



## Church Covenant Instruction Sheet

1. Applicants who express a desire to become a member would meet with one or two elders during which time the elders would go over the Covenant and Statement of Faith with them and ask to hear their testimonies.
2. If those Elders are confident the applicant is
  - A believer
  - Committed to belonging (encourage them to join a Life Group)
  - Support the Fellowship by using spiritual gifts, resources, time, and talents to build up the body of Christ and reach out to the lost and dying world.
  - Understands and agrees with our Statement of Faith

The Elders will ask the applicant to sign the covenant.

3. Those who sign the covenant will be presented before the congregation on a Sunday morning and welcomed into the fellowship.



## Church Covenant

### Article III. Membership.

Section 1. Membership shall be by public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, baptism, and upon submission to and accordance with the Statement of Faith. Please read the Statement of Faith of Harvest Fellowship (*on back*) before signing the covenant.

Section 2. The church covenant that binds Harvest Fellowship shall be as follows:

“Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and on profession of faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; striving to live according to the Scriptures, which I accept as final authority in all matters; I do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with all others, as one body in Christ. I have read the Statement of Faith of Harvest Fellowship and agree with its beliefs.

It is my desire and prayer that the righteousness and love of Christ might increase in me daily, that I might set the example that God intends. I covenant to support faithfully this church, as part of the Body of Christ, with my prayers, presence, gifts, and service.”

Printed Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Elder Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Elder Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Section 3. The purpose of voting is to discern the mind of Christ. We are a theocracy not a democracy. Only such members of legal age and in full and regular standing may act and vote in the transactions of this church. Families are to seek God’s will for every matter voted on.

*If you have not already, please let us know how we can contact you:*

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Scripture:** We believe the Bible, containing the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God. It is verbally inspired (*verbal plenary*) and completely without error (historically, scientifically, morally, and spiritually) in the original manuscripts. The Holy Spirit superintended the writing of the Bible in such a way that the human authors, reflecting their own words and literary style, wrote exactly what God intended down to the very words written. The Bible is therefore our supreme and final authority in all matters that it addresses. Church tradition, personal preference and the latest insights of so-called experts are all subjugated to the Bible's teaching. (Matthew 5:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

**Creation:** We believe that the physical universe was created by God out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) and declared "very good." It asserts God's existence and gives a trustworthy revelation of God's character and purpose, though corrupted by the Fall. God's existence, power, glory, and wisdom are clearly seen by all humanity in view of creation. A sincere study of nature can benefit a person's search for truth. The special revelation of God's Word and the general revelation of nature, when properly interpreted, will never contradict each other. (Genesis 1:1,31; Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:18-23; 8:9-22).

**God:** We believe there is only one infinitely perfect God (monotheism), the transcendent creator and providential sustainer of the universe. This one God exists eternally as three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Trinity). All three persons in the Godhead are coequal in power, nature, and glory. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1; 20:28; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

**Person of Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ is both God and man, one person with two natures. He has always been the second person of the Trinity and took on the second nature of humanity in the incarnation. We also believe in His eternal preexistence, virgin birth, miracles, sinless life, death on the cross, bodily resurrection from the dead, ascension into heaven, and present work in heaven as High Priest and Advocate. He will return just as He left to resurrect and judge all humankind. (Luke 1; 23-24; Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 John 4:2)

**Person of the Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is coequal with the Father and the Son. We also believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit in creation and salvation, a ministry which includes indwelling believers and empowering them for godly living and spiritual service. (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:13; John 16:5-15; Romans 8; Titus 3:5)

**Humankind:** We believe God created people in His image (having rational, moral, relational, and spiritual capacities) to love Him, fellowship with Him and give Him glory. Human beings are the crown of God's creation, possessing intrinsic dignity, and therefore are unique among all of God's creation. Adam and Eve, the first two humans, chose to rebel against God resulting in separation from God. Because of Adam's sin, death and the sinful nature are passed on to all of humanity. Unregenerate people are spiritually dead and incapable of saving themselves. Their only hope is redemption through faith in Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:26-27; 3; Psalm 8; John 6:33; Romans 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-9)

**Redemption/Substitutionary Atonement:** We believe God has acted sovereignly to bridge the gap that separates people from Himself. He sent His Son, born of a virgin, attested by miracles and by a sinless life, to bear the full penalty for humanity's sin. Jesus Christ suffered and died in the place of sinners, thus satisfying the Father's just wrath against human sin, and effecting true reconciliation between God and those who believe. In the atoning death of Christ, both God's love and God's justice are fully manifested. The righteousness of Jesus Christ in perfectly fulfilling the law of God has been graciously credited to all believers. Redemption is solely a work of God's grace, received exclusively through faith in Jesus Christ, and never by works of human merit. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins we deserved to pay and imputes his righteousness to us when we trust in Christ. (Romans 5:6-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Isaiah 53)

**Justification:** We believe justification is a judicial act of God's grace wherein He acquits a person of all sin and accepts that person as righteous in His sight because of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Justification is strictly a work of God's grace, apprehended through faith alone, and solely on the account of Christ. (Romans 4:1-5; Philippians 3:9; Luke 18:9-14; Galatians 2:15-16)

