *Matthew 5:9, 23-26; Romans 12:18-21, 14:19; Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 2:1-4; Colossians 3:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 12:14*
- To boldly witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, living a transformed life and sharing the Gospel as God provides opportunity. *Matthew 4:19, 28:19; Acts 1:8, 5:42; 1 Peter 3:15*
- To actively pursue personal holiness before God, loving others as Christ has loved us.
2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 3:3; John 13:34-35
- To respectfully follow the leaders of this church, trusting and supporting their leadership.
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17-20; Hebrews 13:7, 17
- To humbly submit to the church's discipline, graciously repenting when approached about personal sin, and lovingly restoring others who become entangled in sin.
Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:6-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians. 5:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 3:5-6; Ephesians 4:29; Philippians 2:14
- To support the Statement of Beliefs of Rocky Creek Baptist Church

Signed: _____ Date: _____

To faithfully attend the church's worship services. *Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25*

Scriptures explain how believers in the first century church committed and devoted themselves to worshipping and studying the Scriptures with other believers. “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). John MacArthur explains, “The foundational content for the believer’s spiritual growth and maturity was the Scripture, God’s revealed truth, which the apostles received (cf. John 14:26, 15:26, 27, 16:13) and taught faithfully (cf. 2 Peter 1:19–21, 3:1, 2, 16).” In order for the believer to grow in the Word of God they must hear the Scriptures expounded in the truth on a consistent basis.

MacArthur continues, “fellowship, literally “partnership” or “sharing,” because Christians become partners with Jesus Christ and all other believers (1 John 1:3), it is their spiritual duty to stimulate one another to righteousness and obedience (cf. Romans 12:10, 13:8, 15:5; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 4:2, 25, 5:21; Colossians 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 3:13, 10:24, 25; 1 Peter 4:9, 10).” In order for believers to stimulate others on a consistent basis they must meet together on a consistent basis. Attending church less than 75% of the time is not consistent attendance.

Acts 2:42 explains how believers are to meet together on a consistent basis. Hebrews 10:25 warns believers not to forsake assembling together. Corporate worship and group Bible study is a vital part of spiritual life. Warning believers to forsake meeting together because tomorrow is not a guarantee for any one, in reference to the approaching “day,” the second coming of Christ (cf. Romans 13:12; 1 Corinthians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:4). Scriptures tell believers to encourage each other in the form of comforting, warning, and strengthening. In order to encourage each other there must be consistent fellowship.

To diligently guard and grow in the Truth, upholding the standard of the Scriptures. *1 Timothy 3:15, 6:3-4, 20; 2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:14-15, 24-26, 4:3-4*

Scriptures warn the believer about false teachers and prophets. In order for the believer to know what is false they must know what is true. John MacArthur comments, “Paul identifies 3 characteristics of false teachers:

- 1) they “advocate a different doctrine”—a different teaching that contradicts God’s revelation in Scripture (cf. Galatians 1:6–9);
- 2) they do “not agree with sound words”—they do not accept sound, healthy teaching, specifically the teaching contained in Scripture (2 Peter 3:16); and
- 3) they reject “doctrine conforming to godliness”—teaching not based on Scripture will always result in an unholy life. Instead of godliness, false teachers will be marked by sin (2 Peter 2:10–22; cf. Jude 4, 8–16).

“Questions” refers to idle speculation; “disputes about words” literally means “word battles.” Because proud, ignorant false teachers do not understand divine truth (2 Corinthians 2:14), they obsess over terminology and attack the reliability and authority of Scripture. Every kind of strife is mentioned to indicate that false teachers produce nothing of benefit out of their fleshly, corrupt, and empty minds.”

The only way to know the Truth is to study the Scriptures. The Scriptures instruct believers to grow and live in the Truth.

