

Invitation to Covenant by J. Christy Ramsey

The session and I have been talking about expectations. We haven't come to any specific consensus yet. I hope we do. Session requested I share my expectations of session members. I hope the session can make a workable covenant that calls all of us to accountability and responsibility as we work together as servants of God at Latrobe Presbyterian Church.

Expectations of J. Christy Ramsey

- 1 I promise to bring my best self to worship and session and seek to include all members in our work together. I promise to be responsible in attendance arranging for absences. I will be responsible in seeking the best time and length for meetings.
- 2 I promise to limit myself to pastoral roles and leadership respecting the authority of the session and trusting in the work of staff and church members. I will take time off from ministry here honoring my vows as a husband, my blessings as a parent, and my faith in God's grace.
- 3 I promise to pledge to the church, giving a percentage of my income to the general fund as an example to others and as a spiritual discipline.
- 4 I promise to speak my mind, my faith, and my wisdom. When information or recommendation comes from other sources (such as Presbytery) I will announce this and add my own thoughts. I will be open to the leading of the Spirit and the wisdom of those at the session meeting.
- 5 I promise to work to avoid surprises, giving information to session before the meeting and consulting when possible with elders and leaders. I promise to strive to work with and through the staff, committees, and structures of the church.
- 6 I will tell you who I tell of our decisions and discussions and will seek not to embarrass board members by quoting them out of context or irresponsibly. I keep confidential information, internal papers and discussions not intended for distribution.
- 7 I will support the session's decisions and faithfully strive to carry them out. I will not undermine the decisions session even when I do not agree with those decisions. I will speak well of the session and church in the community.
- 8 I will not use pressure tactics outside our policies and procedures such as withdrawing financial support, boycotting or disrupting worship or gatherings.
- 9 I may make errors and at times sin, straining this covenant. I promise not to retreat but to seek to repair and repent, seeking God's forgiveness and yours, seeking your help as I learn, grow, mature in my faith and witness. I expect to forgive others for straining this covenant as they seek to repair and repent.

Expectations of Session

- Your attendance and participation is expected unless prevented by poor health, family or employment responsibilities. If you cannot make a meeting, as a courtesy to the others you are expected to inform the clerk.
- You are expected to respect the authority and leadership of the pastor and limit and focus your church involvement. One expectation is to hold no more than two *leadership roles* in the church. You are expected you to honor your family and work commitments and allow others room in the life of the church.
- You are expected to pledge and maintain regular giving to the general fund as a sign of faith in the ministry and mission of the church, supporting the budget which is set by session.
- You are expected to give your own best wisdom to the church. You are expected to acknowledge comments and concerns that are from others and add your own wisdom. You are expected to make your own decisions with the session being open to the Spirit and other elders on session.
- You are expected to work with the staff, committees, and boards of the church. You are expected to discuss proposals and matters with those concerned especially those that are out of the ordinary experience and expectations before presenting them to session.
- You are expected to be accountable with whom and how you share the actions of session, seeking always to be supportive of those serving with you. You are expected to keep confidential information, internal papers and discussions not intended for distribution.
- You are expected to be a part of the team among church members, staff and leaders. You are expected to support the board, staff, and leaders even when your own desires are not followed. You are expected to speak well of the session and church in the community.
- You are expected not to use pressure tactics outside our policies and procedures such as withdrawing financial support, boycotting or disrupting worship or gatherings.
- You may strain this covenant by errors or even sin. You are expected not to retreat but to seek to repair and repent, seeking God's forgiveness and that of your brothers and sisters as you learn, grow, and mature in the faith. You are expected to forgive others as they seek to repair and repent.