

Membership Covenant – Mill City Church  
Written February 2013

***The mission of Mill City Church is to love our community in the name of Jesus. This covenant represents the way we commit to living together as a church seeking to live out this mission.***

### **Overall Goal of our Covenant - The Vision of Mill City Church**

#### *Reproducing Communities of Missional Disciples*

Our “big picture” vision is to be a church that reproduces missional disciples. A missional disciple is one who follows Jesus by continually learning to participate in God’s mission in the world through every aspect of their life. Every covenant member of Mill City Church commits to discipling others as they are being discipled.

### **Our Foundation: Faith in Jesus Christ**

All Mill City covenant members see a saving faith in Jesus Christ as the foundation of being a Christian in community. This means that every member can say the following, “I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is the foundation of my relationship with God and my commitment to the church.”

We recognize that people experience this reality differently. Some remember a distinct moment or period of time when they came to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Some would say they can’t remember a time when they didn’t follow Jesus. Some would use language of commitment, saying they chose to commit their life to following Jesus. We affirm a wide range of experiences that lead to the reality of faith in Christ described here.

### **Our Church: Mill City Church Culture**

I have both understood and experienced the mission, vision, values, and practices of Mill City Church. I have received an introduction to the missional theology that guides the ministry philosophy of Mill City, and understand Mill City’s desire to live out God’s mission in everything we do. I have learned the language of a “high invitation, high challenge” culture, and desire to grow as a follower of Jesus in that kind of environment.

## **Biblical Foundation for Mission: Ephesians 4:1 – 4:16 NIV**

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

*7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." 9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

*14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 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. 16 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.*

This passage is one source of our understanding of who we are as a community of faith. As a church we are united in covenant together through a commitment to follow Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by the power of the Spirit. We enter this covenant life together recognizing that each of us has a role to play in helping us to mature in our love for each other and our participation in God's mission in the world.

All of this is centered on the love that God has shown us in Jesus Christ, and we pray, worship, listen to scripture, and celebrate communion together to remind ourselves how great the depth of God's love is for us. It's out of the experience of this love that we seek to follow God's leadership of our church together. We want to be known for our expression of this love for God and others.

## **Core Commitments**

*Our core commitments answer the question, “Who MUST we be and what MUST we do in order for us to live out the mission God has given to our church?”*

### *Participating in God’s Mission*

It is an ongoing spiritual practice of covenant members to ask the questions, “What is God up to?” and “How does God want me/us to respond?” We affirm that God is constantly at work in the world, calling people into deeper relationship with God and greater participation in God’s mission. Covenant members seek to approach each day as a chance to be part of what God is doing in whatever setting they find themselves in.

### *Loving Our Community*

This phrase describes our commitment to love each other as a spiritual family that God has called together at this time and place. We want to invest time deepening our relationships with each other so that we can be an encouragement to each other as we seek to participate in God’s mission together. This means we will prioritize group life outside of Sunday morning in various forms so our relationships have the chance to grow. We want to be a church that eats together and shares life regularly together. We want to be a church that cares for each other by visiting others homes and seeking to meet needs as they arise in our lives. This is essential to what it means to be church.

This phrase also seeks to describe our commitment to always seek to engage relationally with people whom we do not know and who may not be like us. We want to take seriously Jesus’ teaching about loving our neighbor as ourselves, which we believe involves developing relationships with people who may be different from us in age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic background, etc. This is essential to our mission.

### *Serving Northeast*

Every covenant member commits to participating in meaningful service of the neighborhoods of NE Minneapolis. Mill City desires to be an asset to the community in which it lives and worships. Covenant members commit to serving our local partners. Members will also look for opportunities to serve in informal ways as they notice opportunities to “join in what God is doing.”

Serving Northeast as a covenant member could include, but isn’t limited to the following practices: Investing in the Sheridan School by praying for the school, volunteering with mentoring or the backpack program, serving at the Little Kitchen Foodshelf once a month, engaging with Clare Housing residents once a month, or joining a missional community with a particular mission focus that aligns with your passions.

## **Our Spiritual Practices**

### *Receiving God's Grace*

We want to be careful to base everything we do out of an experience of God's grace. Our commitment as covenant members is to regularly receive God's grace through confession, extending and receiving forgiveness, reflecting on our identity in Christ, and uniquely in the practice of receiving communion as an act of worship.

### *Shaped by Scripture*

We believe that in order to live our mission of loving our community in the name of Jesus, we must be regularly shaped by the Scriptures as one of the central ways we hear from God. Without a regular lifestyle of being influenced by the Scriptures, we will not be able to discern what God is doing around us and how we are being invited to participate in this. We will cultivate practices of listening to the scriptures together regularly in a variety of ways.

### *Sacrificial Giving*

We want to live in such a way that makes our resources available to those in need. This involves giving of our time and talent in service to God's leading in our lives. It involves a commitment to financially support the ministry of our church on a regular basis. We also want to be ready to respond by giving sacrificially when particular special needs come to the attention of our church.

### *Prayer*

Prayer is foundational for us, with a special emphasis on developing discernment regarding God's activity all around us. Through a life of prayer as a church, we hope to be more and more aware of how God is inviting us to participate in God's mission. Each covenant member commits to making prayer a key part of their spiritual life. We will practice corporate prayer and discernment together.

### *Evangelism*

Covenant members practice sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in both word and deed. We want to find ways to share the story of how our faith in Jesus Christ has changed our lives with others. We want to live together in ways that communicate the good news with those we interact with.

### *Corporate Worship*

We believe in the power of gathering together to worship God. This is an aspect of loving God with all our hearts. We want to commit as members to cultivate a life of loving God and worshipping God together. Covenant members practice worshipping together regularly.

**Covenant Membership Life**

We plan to meet together as covenant members 4 times a year for mutual encouragement in living out this covenant together. The primary focus of our meetings will be share how we are experiencing the life described above.

## **Mill City Church Membership Covenant**

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- **Goal of our Covenant - The Vision of Mill City Church:** *Reproducing Communities of Missional Disciples.*
- **Our Foundation:** *Faith in Jesus Christ*
- **Biblical Foundation for Mission:** *Ephesians 4:1-16 NIV*
- **Core Commitments:**
  - *Participating in God's Mission*
  - *Loving our Community*
  - *Serving Northeast Minneapolis*
- **Our Spiritual Practices:**
  - *Receiving God's Grace*
  - *Shaped by Scripture*
  - *Sacrificial Giving*
  - *Prayer*
  - *Evangelism*
  - *Corporate Worship*

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Pastor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_