
MEMBERSHIP IN *THE NEW CHURCH* IS BY COVENANT

“There is no such thing as a relationship without a covenant. And in our world, covenants must constantly be remembered, maintained, reworked, renewed.... Here at this church, we want renewal and the excitement of a more dynamic relationship with God. Renewal and growth seem appropriate to real life in Christ Jesus. God may have more plans for us than we know. Instead of everything locked up and tied down, we want a church willing and able to respond, to pray, to obey – and to change our commitments and covenants to match where the Spirit is trying to lead us. So we have moved into patterns as old as the Bible itself, and the Bible is about covenants with God from one end to the other.”

– Bruce Van Blair, *A COVENANT PEOPLE*

For more of Bruce’s thoughts on Covenants and some history about our Covenant process:

SERMON: [OUR BEHAVIOR](#)

SERMON: [A COVENANT PEOPLE](#)

The New Church is a Covenant-based community, and submitting a Covenant is the only basis for membership. We are comprised of people (13 years of age or older) who have each expressed through our written Covenant a desire to join in the faith, work, and/or fellowship of *The New Church*, and who share the understanding that it is the purpose of *The New Church* to be a community of intentional, committed Christian seekers and believers, each of whom has covenanted in the way we believe is best for us and consistent with our relationship with God.

To be a member of *The New Church*, a Covenant must be submitted in writing. **Email is an acceptable way to submit a written Covenant.** If writing is a hardship, a person may dictate his or her Covenant to another member. While there is no set format for our written Covenants, the PDF fill-in form at the end of this Covenant Package may be helpful.

Below are excerpts about Covenants from our Bylaws, followed by a list of the various positions, boards and committees of *The New Church*.

TNC BYLAW EXCERPTS – COVENANTS

THE COVENANT

Each member’s Covenant shall be a statement of their desire to be a member of this Church, expressed in written form. Each member, each year, shall prayerfully consider his or her part in the life of this Church, and renew or rewrite their Covenant. A Covenant may be as long or as short as a member desires. In their Covenant, a member may write declarations of intention concerning participation, service, financial contributions, exclusionary clauses, faith concerns, spiritual disciplines, areas of special interest, and anything else they wish to note and remember. No person need write in their Covenant anything they do not wish to write in their Covenant. Any member may revise or amend their Covenant at any time.

No person shall have the right to challenge or discredit another member’s Covenant. All persons submitting a Covenant shall instantly be members of this Church in full standing on the basis of their Covenant. Each person shall review, renew, or revise their Covenant in November of each year, to take effect at the following Annual Meeting.

Any person making a Covenant request to serve on any standing board or committee shall automatically become a member of that board or committee. They shall remain a member of that board or committee for as long as they wish to serve there. A person may additionally express in their Covenant a willingness

to serve as chairperson of a board or committee or to serve as an officer of this Church, and the Nominating Committee shall give the request careful consideration.

It is the intention of these bylaws to make it easy for our people to get to where they *want* to serve.

SUBMITTING THE COVENANT

Members shall submit their Covenants on or before Stewardship Sunday in November of each year. Stewardship Sunday shall be designated by the Diaconate and announced no later than September 30. Covenants are “the life blood” of the Congregation and shall be celebrated and honored as such. It shall be the responsibility of a designated Deacon to read all of the Covenants, and to share the appropriate information from the Covenants with the Treasurer (or Financial Secretary) and with the Nominating Committee.

MEMBERSHIP ROLLS

All persons who have covenanted to be members for the coming year shall have their names placed on the membership roll as it is constituted on January 1 of each year.

NEW MEMBERS

Whenever a new member submits a Covenant, their name shall be added immediately to the membership roll of this Church.

TNC BYLAW EXCERPTS – OFFICERS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

CHURCH OFFICERS AND CHAIRS OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES

MODERATOR – The Moderator shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the Church Council and at all duly called meetings of the Congregation.
- Be an *ex officio* member of all boards, committees, and task forces of the Church.
- Coordinate the efforts of boards and committees.
- Meet regularly with the Minister to share common concerns.
- By the December Church Council meeting, propose to the Church Council, for its approval, names of members to serve on a Nominating Committee. On approval, these names shall be submitted to the Congregation for election at the Annual Meeting.
- In Moderator's absence, the chair of the Diaconate shall perform the responsibilities of Moderator.