**Faith:** We believe we are saved by faith alone. True faith includes repentance, surrender and trust. Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin (Acts 20:21; Luke 24:47); we must come to a place where we see our sin as evil, and we don't want to live that way anymore. We have to want to be saved from our sin, before we can be saved from our sin (Matthew 1:21; 1 John 3:5). When we come to this place of repentance, we also recognize that only Jesus can save us from the penalty, power and eventual presence of sin. Faith is trust in Christ, not in ourselves or our works, for our salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). When we trust in Him, we surrender to Him as Lord (Romans 10:9-10). When we are ready to surrender to Jesus as Lord, we are baptized. Baptism is the outward expression of our inward faith in Christ (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; Mark 1:4-5; Acts 22:16). Good works are the inevitable fruit of true faith (James 2:26).

**A Born Again Experience is Necessary for Salvation:** We believe that every true believer is born again. A person does not necessarily have to remember the exact time when he or she was born again, but there was a time when he or she repented and placed his or her faith in Christ and was regenerated by God. People are either in or out of the Kingdom of God; there is no grey area. (John 3:3; Titus 3:5)

**Sanctification:** We believe that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. This conflict terminates only when

the saint is translated from this mortal life to the presence of Christ, but the true believer can attain a place of maturity in the faith where sin is the exception to the rule of victorious Christian living (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

**Resurrection:** **We believe** Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead, conquering sin, death, and all the powers of Satan. The resurrection is God's historical affirmation and vindication of Jesus Christ's unique identity, mission, and message. Historical evidence of the resurrection is manifest in Christ's empty tomb, His many resurrection appearances, and in the emergence of the Christian church. Jesus Christ now resides at the right hand of the Father and lives to indwell all who recognize their sinfulness, who repent, and who turn their lives over to His authority. (Matthew 28:1-15; Luke 24; 1 Corinthians 15)

**The Church:** **We believe** the church is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ (its Founder, Head, and Shepherd), and that it encompasses all true believers at all times and places. The function of the church is to carry out the Lord's expressed will through the power of the Holy Spirit. One of the central purposes of the church is to preach the Gospel (in both word and life), the good news that humankind can find salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ. All people who have placed their faith (confident trust) in Jesus Christ for salvation belong to the church and are, thus, the people of God. This community of believers is made up of people who are neither perfect nor sinless, but by grace their lives are coming more and more under the control of the Holy Spirit, expressing His love, joy, peace, and other Christ-like qualities. We believe the local church is God's primary means for building up His people and reaching the world for Christ. The Church is not a building, but rather a group of followers of Christ committed to each other and God. The best structure of the church consists of large group celebration and small group fellowship as seen in the Cell Church model. The biblical model of church government is elders-led. (Matthew 16:15-19; Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-15; Acts 2:41-47; 5:42; 20:20)

**Future Things:** **We believe** the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this earth, personally, bodily, and visibly to establish His glorious reign in a kingdom that will never end. As the sovereign Lord, He will resurrect and judge all humanity. Those who have received His offer of life through the Gospel will go to eternal blessings in heaven; those who have rejected it, to eternal conscious torment in hell. We look forward to the blessed hope, Christ's Second Coming in glory. (Matthew 24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation; Luke 16:19-31; Titus 2:13)

**The Great Commission:** **We believe** Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation. And since Christ has commissioned His people, the church, to go into the entire world to disciple, to baptize, and to teach everyone everywhere to obey His Word, we desire, by His grace, to play our part in reaching the world with the Gospel of Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

**Morality:**

**We believe** in sanctification and holiness of heart and the overcoming life as God's design for the Church, which is the Bride of Christ. (2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Revelation 19:6-9)

**We believe** that sexual purity is the standard for all God's children, which requires abstinence from adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, or other sexual relationships or practices forbidden by Scripture. (1 Corinthians 6:9-20)

**We believe** that marriage is a sacred institution established by God and is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. (Genesis 2; Matthew 19:1-9)

**Ethical Essentials of the Faith:**

**We believe** abortion is murder.

**We believe** marriage is between one man and one woman only. Adultery is sin; premarital sex is sin; homosexuality is sin.

**We believe** pornography is sinful.

**We believe** Christians as a whole should help relieve poverty, stop human trafficking, and love all people, treating them with respect as humans created in God's image.

**We believe** greed, uncontrolled anger, selfishness, pride, lying, jealousy, and lust are sins that all Christians should avoid.

**We believe** Christians should practice forgiveness.

**We believe** unity is vital for the health and growth of Christianity.

Everyone, regardless of his or her beliefs, is welcome at Harvest Fellowship. This statement of faith is only for those who wish to covenant with us as members of Harvest Fellowship. We seek to treat all humanity with love and respect. We believe our statement of faith is based on God's word, and therefore to follow Jesus we must embrace His word rather than human feelings or opinion. (John 8:31-32)