To wholeheartedly support loving, growing, and serving for the church's ministries and members, offering:

- ✓ **My prayers.** *2 Corinthians 13:9; Ephesians 1:15-20, 3:14-21, 6:18; 1 Peter 1:22; Philippians 1:3-11; Colossians 1:3-12, 4:2-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4, 5:17*

Scriptures command believers to pray for other believers as Paul demonstrates in Ephesians 3:14-21 and 6:18. John MacArthur comments on 3:14-21, “Paul’s prayers are almost always for the spiritual welfare of others (cf. Philippians 1:4; Colossians 1:9–11; 1 Thessalonians 1:2).” He continues commenting on 6:18, “This verse introduces the general character of a believer’s prayer life:

- 1) “all prayer and petition” focuses on the variety
- 2) “at all times” focuses on the frequency (cf. Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- 3) “in the Spirit” focuses on submission, as we line up with the will of God (cf. Romans 8:26, 27)
- 4) “be on the alert” focuses on the manner (cf. Matthew 26:41; Mark 13:33)
- 5) “all perseverance” focuses on the persistence (cf. Luke 11:9; 18:7, 8)
- 6) “all the saints” focuses on the objects (cf. 1 Samuel 12:23).”

- ✓ **My financial gifts.** *Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18*

Scriptures command believers to give lavishly from the abundance God has provided. John MacArthur comments on 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, “When a generous believer gives by faith and trust in God, with a desire to produce the greatest possible blessing, that person will receive that kind of a harvest of blessing (cf. Proverb 3:9, 10; 28:27; Malachi 3:10). God gives a return on the amount one invests with Him. Invest a little, receive a little, and vice versa (cf. Luke 6:38). The term translated “purposed” occurs only here in the New Testament and indicates a premeditated, predetermined plan of action that is done from the heart voluntarily, but not impulsively.

This is an age-old biblical principle of giving (cf. Exodus 25:2). The term “grudgingly” literally “with grief,” “sorrow,” or “sadness,” indicates an attitude of depression, regret, and reluctance that accompanies something done strictly out of a sense of duty and obligation, but not joy. “Under compulsion” refers to external pressure and coercion, quite possibly accompanied by legalism. Believers are not to give based on the demands of others, or according to any arbitrary standards or set amounts. God has a unique, special love for those who are happily committed to generous giving. The Greek word for “cheerful” is the word from which we get “hilarious,” which suggests that God loves a heart that is enthusiastically thrilled with the pleasure of giving.”

- ✓ **My service.** *Ephesians 4:11-16; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 10:24; Jude 17-21; 1 Peter 2:5-12, 4:10; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31, 12:4-11, 25-26; Ezekiel 36:23b*

John MacArthur comments, “As evidenced by His perfect fulfillment of His Father’s will, Christ possessed the authority and sovereignty to assign the spiritual gifts to those He has called into service in His church. He gave not only gifts, but gifted men (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers). “Equipping” refers to restoring something to its original condition, or its being made fit or complete. In this context, it refers to leading Christians from sin to obedience. Scripture is the key to this process. “Saints,” all who believe in Jesus Christ are called into “the work of service.”

The spiritual service required of every Christian, not just of church leaders (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:58) for “the building up of the body of Christ.” The spiritual edification, nurturing, and development of the church (cf. Acts 20:32). Oneness and harmony among believers is possible only when it is built on the foundation of sound doctrine. “The knowledge of the Son of God.” This does not refer to salvation knowledge but to the deep knowledge of Christ that a believer comes to have through prayer, faithful study of His Word, and obedience to His commands (cf. Philippians 3:8–10, 12; Colossians 1:9, 10; 2:2; 1 John 2:12–14).”

To diligently promote the unity of the church, being a peacemaker with all in the body of Christ. *Matthew 5:9, 23-26; Romans 12:18-21, 14:19;*

Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 2:1-4; Colossians 3:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 12:14

Matthew chapter 5 provides God’s specific instruction to believers to diligently seek unity within the body of Christ. Reconciliation with others is required of all believers, even taking precedence over one’s offering to God. The command of unity continues throughout the Scriptures, as revealed in Philippians 2:1-4. John MacArthur writes, “Paul’s joy was tied to concern for the unity of believers (cf. Hebrews 13:17). The phrase “same mind” (cf. 3:15, 16; 4:2; 1 Peter 3:8) means “think the same way.”

