

Old Fort Baptist Church Covenant

The church is the vehicle by which God is accomplishing His purposes in the world. The church exists to display the glory of God because all things exist for His glory. Followers of Jesus have been invited graciously into God's redemptive purposes for the world through the church. In light of this reality, the opportunity to join a local church is much more than a commitment to consistent attendance or active involvement in community. It is also a sacred call to be involved in the redemptive work of our sovereign God and to be a microcosm of the universal household of God. Therefore, we will covenant together to fulfill these purposes and hold one another accountable to this high calling.

One of Old Fort's greatest convictions is that church membership should be meaningful. Therefore, we believe it is important to covenant together as a church family. As members of Old Fort Baptist Church, we affirm this covenant with one another, by God's grace, for our growth, and ultimately for the glory of our Triune God:

a. Baptized Community of Believers that Makes Disciples

Having been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 6:44; Acts 3:19, 16:31, 17:30, 20:21; Rom. 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-10;) and to surrender our lives to Him (Lk. 14:25-33), and having been baptized by immersion as born again Christians (Jn. 3:3; Acts 8:38, Acts 10:44-48) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:1-4), we covenant with one another as one body in Christ to glorify God (Isa. 43:7; 1 Cor. 10:31) by making disciples of Jesus Christ among all nations (Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Ps. 67:1-2; Rev. 7:9-10).

b. Worship Together Regularly around the Scriptures

Together, we will draw near to God in worship (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:22). We will delight in the glory of God (Ps. 16:11, 37:4, 63:1-11), depend on the presence of God (Matt. 28:20; Jn. 15:5, 16:7; 1 Pet. 4:11), and grow in the knowledge of God (Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:9-12; 2 Pet. 3:17-18) by submitting to the Word of God in all matters of life, as the all-sufficient authority in our lives and in His Church (Ps. 19:7-11, 119:105-112; 2 Tim. 3:14-4:5). Together, we will hold fast to the hope we profess (Heb. 10:23).

c. Disciple and Care for One Another in Large and Small Groups

The Gospel creates community - we are committed to living life together and challenging one another to grow as disciples of Christ. We are committed to living out the Gospel and its implications for everyday life (1 Pet. 3:15, Gal. 2:14). Together, we will spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). We will meet with one another consistently in small groups and actively participate in the corporate gatherings of this local church, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25). We will also pray for one another regularly (Ephesians 6:18-20) and serve one another selflessly (Romans 12:9-13).

d. Submit to the Leadership of the Church

We will cooperate with, submit to, and prayerfully support the leadership of the pastors (elders) who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for this body by teaching the Word of Christ to us and modeling the character of Christ before us (Heb. 13:7, 17; Ac. 6:1-7; 20:28-31; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17-20; 1 Pet. 5:14).

e. Good Stewards

We covenant that we will give cheerfully, regularly, and generously to the support of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel both in our city and through all nations (2 Cor. 8-9). We affirm that we will give our spiritual gifts, time, resources and money in a sacrificial manner consistent with the Gospel and for its progress.

f. Display God's Glory through Unity and Discipline

Unity - Together, we will seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). We affirm that we are God's church and not our own; therefore, our preferences, needs, and desires are secondary to the mission and vision of the church. Part of maintaining unity and peace means we will adhere to Old Fort's "Basic Beliefs" and will not be divisive over Old Fort's Theological Distinctives as laid out in the BFM2000.

Restorative Discipline - We will humbly and gently confront one another and receive correction from one another in accordance with a New Testament understanding of church discipline and restoration (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1). We will submit to and prayerfully support the leadership of our pastors (elders) as they seek to oversee discipline among our church.

g. Christian Growth

We affirm our responsibility to grow in Christ and his Gospel through the consistent practice of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, Scripture reading, worship, service and others. We affirm, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to exercise our Christian liberty with responsibility, remembering that because of the Gospel, we have a special obligation to lead a new and holy life. Certain life choices such as cohabitation and extra-marital sex (Acts 15:20; Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:13, 18; 7:2; 10:8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 7), homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9), drug addictions and alcohol abuse (Ephesians 5:18; Proverbs 23:29-35; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 2 Peter 2:19; 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; 1 Corinthians 10:31), etc. are not consistent with this special obligation to lead a new and holy life.

h. Gospel-Centered Families

We will endeavor to build Gospel-Centered homes. Husbands will seek to lead their wives and children sacrificially as Christ leads the church, meaning husbands are ready to lay down their lives for their families (Eph. 5:22-33). Wives will seek to submit to their husbands, as the church does to Christ. As parents, we will raise the children under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.