

S/PPRC Covenant Template - 2014

A covenant is an agreement and commitment mutually created by those within a relationship, team or committee. It helps to clarify roles, expectations, priorities and structure. It also outlines agreed upon rules and policies for handling various situations. A covenant can be very helpful in avoiding miscommunication and conflict. A properly constructed covenant will serve as the foundation for developing healthy working relationships.

The example covenant text below is meant to serve as a starting point from which your church's S/PPRC can develop its own relational covenant. You may choose to use all of the suggestions that appear below or a combination thereof. You may also choose to add additional points of agreement that you develop with your S/PPRC - which are specific to your situation and needs. Please remember that S/PPRC covenants cannot change or supersede any mandatory rules contained in the Book of Discipline. An additional helpful resource for creating covenants is the book "Watching Over One Another In Love." A covenant is a great tool for improving communications, setting clear expectations and reducing conflict within your S/PPRC and your church.

GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

We agree to follow the guidelines and rules contained in the Book of Discipline. We agree that, should there be a question regarding any guidelines or rules in the Book of Discipline that we will bring it to the attention of our chair and pastor, and if they cannot clarify the issue, they will seek the assistance of the District Office to obtain clarification.

We agree to treat each other and other members of the church with a high level of professionalism and respect during meetings and all other times.

We agree that each member of the committee should be given the opportunity to express their input and thoughts during meetings.

We agree to continually ask for and listen for God's guidance in all we do.

We agree to promote unity in the church whenever and wherever we can.

We agree to continually strive to lead by example and conduct ourselves in a Christ like manner.

We agree to speak the "truth in love" by providing open and honest input – and to let others do the same.

We agree to support our pastor(s), the staff and their families through our prayers and actions.

We agree to not to rush important decisions without adequate research and prayerful consideration.

We agree to hold each other accountable for honoring the points of agreement in this covenant.

We agree it will be the responsibility of the committee chair to ensure accurate and complete records are maintained, safely filed and passed on to the next chair when that time comes.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We agree to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive matters discussed by the committee and to keep confidentiality in mind when communicating to members of the committee between meetings. We agree that maintaining confidentiality includes not sharing information discussed by the committee with family members or close friends.

DEALING WITH CONFLICTS / COMPLAINTS / RUMORS

We agree (in the spirit of Matthew 18) to discuss any conflicts that we may have with another committee member directly with the other committee member in a constructive and respectful way to try to resolve the issue. We agree that we may seek the advice and assistance of the senior pastor to help resolve the matter IF the conflict still exists after we've spoken with the other committee member directly.

We agree to encourage other church members who have conflicts with others to address the conflict with the other person directly - with an open heart and the intent to resolve the issue.

We agree that if church members complain to us about our pastor(s) or other matters related to the church that we will make a reasonable attempt obtain the full details of the complaint and the person(s) from which the complaint originated – so that the matter can be fully understood by the committee. If a complaint or rumor is considered urgent or time sensitive we agree to inform both the pastor and committee chair so that they can determine if a special meeting is necessary. If the complaint is not urgent or time sensitive, we agree to make the committee aware of it at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

COMMUNICATION

We agree to meet as a committee at least once per quarter as required by the Book of Discipline. (Note: if the committee agrees it would be beneficial to meet more often than once per quarter the agreed upon frequency should be spelled out.)

We agree to review the progress the pastor and staff members are making on the goals set for them at the beginning of the year in the months of _____ and _____ (whatever frequency your committee decides).

We agree to review the progress the pastor and staff members are making on the goals by using the following process (at a minimum this will include whatever church/pastor assessment form is asked for in the Fall, plus any additional review or “check-in” procedures we may have in place throughout the year)

***** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION *****

We agree that the chair will call any members who must miss a committee meeting, following the meeting in order to give them a summary of what was discussed and any decisions that were made.

CLARIFYING MISSION / VISION / GOALS / PRIORITIES

We understand that the **mission statement of The United Methodist Church** is “To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world” and will strive to carry out that mission through our church.

We agree that the **vision statement of our church** for 2014 is:

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

We agree that the **key goals of our church** for 2014 are the following:

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

We agree that the following prioritized list reflects the **key areas of focus for our pastor**. These are areas in which we expect our pastor(s) to focus most of his/her/their time and energy. Note: This list needs to be created with the pastor’s input and agreement.

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

We agree that the following list reflects **the key goals our pastor(s)** will strive to achieve. Note: This list should be created with the pastor’s input and agreement.

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

We agree that the following list reflects **the key goals our staff members** will strive to achieve. Note: This list should be created with the input and agreement of the staff members.

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

We agree that the following list reflects **the ways in which our laity leaders and congregation will assist and support** the pastor and staff in achieving their goals.

*** FILL IN WITH YOUR INFORMATION ***

ACCOUNTABILITY

We agree to hold each other accountable for honoring the points of agreement in this covenant.

ADJUSTMENT OF THIS COVENANT

We agree to review this covenant at least annually and to ensure it is still appropriate and to make any necessary adjustments.

If at any time it appears the above listed goals, areas of focus and/or priorities need to be adjusted we agree to discuss this promptly with the members of our committee, including the pastor – and make any necessary revisions.

SIGNATURES

Senior Pastor: _____ *Date*

S/PPRC Chair: _____ *Date*

S/PPRC Committee Members:
_____ *Date*

_____ *Date*

_____ *Date*

_____ *Date*

_____ *Date*

