

Raleigh Mennonite Church

Expectations for Covenant Members

Preamble:

All churches have stated or unstated expectations of their members. Raleigh Mennonite Church has the Covenant Statement for general guidance about faith issues and this document to spell out the day-to-day practical expectations of its members.

The following guidelines, which may be viewed as goals or ideal standards, are to put in writing what we understand to be the expectations of covenant members of Raleigh Mennonite Church. Please do not think of these as rigid rules—clearly there is room for variation in participation that reflects each member's personal situation.

While we expect to live with less than the ideal, we do not want to lose sight of our mutual understanding that there is a set of group expectations, and we place a very high value on active participation by all. We hope that these guidelines give a picture of the typical covenant member's involvement at RMC.

1. **Participation:** To participate actively and regularly in Sunday morning worship services, church life meetings, and some form of a small group in which personal interaction and nurture can take place.
2. **Stewardship:** To exercise faithful and compassionate stewardship in the use of our resources, which includes finances, time, and spiritual gifts.
 - a. Of our money – We believe we are to give sacrificially and proportionately, according to our income, as an act of worship to God who is the owner of all our resources entrusted to us.
 - b. Of our time – We believe we need to avoid over-extension of ourselves in the daily activities of life. We will set aside regular time to nurture our faith journeys through spiritual disciplines and we will give time to extending the reign of God through the church.
 - c. Of our spiritual gifts – We believe it is important to consider a call to service from the church as a call from God. We will volunteer our gifts in the building up of the church on Commissions, Ministries, and in service projects as they are discerned and we are able (2-4 hours a week in addition to Sunday morning).
1. **Hospitality:** To initiate relationships with newcomers by greeting visitors to RMC and inviting them into our homes and to join in church activities.
2. **Transfer of covenant membership:**
 - a. Covenant members on short-term or long-term church assignments or college/graduate students away from here may retain membership at Raleigh Mennonite Church until they arrange for membership elsewhere.
 - b. Covenant members who take up permanent residence elsewhere are encouraged to establish membership in a church of that area, as soon as possible. After two years, and with mutual agreement, covenant members will be put on an inactive list and will no longer be considered as covenant members.

Those living in a community without an appropriate Anabaptist related church, but who desire some relationship with RMC and the wider Mennonite church, may become "Affiliate Members of RMC". Affiliate members will maintain relationship to RMC through periodic visits, email connections, personal friendships, etc. but they will have no formal membership in any Mennonite body.

- c. Covenant members who do not participate in the life of the congregation for a period of six months to a year and who fail to respond to pastoral contacts may be removed from covenant membership with approval of the Servant Leaders. Upon a renewed commitment, they may again become active covenant members.