

# East End Fellowship | 2023 Community Covenant

A covenant is the deepest of agreements between two parties. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with the nation of Israel, and in the New Testament Jesus fulfilled this covenant, establishing a New Covenant with his Church through his death and resurrection. This is a New Covenant because now not only will God keep his side of the agreement, **but through the death and resurrection of Jesus, he also keeps our side of the covenant as well.** Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus not only makes us “new creatures” (cf. Gal. 5:17) but “fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.” (cf. Eph. 2:19-20). God makes us the people of God.

East End Fellowship has chosen to develop a community covenant together to express the shape of our life together. We believe the church is not a club bound by exclusive membership – instead, it is **a community in mission bound together by the gospel.** We are called to be “partners in the gospel” (Phil. 1:5), called together to a shared life and a shared mission.

In September-November 2009 a core group of about 40 leaders in EEF met together for 9 hours over a three-month period. In this time, we explored how the gospel changes us personally, how it shapes our community, and how it sends us into mission in our city and world. In response to this time, we developed a community covenant that outlines what we are freely committing to with these people, in this time and place.

This covenant is not about a binding set of rules, nor does it in any way create an exclusive club. Instead, it is about our **responsible partnership** in the gospel. As you consider becoming a part of this covenant community, this covenant outlines the expectation of commitment to God, to one another, and to our neighborhood and city (and beyond!). This is a covenant of grace that we hope you will receive freely and joyfully. We hope you will covenant with us not out of pressure or coercion, but out of conviction, a sense of call, and joyful obedience to Jesus Christ.

January 2010  
Revised Jan 2013  
Revised Jan 2014  
Revised Dec 2015  
Revised Dec 2016  
Revised Jan 2018  
Revised Feb 2019  
Revised Feb 2020  
Revised June 2021  
Revised Aug 2022  
Revised Sept 2023



## Gospel & the Self:

“So then, just as you received Jesus Christ as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing in thankfulness.” Colossians 2:6-7

We believe the gospel is not just the way to become a Christian, but also the way to grow as a Christian, repenting and receiving the grace of Jesus day by day.

### What is the gospel calling us to commit to in our personal lives? [UP]

- **Prayer:** We will pray for one another, for our community, for our leaders, and for God's Kingdom. We will repent of our sin, pray for mercy and receive God's grace daily.
- **Knowing God's Word:** We will study, meditate on, and engage with God's Word, on our own and with others. We will seek to know and believe God's promises more deeply.
- **Generosity, stewardship and hospitality:** We will give of our time and money, to the church and to others. We will seek to know and use well the gifts and resources that God has given us. God wants all of our time, talent and treasure.
- **Obedience:** By God's grace we will seek to live holy, obedient and faithful lives, keeping God's commandments and keeping our lives free of personal idols. We will treat our bodies well as temples of the Holy Spirit, living healthy lifestyles and seeking personal purity.
- **Rest:** We will receive God's invitation to rest, acknowledging our limits and resting in God's grace. We will do so through healthy rhythms of solitude, Sabbath and other life-giving spiritual practices.
- **Cultural Awareness:** We will work to understand our own ethnic and cultural identity, and to learn how to engage in mutual relationships of love with people who are different than us.



## Gospel & Community:

“They devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

We are called to build Christian community not just through hard work but through the power of the gospel, believing and trusting in what Jesus has accomplished for us.

### What is the gospel calling us to commit to in our community & congregational life? [IN]

- **Prayer:** We will pray together – for one another, our community, and our leaders; for God’s mercy on us, the grace to forgive one another, and God’s Kingdom.
- **Worship:** We will praise God together, learn together, grow in the gospel together, celebrate the sacraments of communion and baptism, and serve together.
- **Participation:** We will not be mere spectators at a service, but participants in community. This means involvement both in official gatherings (Large Gathering, House Churches, Covenant Community gatherings) and in one another’s lives.
- **Confession and Forgiveness:** We will openly confess sin and faults personally and corporately, and extend and receive grace and forgiveness.
- **Accountability and Submission:** We will receive each other’s discipline and correction, we will respect our leaders, and we will live open, vulnerable lives, honestly admitting wrong. When discipline is needed, we will carry it out in the spirit of Matthew 18, and we will forgive one another quickly.
- **Hospitality and Home Ministry:** We commit to “home-based ministry,” opening our homes to each other and to strangers, eating meals together, meeting each other’s domestic and practical needs, using our homes as central ministry and outreach locations.
- **Multi-ethnicity and Cross-cultural Dexterity:** We will work to understand each other’s ethnic and cultural identities, being open to all, repenting of cultural idols and blindness, receiving and seeking reconciliation in the gospel.
- **Respect:** We will respect each other’s homes, space, and time.
- **Discipleship:** We will seek to be discipled and invested in by someone with spiritual maturity, and pursue opportunities to spiritually invest in others, understanding this an essential way that believers grow spiritually.



