



PARTNERSHIP COVENANT

Why do we have a partnership covenant?

The Mercyview partnership covenant is a tool that defines Biblical expectations and responsibilities that God has for the partners and leaders in this particular local church into one document, as to encourage consistency, accountability, and loving unity within the church. Our partnership covenant echoes the spirit found in places like Genesis 6, 9, and 17, Ezekiel 20, Hosea 2, Jeremiah 31, and Matthew 26.

What does it mean to become a partner?

Partners are what we call “members” at Mercyview. We believe the term “partner” best describes the kind of relationship we are to have in the body of Christ ([1 Corinthians 12:12-26](#)). Becoming a partner means formally committing yourself to this particular local church, to function, participate, and minister in a particular place within the body of Christ ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#); [Ephesians 4:12](#)), joining in its mission, and placing yourself under the care, accountability, discipline, and direction of its leaders, who will give account to Jesus for their work ([Acts 20:28](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#); [1 Corinthians 5:11-13](#)).

Commitments of elders to partners

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

The elders covenant...

- 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 leading 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 identify, test, and appoint additional elders and deacons according to the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures ([1 Timothy 4:14](#); [Titus 1:5](#); [Acts 6:1-4](#); [15:22](#))
- to discipline church leaders when necessary ([Matthew 18:15-20](#); [1 Timothy 5:19-20](#); [Titus 1:10-13](#))
- to train prospective partners and receive new partners into the church ([1 Timothy 3:1-2](#); [1 Peter 5:1-5](#))
- to equip the members of the church for the work of ministry and mission ([Ephesians 4:11-16](#); [Matthew 28:18-20](#))

- to ensure a healthy partnership with the congregation by providing open and accessible pathways for communication, in particular regarding the affirmation of disciplining partners, appointing/disciplining leaders, doctrinal issues, and significant directional matters ([Matthew 18:17](#); [Acts 15:22](#); [2 Corinthians 2:5-8](#); [1 Timothy 5:19-20](#))
- to regularly pray for each church partner and as requested, pray for the sick ([Acts 6:1-4](#); [James 5:13-15](#))
- to be on guard and protect against false teachers and teachings ([Matthew 7:15](#); [Acts 20:28-31](#); [1 Timothy 1:3-7](#); [1 John 4:1](#))
- to lovingly exercise 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 5:1-13](#); [Galatians 6:1](#); [James 5:19-20](#))
- to set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church partnership stated below ([Philippians 3:17](#); [1 Timothy 4:12](#); [Titus 2:7-8](#); [1 Peter 5:3](#))

Commitments of partners to the elders and rest of the body

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 Scriptures refer to this reality as “living by the Spirit” in Romans 8. The requirements of this partnership covenant are in no way intended as an addition to the biblical obligations of a believer. Rather, these commitments function primarily as an accessible explanation of what the Scriptures teach about the obedience that faith produces in the life of a partner in the church.

As a partner, I covenant...

- to pursue the Lord Jesus Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of 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 and example of Jesus by participating in the ordinances prescribed to His Church by: 1) being baptized by immersion after my conversion and 2) regularly remembering and celebrating the person and work of Christ through communion
- to understand Mercyview’s core beliefs and agree not to be divisive toward its teaching ([Hebrews 13:17](#); [Ephesians 4:1-3](#))
- to actively participating in the life of Mercyview by attending weekly worship gatherings and a missional community ([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 1) serving those within and outside of this church and 2) regular financial giving, service and participation in community that is sacrificial, cheerful and voluntary ([Matthew 25:14-30](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#); [2 Corinthians 8-9](#))
- to, 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](#). [1 Peter 4:1-3](#)). Below are a few examples of actions addressed in the Scriptures we are to walk in holiness in:
 - I will practice complete chastity unless married and, if married, complete fidelity within a heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Complete chastity and fidelity means, among other things, that regardless of my marital status, I will pursue purity and abstain from sexually immoral practices including, but not limited to, premarital sex, adultery, and pornography ([Romans 13:11-14](#); [1 Corinthians 6:15-20](#), [1 Corinthians 10:8](#); [Ephesians 5:3](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:1-8](#); [Hebrews 13:4](#)). In general, I will seek to live above reproach

- towards God and others in wisdom and ensure a positive witness to all those I am in community with ([1 Corinthians 8:1-13](#))
- I will seek to preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation at Mercyview with a pastor before pursuing divorce from my spouse ([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 6:1-11](#))
 - I will refrain from illegal drug use, drunkenness, gossip, and other sinful behavior as the Bible dictates ([Romans 1:28-32](#); [Romans 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 [Matthew 18:15-20](#)
 - receiving righteous and loving discipline when approached biblically by fellow believers ([Psalm 141:5](#); [Matthew 18:15-20](#); [1 Corinthians 5:9-13](#); [Hebrews 12:5-11](#)).
 - to submit to the elders and other appointed leaders of the church and diligently strive for unity and peace within the church ([Ephesians 4:1-3](#); [Hebrews 13:17](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#)).
 - 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 accept the responsibility to notify Mercyview eldership if at any time I believe I can no longer commit to this covenant for righteous reasons. I commit to pursue this by doing the following:
 - Write and send a detailed reasoning to the elder who oversees my missional community of the righteous reasons I feel led to leave
 - Meet with that elder to discuss further my situation and prayerfully seek God's will together as we discern my next step in my spiritual journey
 - If I must leave Mercyview, I will do it in a peaceful and respectful way, as to honor the church body and greater body of Christ.

A Covenant Seal

I understand that this covenant obligates me to the elders of Mercyview and is an acknowledgement of my submission to the elders of Mercyview. With God enabling me, I will consider my commitment to this partnership covenant on a yearly basis. In awareness of and submission to these expectations, I commit myself to Mercyview.

Partner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Partner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Elder representative signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____