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## MEMBERSHIP IN *THE NEW CHURCH* IS BY COVENANT

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*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*

*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*.

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## TNC BYLAW EXCERPTS – COVENANTS

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### 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. Each person submitting a Covenant shall instantly be a member 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 Annual Meeting in January the following year.

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 Church Council 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 October or November of each year. Stewardship Sunday shall be designated by the Diaconate and announced no later than four weeks before such designated date. 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 the Church Council.

### 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.

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## TNC BYLAW EXCERPTS – OFFICERS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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### CHURCH OFFICERS AND CHAIRS OF BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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**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 this Church.
- Coordinate the efforts of boards and committees.
- Meet regularly with the Minister to share common concerns.

**CHURCH CLERK (SECRETARY)** – The Church Clerk shall:

- Keep a record of the proceedings of this 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 this Church, recording additions and deletions to the membership, baptisms, confirmations, and weddings.

**TREASURER** – The Treasurer shall:

- Be responsible for all expenditures of this 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 this Church and at other times as deemed necessary.
- Have custody of all records relating to the real and personal property of this Church.
- Receive and be responsible for all payments to this Church for whatever reason.
- Maintain an accurate record of all pledges, and provide each pledgor with at least a once-yearly statement of account.
- Deposit all moneys received by this 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 this Church, if appropriate.

### BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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**THE DIACONATE (DEACONS)**

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

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees shall have the responsibility for the finances of this Church. It shall tend to all matters pertaining to insurance, liability, and legal issues that may arise. It shall have responsibility for website 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 this Church. Its duties shall include assisting the Minister with planning and producing the worship services of this Church, including selecting hymns and other appropriate licensed 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, keeping in mind copyright licensing requirements for using and streaming music.

**BOARD OF DISCIPLE BANDS**

The Board of Disciple Bands shall have responsibility for encouraging every member of this 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 VOCATIO**

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