CHURCH CLERK (SECRETARY) – The Church Clerk shall:

- Keep a record of the proceedings of the Church and of the Church Council.
- Keep on file all communications and written official reports.
- Notify all persons elected to Church offices.
- Give legal notices of all meetings when such notices are necessary.
- Conduct all correspondence when such is not otherwise provided.
- Summarize the decisions and activities of the Church Council for inclusion in the Church newsletter, if one exists.
- Maintain the records of the Church, recording additions and deletions to the membership, baptisms, confirmations, and weddings.

TREASURER – The Treasurer shall:

- Be responsible for all expenditures of the Church, including payment of bills on order of the Church Council or its properly appointed agents.
- Maintain an accurate accounting system for all matters pertaining to Church income and disbursements.
- Make a detailed financial report annually to the Church and at other times as deemed necessary.
- Have custody of all records relating to the real and personal property of the Church.
- Be an *ex officio* member of the Board of Trustees.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY – The Financial Secretary shall:

- Receive and be responsible for all payments to the Church for whatever reason.
- Maintain an accurate record of all pledges, and provide each pledgor with at least a twice-yearly statement of account.
- Deposit all moneys received by the Church in a banking institution as designated by the Board of Trustees, recording all such deposits with the Treasurer.
- Be an *ex officio* member of the Board of Trustees.

SEER – The Seer shall:

- Be responsible for maintaining and adding to the Church archives.
- Arrange for written, photographic, or taped records of special celebrations and significant events in the life of the Church, if appropriate.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

THE DIACONATE (DEACONS)

The Diaconate, in cooperation with the Minister, shall have responsibility for the spiritual life of the Church, and for the nurture of those within the Congregation. The Diaconate's duties shall include evangelism; devising and maintaining ways to enhance and increase caring and communication between the members of the Church; and developing and maintaining ways of integrating new and existing members into the life and mission of the Church.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees shall have the responsibility for the finances of the Church. It shall tend to all matters pertaining to insurance, liability, and legal issues that may arise. It shall have responsibility for web pages, video conferencing, and any other ways and means for keeping the Congregation in communication at worship services, classes, study groups, coffee hours, meetings, and any other connections deemed helpful or necessary.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

In cooperation with the Minister, the Worship Committee shall be responsible for the worship services of the Church. Its duties shall include assisting the Minister with planning and producing the worship services of the Church, including selecting hymns and other appropriate music for the worship services and designing any liturgical portions of the worship service when desired or inspired; being watchful for and helping to design special worship services for special occasions beyond Sunday morning; and finding ways to enhance congregational singing and any other worshipful music in our services.

BOARD OF DISCIPLE BANDS

The Board of Disciple Bands shall have responsibility for encouraging every member of the Church to participate in a small group with other members for the purpose of studying the Bible, sharing what is going on with each other, and caring for one another in Christian love.

BOARD OF VOCATIONS

The Board of Vocations shall be responsible for encouraging every member to find, train for, and live out their vocation. Its duties shall include coordinating the Congregation's efforts to support one another in finding, training for, and/or implementing each member's vocation; finding ways to help finance and support a member's move from a job into a vocation; and encouraging and awakening young people to seek a "calling" instead of just a job or way to make money. (Colossians 3:23-24)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three or more members of the Congregation proposed by the Moderator and approved by the Church Council. Its duties shall include preparing, prior to the Annual Meeting, a ballot nominating members of the Church (who have agreed to serve) to fill the offices, chairperson positions, and boards and committees of the Church.

2012 Covenant for *The New Church*

(This form is offered as a convenience. Your covenant can be written in any form that you choose.)

Date: _____

I, _____, want to join *The New Church* for the year 2012.

- I would like to serve in this way:

- My financial commitment for the year is:

- My commitment to prayer and to study of the Scriptures:

- Other:

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Address, including city, state and zip code:

Phone number: _____

Cell phone number: _____

Other phone number: _____

Email address: _____