

**COVENANT BETWEEN THE FAIRFIELD GLADE COMMUNITY CHURCH,
THE PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.),
AND THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

PREAMBLE

In 1975 a unique relationship began to develop between a group of Christian people at Fairfield Glade, Tennessee, the Presbytery of St. Andrew of the United Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Alabama-Tennessee Association of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. Those Christians moving to Fairfield Glade from many places in search of retirement and recreation decided to form an ecumenical fellowship. Eventually they affiliated with two denominations - the United Church of Christ and the United Presbyterian Church (USA). In 1983 the United Presbyterian Church (USA) merged with the Presbyterian Church in the United States to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Presbytery of St. Andrew became part of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee of the newly merged denomination.

Because of a desire to be more active in a Presbytery with closer boundaries to Community church, an Overture was submitted to Middle Tennessee (approved October 1999), East Tennessee (approved March 2000), the Synod of Living Waters (approved March 2000), and the General Assembly (approved June 2000) to transfer Fairfield Glade Community Church from the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee to the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

This covenant expresses the relationship between the Fairfield Glade Community Church (hereinafter, Church), the Presbytery of East Tennessee (hereinafter, Presbytery) and the Alabama-Tennessee Association and Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ (hereinafter, Association/Conference). It also includes the relationship between the Presbytery and the Association/Conference as ecumenical partners.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE COVENANT

The local church, the Presbytery and the Association/Conference are complementary institutions, expressing their mission and service to Jesus Christ as appropriate to Christian bodies locally and regionally. The Church witnesses to the Gospel in its local surroundings and in outreach to the world and calls upon the Presbytery and Association/Conference for resources needed to carry out its mission. The Presbytery and Association/ Conference provide the congregation with program resources and channels for effective global ministries.

The Presbytery and the Association/Conference recognize and support the ecumenical nature of Fairfield Glade Community Church. The Church appreciates its relationship with its two denominations and welcomes into its life of worship, fellowship and ministry all who confess Christ as Lord and who wish to join its ranks.

THE CHURCH COVENANTS:

1. To promote and interpret the life and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ and its own ecumenical spirit. In the event of disagreement over denominational policy or program, the controversy shall be brought before the congregation for decision.
2. Where any particular guidance may be required in such a "Federated" Church, provisions of the "Book of Order" (G-15.0204) shall be used.
3. To be represented in the meetings of the Presbytery, Association and Conference by the pastor and elected lay representatives.
4. So that Lay Representatives to Presbytery, may be given all full rights, privileges, and responsibilities, to speak, vote, serve on committees and be elected as Commissioners to Synod, or General Assembly; it is understood that F.G.C.C. would elect and duly Ordain and Install, at least three persons as Elders for that church, to serve as needed. Such elections to be held so as to fulfill constitutional requirements concerning Rotation and Representation; and whenever further elders are needed. Presbytery would assure that appropriate training would be given to those persons.
5. Those persons elected to serve as Elders would give affirmative answers to all Constitutional Questions (Vows) and meet the qualifications of G-6.0300-304.
6. To respond to the annual opportunity to make a voluntary mission pledge to each denomination through the Presbytery, Association and Conference.
7. To continue the present practice of alternating the calling of a minister between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ. Should a diligent search not produce a Pastor from the alternate denomination, the failure to locate a candidate for recommendation shall be brought to the congregation to determine whether the search may be broadened to include both denominations. The Call shall be for an indefinite period of time. However, if a minister for any reason should leave within the first two years of his or her ministry with the Church, the Church shall first search for a minister from the same denomination as the one to which the departing minister belonged.
8. Recognizing the history and tradition of alternating selection of United Church of Christ and Presbyterian Pastors, and that the By-Laws specify a certain membership to a Pastoral Selection Committee; it is understood that in the selection of a Presbyterian Pastor the Pastoral Nominating Committee, and the specifications concerning members of a P.N.C. and the procedures of G-14.0500ff would be followed. Support would be given by representative(s) of the Presbytery Committee on Ministry.
9. To follow the procedure of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of East

Tennessee when a Presbyterian Minister is being called by: a.) requesting the Committee's approval of the candidate, and b.) calling the Committee on Ministry immediately In the event of a troubled relationship; and to follow the procedure of the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Alabama-Tennessee Association of the Southeast Conference when a United Church of Christ minister is being called.

10. Any Presbyterian Pastor would serve subject to the Call, and later Dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship, in accordance with the guidelines of the "Book of Order" and the guidance and discipline of the Presbytery.

THE PRESBYTERY AND THE ASSOCIATION\CONFERENCE COVENANT:

1. To provide Presbytery and Association/Conference staff and committee resourcing to the Church as requested and appropriate.
2. To provide continuing interpretation of their respective activities and mission projects.
3. To encourage the Church's involvement in mission beyond its local borders.
4. It is understood that for most purposes the President of the Congregation serves as Moderator, in keeping with the By-Laws of the F.G.C.C. In cases requiring a Presbyterian Moderator (e.g. selecting a Presbyterian Pastor and Ordaining and/or Installing), a Moderator will be supplied by Presbytery.
5. To continue to be ecumenical partners in this relationship.
6. Provide each other copies of correspondence with the Church.
7. To make requests of the Church only with the knowledge of the other denomination.
8. To expect the minister of the Church to attend the quarterly meetings of the Presbytery and the Meetings of the Association and Conference but not to commit him or her to committee work without the approval of said minister and the Official Board of the Church and the consent of the other denomination.
9. Understanding that the property of the Fairfield Glade Community Church was given by the Developer, and that deed restrictions may require that the property revert, if the church ceases to exist; the Presbytery of East Tennessee hereby agrees, as in accord with provisions of G-8.0700-701, that this particular church shall hold title to its property in accord with the prior agreement.

DISSOLUTION

This statement has been prepared to document a longstanding relationship between the Church, the Presbytery and the Association/Conference. No definite term is stated as it is the intent and prayerful hope of the participants that the existing relationship will not only continue but be strengthened with the passage of time. Any participant desiring to withdraw from this agreement may do so at any time by giving not less than six (6) months written notice to the other participants stating when thereafter such notice shall be effective. During this period of time the participants shall maintain a continuing dialogue.

Covenant first modified to clarify rotation of Pastors, 1991.

Modified January 16, 2000 at Annual Congregational Meeting for clarification toward transfer to East Tennessee Presbytery.

Modified June 2000, following acceptance by the General Assembly