

Riverbend Community Church ///

Leadership Covenant

As leaders who oversee the people and ministries at Riverbend, our desire is to be and continue to become a community of servants who pour out our lives for the well-being of our church family, our neighbors, and our community. As such, we desire to be a community of leaders who live lives of integrity congruent with God’s vision for human flourishing as it is given freely to us in the gospel of Jesus. In short, we want to be servant leaders whose lives compel others to follow Christ.

To this end, we require our leaders at Riverbend, as Paul exhorted Timothy, to “Pay close attention to your life and your teaching; persevere in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.” We are asking leaders at Riverbend to uphold and affirm the following commitments to lives of love and to seek to put into practice the teachings of the faith.

Walking In Love

Ephesians 5.1-20 and 2 Peter 1.3-11 are powerful summary statements that frame the boundaries and commitments towards which we flourish in Christ, both as persons and as a community. Through Scriptures such as these we commit to living lives that bear witness to the Kingdom of God, recognizing that such lives are a commitment to growing in God’s direction, under God’s free grace, and not the arrival of perfection in all of these areas.

In these passages we find the command to pursue the virtues of goodness, knowledge, self-control, mutual affection, joyful gratitude, and, above all, sacrificial love, as well as to abstain from sexual immorality, greed, drunkenness, and using one’s words to tear down rather than to build up. We are urged to live lives that are fully dependent upon and under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

I have read the Bible passages above and commit to pursuing a life that is congruent with God’s vision of human flourishing in Christ, in order that my life might bear witness to the Kingdom of God as a leader at Riverbend. I also commit to communicating with the Pastoral Staff if this ceases to be true.

Name & Signature

Date

1 See appendix for text

Affirmation of Riverbend Community Church Beliefs and Doctrine

The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. The Bible, in its original language is completely accurate and without error (Rev. 22: 18-19; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Although the original documents are no longer available, God has promised that His most important revelation to mankind would stand forever (1 Peter 1:25). It reveals God's passionate pursuit of restoring his creation and is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

God

There is one and only one living and true God. ...The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

God the Father

God as Father reigns with care over all that is; His universe, His creatures, and even human history according to the purposes of His grace. God is the Father of Jesus and to those who have trusted in Jesus according to the scriptures (John 1:12). God is never changing and is consistent in His being (Malachi 3:6).

God the Son

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation (when He became human), He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He was both fully human (Heb. 2:14) and fully divine (John 1:1-2) living a flawless life. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience to God, and His death on the cross for the redemption of men from sin. He rose in bodily form on the third day to establish that those who trust in Him will also rise to eternal life (1 Cor. 15:20-23). He returned to Heaven, has been given a place of honor, and represents us before God (Romans 8:34). He will return at any time to take those who believe and trust in Him to Heaven (John 14:23). Later, he will return to judge and righteously rule the earth (Matthew 25:31-34).

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine (Isaiah 6:8-9; Acts 28:25-26). His coming was promised by Jesus (John 14:16-26). He works in us to teach us (John 14:16-26), direct us (Galatians 5:18), and make us more Christ-like (Galatians 5:22-23). He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service by giving gifts/skills for the mutual benefit of the community (1 Cor. 12: 1-7). It is the Holy Spirit who draws people to see their need of forgiveness from sins (1 Cor. 12:30).

Satan/Angels/Demons

There is a spiritual realm that exists consisting of heavenly beings known as angels and demons. God created all angels including Satan (Ezekiel 28:14; Col. 1:16) who led a rebellion against God and was then cast down from Heaven (Isaiah 14:12-17). Satan and his angelic followers (demons) seek to entice people away from God (Genesis 3:1-6) and deceive people from recognizing Truth (2 Cor. 4:3-4). There is a spiritual battle that is ongoing (Job 2:7), but the ultimate outcome has been determined-- eternal punishment for Satan and his followers (Rev. 20:10).

Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7; James 3:9). For this reason, human life is valued above all other living things and we are commanded to love the people around us (Matthew 22:36-40). God created humans male and female as the crowning work of His creation. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 5:12-19). Because all human beings are created in the Image of God, every person ought to be treated and regarded with love, honor, compassion, dignity, and respect (I John 4:7-8; James 2:8-9).

Marriage & Sexuality

Marriage is a reflection of Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:21-33). Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant for a lifetime (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:3-9). Human sexuality is a gift, given by God, to be enjoyed exclusively within the boundaries of that covenant for the sake of human fruitfulness, flourishing, and intimacy (Gen.1:27-28; Prov. 5:18). Any form of sexual activity outside of the biblical marriage covenant, therefore, is sin and outside of God's good will for human flourishing (this includes the practice of any sexually immoral behavior, be it heterosexual or homosexual, the use of pornography, or any other form of fornication (Matt. 5:28; Romans 1:21-28; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27). Husbands and wives hold unique, complementary roles as seen in Genesis 2, 1 Cor. 11, and 1 Timothy 2.

Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. The need for salvation comes from the fact that all people sin and fall short of God's standards (Romans 3:23). God took it upon Himself to restore mankind to Himself by sending His Son to be a sacrifice (John 3:16). God promises that when we truly accept this gift by faith that we will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The Holy Spirit seals us and the gift of salvation can never be lost (John 4:24, 10:28-29). The Bible also tells us that there is no way other than Jesus to be restored to a right relationship, and thus eternal life, with God (John 14:6). There is nothing we can do to deserve this life – it is all a gift of God, and our responsibility is simply to receive it (Ephesians 2:8-10).

The Church

The Church consists of all people who have trusted and follow Jesus (1 Cor. 12:12-14). Jesus Christ is the head of the Church (Col. 1:18). According to the New Testament examples, local communities of believers come together to form a local church. The Church performs the work of God here on Earth. This work includes inviting others to follow Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20), gathering to worship and grow closer to God (Hebrews 10:24-25), guiding people with the Bible and offering accountability (Ephesians 4:11-14), using our abilities for the benefit of the community (1 Cor. 12:4-7), and meeting the needs of others (James 1:27). A New Testament church observes the two ordinances of Christ, Baptism (Matthew 28:19-20) and Communion (1 Cor. 11:23-26). In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.

Baptism & the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and the believer's death to sin, burial of the old life, and resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17; Rom. 6:1-6; Col. 2:12). The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

Evangelism & Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). This starts locally and extends globally.

Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell and the righteous will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:51-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Phil. 3:20-21; Matt. 24:15-22, 25:46, Revelation 6-21)

I have read and affirm the above statements of faith, and commit to uphold them in my life, my teaching, and the counsel I provide for others as I lead at Riverbend Community Church. I also commit to communicating with the Pastoral Staff this ceases to be true.

Name & Signature

Date

Appendix

Ephesians 5.1-20

1 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10 and find out what pleases the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." 15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1.3-11

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. 10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.