

LIVING IN COVENANT  
AT  
PAOLI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In the course of life we often find ourselves gathered in communities that are able to accomplish more together than separately. This experience of living in relationship is one of the richest blessings that God bestows on us. Indeed, God lives in community also. The Trinity is the highest form of community we know of and it provides us with a model of how humans can live in community as well.

We find in the Trinity a continuous dance of affirmation of all members of this triune God. One member does not try to out do the other two but speaks and acts in ways that are always becoming of the mystery of relationship. *This example is the clearest model of how humans working along side each other should act.*

As Christians who are called by God to live in relationship, we do well to hold our lives up to the standards of our loving God. Living in relationship is among the richest of blessings, but unfortunately, has the potential to be just as painful as it is joyful. As humans we often differ with each other and find ourselves subtracting from the value of someone of a differing opinion, we do it by the words we choose which reflect unhealthy attitudes. Why do we do this? There are undoubtedly many reasons but one of the primary reasons may be that in lowering someone else, it makes us feel higher. Is this really the witness we want to portray?

This kind of behavior is not becoming of the God who loves us and calls us into service. At PPC our “Core Values” tell us that *God is worthy of our best.* God expects of us our best in all areas of our life and action. We believe that *God calls us together to work as a team* of teams; this is God’s design for our ministry. We believe that *genuine love and caring relationships are the keys* to the life of every endeavor.

Because of these core beliefs and with full acknowledgement of our sinful nature we believe it is helpful and important to place a set of expectations before us in simple but profound implications. What we do and say will affect others at PPC. How we say certain things and the way we handle situations will have a relationship to the spirit of unity and spiritual growth of others in this congregation. How we treat privileged information is an issue of both sensitivity and integrity that is just as important as how we treat people.

The eyes and ears of us all are witnesses to whether or not we live up to these expectations. We will not always agree fully with someone’s words or their actions, before we talk to someone else about our disagreement it is our clear duty to talk to the source; this will prevent setting up triangles. Jesus had clear instructions in Matthew 18:15ff, he said if someone offends you, go and talk to them about it before it becomes a major distraction. \*

With the Psalmist, let us say, “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in the sight of God,” and our neighbor.

God has placed us in the role of stewards of this gift called Paoli Presbyterian Church. *It is the expectation* that in all things we will treat each other and information we carry, with dignity and respect.

\*One of the best ways to facilitate faithfulness to these expectations is to live in covenant with regards to courageous honesty in gently reminding each other when we fail in these expectations.

This statement has been signed by all staff and officers of PPC. They believe they lead best by example. The above is laid before the congregation with the hope it will be a model of Christian character we all can strive for. 5/10/09

Signed

Date