

DEFINING COVENANT & CULTURE

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.” (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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. — Ephesians 4:4-13

Because we want to operate as a leadership team and not just a “team of leaders,” by God’s grace and under his leadership we commit to these guiding principles:

- We will be a body filled with and dependent upon the Holy Spirit.
- We will keep Jesus Christ at the center of our deliberations and prioritize the needs and vision of the Global Methodist Church over personal preferences or comforts.
- We will dedicate a portion of each gathering to concentrated prayer for the Church and our work.
- We will create a culture of loving God and others by practicing corporate and individual times of spiritual formation and praying for one another by name daily.
- We will cultivate a culture of learning so we develop the needed leadership skills to help us in our work of leading the church with one voice, purpose, and message in pursuing in our mission and vision.
- We will operate in spiritual giftedness, honoring the strengths God has given to each of us.
- We will practice appreciative inquiry with one another, learning as John Wesley did the value of great questions over good opinions.
- We will share the air by creating an environment where everyone participates in conversation.
- We will respect the roles and responsibilities of bishops and conference superintendents, not infringing on the work of others without permission (especially when responding to invitations to visit).
- We will practice transparently speaking and receiving hard truths in an atmosphere of grace and reconciliation.
- We will practice conflict resolution with each other in the spirit Matthew 18:15-20.

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- We will assume the best of each other, especially in the absence of information.
- We will keep all matters confidential that are discussed within our Assembly meetings, unless we unanimously agree to share it outside the Assembly.
- We will check our Assembly's WhatsApp group daily.
- We will prioritize attending and participating in on-line and in-person Assembly meetings.
- We will prioritize responding to one another by handing emails and other correspondence within 24 hours, unless travel or connectivity prevent us from doing so.
- We will proactively volunteer information we believe will be helpful to one another and to the cause, and in general we will operate with generosity and transparency.
- We will work together to solve problems and give guidance to one another and the Church.
- We will practice holy boundaries, keeping a healthy and holy Sabbath practice, working reasonable hours, taking time off, and taking vacation time offered in an effort to care for our souls, relationships, and bodies.
- We will be committed to practicing the means of grace — attending weekly worship, participating in small group accountability, and engaging in personal devotional practices.
- We will play and serve together, exhibiting the joy of the Lord by finding reasons to laugh in the midst of our work.

Paul's advice to the Ephesians (noted at the top of this covenant) is focused on unity in the Spirit. Likewise, this is our goal. *The Message* version of Paul's wisdom makes even more clear the culture toward which we aspire:

You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness. But that doesn't mean you should all look and speak and act the same. Out of the generosity of Christ, each of us is given his own gift ... Is it not true that the One who climbed up also climbed down, down to the valley of earth? And the One who climbed down is the One who climbed back up, up to highest heaven. He handed out gifts above and below, filled heaven with his gifts, filled earth with his gifts. He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ. — Ephesians 4:4-7, 9-13