## Gospel, the City & Beyond:

“You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.” Matthew 5:13, 14

The gospel sends us to proclaim that Jesus is the King and to demonstrate the power and reality of the Kingdom in our city and world.

### What is the gospel calling us to commit to as we engage our neighborhood, city, and world? [OUT]

- **Prayer:** We will pray for our neighborhood and city, for God’s mercy on our neighbors, and for God’s Kingdom to come “on earth as it is in heaven.”
- **Evangelism:** We will share the good news about Jesus through word, life, and deed.
- **Justice:** We will work to address systemic injustices in our neighborhood and city through education, advocacy, and civic, community, and government involvement.
- **Mercy:** We will seek to care for the poor and disenfranchised, meeting felt needs.
- **Families:** We care for families in our community and seek to strengthen them, especially focusing on children and youth, fathers and mothers in our community.
- **Neighboring:** We will seek to strengthen our neighborhoods by knowing and serving our neighbors, by building authentic relationships, and by using our homes for hospitality and outreach.
- **Relationships and Resources:** We will work to share our relationships and resources for the common good of our neighborhood and city.

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**Practically, being part of the Covenant Community means:**

- In a grace-filled way, submitting to and living out the *EEF Community Covenant*
- Choosing to live in a posture of submission to what God is saying through the Word, the Covenant Community and our pastors and elders
- Involvement in a weekly House Church or other weekly form of spiritual family
- Regular participation at the quarterly Mid-Size Gathering, a time for community formation and training
- Open to other forms of commitment as needed within the life of this spiritual family (setup/teardown, Mercy, Youth Ministry, Worship, etc.)

**DISCERNMENT:  
IS GOD LEADING ME TO BE PART OF  
THE COVENANT COMMUNITY FOR THE NEXT YEAR?**

**DAY 1: Gospel & the Self (UP)**

**Scripture Reading: Colossians 2:6-7**

Spend some time in prayerful reflection with the Lord on this passage, and then on the corresponding practical implications laid out in the *EEF Community Covenant*. As you meditate on this passage and listen for God’s voice, what is one area in your life that you saw personal growth in 2023 and what is one area you’d like to see breakthrough in your life over the next year?

*Please write your reflections here:*

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**DAY 2: Gospel & Community (IN)**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 2:42-47**

Spend some time in prayerful reflection with the Lord on this passage, and then on the corresponding practical implications laid out in the *EEF Community Covenant*. As you meditate on this passage and listen for God’s voice, what is one area you saw growth in our church family in 2023 and what is one area you’d like to see breakthrough at East End Fellowship over the next year?

*Please write your reflections here:*

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**DAY 3: Gospel and the Neighborhood, City and Beyond (OUT)**

**Scripture Reading: 2nd Corinthians 5:16-21, Matthew 5:13-14**

Spend some time in prayerful reflection with the Lord on this passage, and then on the corresponding practical implications laid out in the *EEF Community Covenant*. As you meditate on this passage and listen for God’s voice, what is one area you saw growth in 2023 and what is one area you’d like to see breakthrough over the next year?

*Please write your reflections here:*

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**DAY 4: Leaders**

**Scripture Reading: Hebrews 13:7, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:13-18**

**Elders, Pastors, & Staff:**

- Don Coleman: Elder & Lead Pastor
- Nathan Walton: Elder & Co-Lead Pastor
- Elena Aronson: Elder
- Sherika Chew: Elder
- Abigail George: Elder
- Paul Granger: Elder
- Romesh Wijesooriya: Elder Chair
- Emily Surratt: Church Administrator
- Rob Denison: Treasurer

Spend some time asking God to allow thankfulness for what he’s doing through these leaders to well up in your heart, mind, and spirit. Spend some time praying that God would give them wisdom, courage, and humility.

Spend some time in prayerful reflection with the Lord on these passages. *Please write your reflections from prayer and from these passages here:*

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**Day 5: REVIEW & ARTICULATE**

Re-read your reflections, including the scripture passages, from Days 1 through 4. *What’s your sense of what God is saying to you about being part of the EEF Covenant Community over the next year?*

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