



Presbyterian Global Fellowship

The 2006 Covenant

This covenant was distributed at the inaugural PGF conference in August 2006, to give initial expression to the core identity and commitments of the fellowship.

In the Spring of 2006, 13 congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) issued the first call to join in a Presbyterian Global Fellowship, initiating the fellowship. The text of this original invitation is below:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in a deep crisis. We have turned our eyes inward, and we are an aging, dying, visionless denomination. We have lost the central focus of the New Testament church: its missional calling. While our own culture has become a mission field, we continue to devote all our efforts to maintaining the institution that we once were. The mandate of the Gospel and the needs of the world are urgent, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) is not currently positioned to respond. Dramatic measures are needed if we are to reverse this trend of recent decades.

We confess that our hope is the living and reigning Lord Jesus Christ, and him alone. We believe Christ is calling us to recommit ourselves to our missional calling, to the authority of Holy Scripture, and to the faithful summaries of biblical teaching found in our church's confessions. We believe Christ is calling us, as covenantal people, to find new ways of building relationships with each other. And we believe Christ is calling us to move beyond confidence in our own capacity to a fresh openness to the witness of the global church. It is time to gather anew around God's mission to the world.

Our congregations are initiating a new fellowship, a Presbyterian Global Fellowship, seeking to reclaim the missional purpose of the church, and we invite you to join with us.

We purpose to develop the following:

- I. A new way of connecting to one another as Presbyterian congregations, that is, a fellowship not defined by our existing governing bodies. We choose to remain within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and we encourage congregations to continue to relate to their own presbyteries in the manner that they deem best. This is not an effort to start a new denomination or to write a new constitution. We are convinced that the church cannot restructure its way to health. We must refocus on God's mission, allowing future structures of the church to emerge as necessary in that mission.
2. A way for Presbyterian congregations, while remaining within their presbyteries, to identify themselves publicly as being part of a fellowship of churches that confesses the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life and is mission-driven. This includes an uncompromising commitment to allowing the Bible to shape our life together, especially with regard to wealth, human sexuality, power, and the congregation's public witness. As a fellowship we recognize the need in the midst of our current North American culture to be particularly vigilant to maintain our witness to heterosexual marriage as God's design for human sexual expression. And in all these areas, we recognize our need for global partners, for their support,

admonition and example as we seek to be congregations that “lead lives worthy of the calling with which we have been called.”

3. A means by which congregations might rethink their stewardship of resources in terms of our missional calling, and intentionally invest financial resources in mission endeavors in local and global Presbyterian mission, encouraging a designation of all giving by congregations toward the most effective, accountable and biblically faithful mission efforts, within the Presbyterian family and elsewhere.
4. A way to revitalize congregations small and large. Fifty years ago Protestant denominations earned and re-earned the loyalty of members by providing resources for congregations. Today the best resources and expressions of ministry are created by congregations themselves. Our goal will be to create relationships and technologies that will enable us to rediscover together our missional calling in our rapidly changing world, by encouraging Presbyterian congregations to cross-pollinate with their best practices and resources.
5. A way to empower congregations in mission. Each of our congregations will commit to a common discipline of prayer, study and discernment of the challenges presented to us in our various contexts. We will do this in order that together we may obey the Great Commission as individual congregations and in partnership with believers around the world. As part of this process each session will set challenging, biblically faithful goals for evangelism and mission outreach, honoring each member’s as well as the congregation’s unique gifts in God’s mission.
6. Regular events, beginning this August 17-19 at Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, that will gather like-minded Presbyterians to explore how to get on with the church’s missional purpose. We will focus on (a) becoming global Christians, (b) growing missional congregations, (c) training missional leaders, and (d) fostering “whole life” discipleship among all believers.

We issue this call humbly and prayerfully, confessing our own sinfulness and dependence upon the grace of God. We dream about a missional church, distinctively Presbyterian, which sees God at work all around us and all around the world. We dream of a church that humbly opens itself to the faith and faithfulness of the global Body of Christ. We dream of a church that engages our energy, our creativity and our resources in all “The Great Ends of the Church” as they are described in our tradition.

In sum, our desire is to be transformed by God’s Spirit into the likeness of Jesus Christ, so that we can faithfully participate in God’s mission throughout the world.