

URC Member Covenant

Preface

The biblical call for a membership of mutual accountability in a local body of believers suggests the need for believers to make a covenant with one another. This is simply implied in agreeing to hold each other accountable to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord. As members of the *Unalaska Reformed Church*, we affirm this covenant with one another by God's grace for our good and ultimately for God's glory.

The church covenant is a written summary of biblical practice that a church agrees should be the basis of its accountability. The covenant allows for freedom of conscience in areas where the Bible is not definite in its guidance. The covenant focuses on principles, especially as they relate to our corporate life together.

Christian Membership

Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent¹ and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to surrender our lives to Him, and having been baptized² in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit³, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body of Christ.

Christian Unity

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴

Assembling Together

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together⁵, nor neglect to pray⁶ for one another and others outside the church.

Communion

We will regularly participate in communion as we solemnly and joyfully remember the past work of Christ on the cross, celebrate the present work of Christ at the Father's right hand, and anticipate the future work of Christ in his return for his bride.⁷

Loving One Another

Together, we will stir one another up to love and good works.⁵ We will meet with one another consistently,⁵ pray for one another regularly⁶, and serve one another⁸ selflessly. We will share each other's joy⁹ and bear each other's burdens.¹⁰ We will listen carefully to one another, build one another up with our speech, and encourage one another with our example.¹¹ We will be slow to take offense, and always ready for reconciliation.¹²

Church 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.^{13 14 15}

Holy Living

We also agree to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith;^{16 17} to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world;¹⁸ to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting¹⁹ and excessive anger;^{20 21 22} to seek God's help in abstaining from all drugs, food, drink²³, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.²⁴

Giving Cheerfully

We will give cheerfully²⁵ and generously²⁶ to the support of the church²⁷, the relief of the poor^{28 29}, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.³⁰

Submission to Authority

We will submit³¹ to the leadership of the elders who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for this body by teaching³² the Holy Scriptures to us and modeling³³ the character of Christ before us, and we will affirm deacons³⁴ as leading servants in the church.

Moving Away

If we move from this local body we will, if possible, unite with another local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Ending

This covenant provides a summary of the life which we will hold each other accountable to pursue. When a person becomes a member of *Unalaska Reformed Church* he or she agrees to live by this covenant and to help others in the church to do the same.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Footnotes

-
- ¹ ... God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, (2 Timothy 2:25)
- ² Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:37-38)
- ³ 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, (Matthew 28:19)
- ⁴ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3)
- ⁵ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- ⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16)
- ⁷ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
- ⁸ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)
- ⁹ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. (Romans 12:15)
- ¹⁰ Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

¹¹ Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)

¹² So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24)

¹³ Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. (Galatians 6:1)

¹⁴ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17)

¹⁵ How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye. (Luke 6:42)

¹⁶ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

¹⁷ Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

¹⁸ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. (Philippians 2:14-16)

¹⁹ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. (Galatians 5:13-15)

²⁰ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. (James 1:19-20)

²¹ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

²² Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. (Psalm 4:4)

²³ The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. (Romans 13:12-14)

²⁴ I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. (Romans 14:14-15)

²⁵ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

²⁶ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, (2 Corinthians 9:11-13)

²⁷ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (Romans 12:13)

²⁸ Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. (Galatians 2:10)

²⁹ Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse. (Proverbs 28:27)

³⁰ 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)

³¹ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17)

³² The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

³³ So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God

would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3)

³⁴ Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:8-13)