



## RICHLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION COUNCIL – STAFF COVENANT

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we have been called by the heavenly Father to serve together in partnership in the Gospel. We believe we have been equipped by the Holy Spirit to minister, to live together, to treat one another in love and respond to conflict, disagreement, and misunderstanding in ways that are remarkably different from the ways the world does the same. Together, the Council and staff of Richland Lutheran Church make the following covenant...

- 1) With the help of God, we promise to **respect, care** and **pray** for each other. *(James 5:16 )(Hebrews 10:24)*
- 2) With the help of God, we promise to **assume** people have good intentions and motivations. *(Romans 15:14) (Romans 2:1)*
- 3) With the help of God, we promise to **participate** in decision making by speaking openly and honestly about priorities and opinions during meetings, not privately afterward. *(James 4:11) (Ephesians 4:15-16)*
- 4) With the help of God, we promise to **listen** completely without interrupting or talking over others. Encouraging people to speak without blaming or judging them when they do. We will listen with an open non-judgmental mind to the words and ideas of the others in the church and on the Church Council or staff and allow disagreement without personal resentment. *(Ephesians 5:21) (James 1:19)*
- 5) With the help of God, we promise to **seek** what is best for the Church as a whole, in pursuit of our congregation's mission and vision, not what may be best for us or for some small group in the Church. *(Philippians 2:3-4) (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)*
- 6) With the help of God, we promise to **accept** differences of opinion and conflict as inevitable, normal and productive. When we disagree, we will do so respectfully. *(Romans 12: 9-18) (1 Peter 2:17)*
- 7) With the help of God, we will seek to hold the majority of our communication and decision making in **face-to-face** meetings, however, when necessary we will allow for certain situations to be addressed by email or phone, according electronic communication the same respect as face-to-face. When conflict arises we promise to seek resolution by communicating directly with the person or group involved, instead of gossiping or speaking negatively about others in the wider community. *(Matthew 18:15-18) (Ephesians 4:3, 28-32)*
- 8) With the help of God, we promise to **forgive** each other and ourselves when we make mistakes. Offer forgiveness whether or not the other person acknowledges his or her responsibility in the conflict. *(Matthew 18:21-22) (Luke 11:4)*
- 9) With the help of God, we promise to **maintain** the integrity of the Council by not breaking confidentiality or undermining the Council and its decisions. *(Proverbs 11:13) (Proverbs 20:19)*
- 10) With the help of God, we promise to **support** the final decision of the Church Council, whether it reflects our personal view or not. Exceptions are allowed if the individual believes the decision is clearly immoral, contrary to Scripture, or not in accordance with the RLC Constitution and Bylaws. *(Ephesians 4:3) (1 Corinthians 1:10)*

These covenants are meant to assist the Church Council and staff in leading the congregation in its mission, ministry, and vision.



## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

**James 5:16** <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

**Hebrews 10:24** <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

**Romans 15:14** <sup>14</sup> I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

**Romans 2:1** <sup>1</sup> You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.

**James 4:11** <sup>11</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

**Ephesians 4:15-16** <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

**Ephesians 5:21** <sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

**James 1:19** <sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

**Philippians 2:3-4** <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-27** <sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

<sup>15</sup> Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

<sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

<sup>22</sup> On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup> while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.



**Romans 12:9-18** <sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

**1 Peter 2:17** <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

**Matthew 18:15-18** <sup>15</sup> "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. <sup>16</sup> But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' <sup>17</sup> If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

<sup>18</sup> "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

**Ephesians 4:3, 28-32** <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

<sup>28</sup> Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**Matthew 18:21-22** <sup>21</sup> Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

**Luke 11:4** <sup>4</sup> Forgive us our sins,  
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.  
And lead us not into temptation.]"

**Proverbs 11:13** <sup>13</sup> A gossip betrays a confidence,  
but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.

**Proverbs 20:19** <sup>19</sup> A gossip betrays a confidence;  
so avoid anyone who talks too much.

**Ephesians 4:3** <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.



**1 Corinthians 1:10**<sup>10</sup> I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.