This exhortation is not optional or obscure, but is repeated throughout the New Testament (cf. Romans 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11–13). In the “same love” instructs believers to love others in the body of Christ equally—not because they are all equally attractive, but by showing the same kind of sacrificial, loving service to all that was shown to them by Christ (John 15:13; Romans 12:10; 1 John 3:17). “United in spirit” perhaps a term specially coined by Paul. It literally means “one-souled” and describes people who are knit together in harmony, having the same desires, passions, and ambitions.”

Believers must make sure they continue to progress in this critical area of love for one another. Being “of the same mind” instructs believers to use their diverse gifts in cooperation focusing on the glory of God.

To boldly witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, living a transformed life and sharing the Gospel as God provides opportunity.

Matthew 4:19, 28:19; Acts 1:8, 5:42; 1 Peter 3:15

In our *Every Believer a Witness* lessons we outlined how the Scriptures tell of God's command to believers to be a living witness to the world, both in word and actions. "And He said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame" (1 Peter 3:15-16).

The Scriptures are clear that we as believers are to make a difference in this world. We can only make a difference in the world if we are different from the world. This one area is probably the most difficult for most believers. Believers are to strive to grow in holiness and be a witness to the world.

To actively pursue personal holiness before God, loving others as Christ has loved us.

2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 3:3; John 13:34-35

These Scriptures clearly outline how all believers are to grow in holiness. Believers are to grow in the Scriptures and live a life in accordance with the Scriptures. Included in the Scriptures is for the believer to act in obedience, in addition to love others. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).

To respectfully follow the leaders of this church, trusting and supporting their leadership. *1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17-20; Hebrews 13:7, 17*

John MacArthur explains God's instructions in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 when he writes, "Appreciate" means that the people are to know their pastors well enough to have an intimate appreciation for them and to respect them because of their value. The work of pastors is summarized in a 3-fold description which includes:

- 1) Laboring, working to the point of exhaustion
- 2) Overseeing, literally standing before the flock to lead them in the way of righteousness
- 3) Instructing in the truths of God's Word (cf. Hebrews 13:7, 17).

In addition to knowing pastors, congregations are to think rightly and lovingly of their pastors (esteem), not because of their charm or personality, but because of the fact that they work for the Chief Shepherd as His special servants (cf. 1 Peter 5:2-4). They are also to submit to their leadership so that "peace" prevails in the church."

To humbly submit to the church's discipline, graciously repenting when approached about personal sin, and lovingly restoring others who become entangled in sin. *Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:6-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians. 5:14-15; 2 Thessalonians 3:5-6; Ephesians 4:29; Philippians 2:14*

Believers are commanded to grow in holiness which requires repenting personal sin, seeking the Holy Spirit's assistance in turning from their sin. Part of the process includes church discipline in terms of working together to hold each other accountable to God's Word, restoring others (cf. Galatians 6:1; Matthew 18:15-20). The process of church discipline must be considered in light of the parable of the lost sheep in the previous verses of Matthew 18:12-14. The goal of the process is restoration, when successful, "you have gained your brother."

To support the Statement of Beliefs of Rocky Creek Baptist Church

The final part of the covenant to be covered in this lesson is a review of a detailed Statement of Beliefs of Rocky Creek Baptist. The statement outlines the church's beliefs concerning God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, Man, Salvation, Eternity, the Church, and the Ordinances of Baptism & the Lord's Supper. Please review the Statement of Beliefs in detail; these are details that are critical to unity.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS OF ROCKY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

God

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. Everything has been created by Him and for Him. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God. God is the one living and true God. He is infinite and perfect in holiness. God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

Genesis 1:1,26,27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 23:9, 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2-3; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Luke 3:21-22, 10:21-22; John 1:1-5; Isaiah 46:9-10; Romans 1:7; 1 Timothy 1:1-2, 2:5-6; Revelation 1:6

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal and one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus was born of a virgin, conceived of the Holy Spirit, and lived a sinless human life. He offered Himself as a substitution, payment and justification for the sins of all men by dying on the cross, the perfect sacrifice. He was buried and after three days, He arose from the dead to demonstrate His power over sin and death. After His literal and physical resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven. He is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry as Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate. Christ will return to judge the living and the dead and to reign as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15, 7:25, 9:24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4, 3:24, 8:34, 14:9; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; Luke 1:35; 1 Peter 1:3-5, 2:24, 4:5; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 2:1-2

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is co-equal and one with the Father and the Son. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every believer from the moment of salvation. He is the source of the power for regeneration of the believer, understanding of spiritual truth, and living a life that is pleasing to God. The Christian is to seek to live under His control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:6, 17; John 16:7-13, 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12-14, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13, 5:18; Galatians 5:25; Romans 8:9

The Bible

The Bible is God's Word, written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Both the Old and New Testament focus on God and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. It is fully inspired by God, inerrant, perfect, life giving, and life changing. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. The Bible is Absolute Truth, the final authority for faith and life.

2 Timothy 1:13, 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21, 3:16; Psalm 12:6, 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5; Luke 24:25-27; Matthew 5:18; John 14:26, 16:12-13

Man

Man is created in the image of God. He is the supreme object of God's creation. Since Adam's disobedience of God, all men are guilty of Adam's original sin, unable to come to God on their own, and have a nature of disobedience towards God, which is called "sin." This attitude separates man from God. Those who have placed their trust in the finished work of Christ are forgiven and adopted as children of God, and they will spend eternity with Him.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23, 5:12-21; Isaiah 59:1-2

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS OF ROCKY CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH (cont.)

Salvation

Salvation is a gift from God to man. Man can never make up for his sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can man be saved from sin's penalty.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1; John 10:29, 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5; John 3:16, 2:25, 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15; 1 Corinthians 15:35-55; Daniel 12:2

Eternity

Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is to exist eternally in Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life in Heaven. Because God gives man eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in that salvation is for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. Man serves God out of a heart of gratitude for the gift of salvation. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives this security.

John 3:16, 14:17; 1 John 2:25, 5:11-13, Romans 6:23, 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15, John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:1; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10-14, 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 Corinthians 2:7-9

Church

The church is the living spiritual body of Christ. Christ is the head of the church, which is made up of all born again believers. The purpose of the church is to glorify God. The local church is an assembly of believers that comes together for worship, for growth in the image of Christ by the teaching of the Word, for observance of the Ordinances, for service using spiritual gifts, for prayer, and for fellowship.

Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 5:19-21; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42, 13:1-4, 14:27, 15:19-31, 18:8-22, 20:17,28; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 5:4-13, 11:23-26, 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Timothy 3:1-3; Titus 1:5-11; Romans 16:1-4; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Matthew 28:19-20

Ordinances (Baptism and Lord's Supper)

The Lord Jesus Christ has instructed two ordinances to the local church, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the action of the believer; the full immersion is a symbol of the union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism is the outward symbol of beginning the Christian life. The Lord's Supper is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian's life as a sign of continuing fellowship with Christ, as a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice for the believer's sins. The bread is broken to symbolize the breaking of Christ's body, and when the cup is poured out, it symbolizes the pouring out of Christ's blood for the believer.

Colossians 2:11-12; Romans 6:1-11; Acts 8:12, 10:44-48, 22:16; Galatians 3:27; Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 10:17, 11:23-26; John 6:63-57

I am in full agreement with these Essential and Statement of Beliefs of Rocky Creek Baptist Church.

Signed: _____ Date: _____