



COVENANT DESIGN

Simply put, a covenant is an agreement. Throughout the Old Testament, we see covenants being made between God and His people. And we celebrate the New Covenant made with us in Jesus Christ. Covenants can set a foundation of care and love which guide how people treat one another as God intended. Covenants can also be used as a curb to guide the behaviors of your group at the Youth Gathering and beyond.

As you formulate your covenant, it will be important to keep in mind your specific group dynamics. What may be pertinent for one youth ministry, may not need consideration by another.

A few key components

- Your covenant should be created BY your group, FOR your group. Let your participants have a say in the items included. By making them part of the process, they are more apt to follow and enforce the rules.
- Do not overwhelm your participants. Choose carefully what you include but make it reasonable for them to remember and follow. Set them up for success.
- Be sure your adults are part of the process and that they sign it too.
- If you plan excursions prior to or following the gathering, you may want an "addendum" of sorts, specific to your locations.

Living Together as Servants

Whether you know it or not, you have been called to be a servant through your decision to participate in this Servant Event. As servants and representatives of our Lord, we expect to be surprised at the opportunities that await us. God calls us in different ways to many different tasks.

We want to be surprised, but we also want to be prepared. Complete the following questions to help you understand more about yourselves and what will be expected.

Complete the questions below individually, then share with your group.

WHAT DO I EXPECT TO DO AS A SERVANT?

Read John 13:1-17. Believe it or not, we may be asked to do more unpleasant things than foot washing during this week. List below any concern you have about the project, the trip, or the Event. Are you afraid about anything?

We know the week will be full of joys, too. List below things you are excited about and look forward to this week.

Think for a few minutes about your role as a servant. What is the most important thing that you hope to gain through this Servant Event? How can your group help you?

Complete the questions below as a group.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF US AS SERVANTS:

List what you know is expected in terms of the service activity, the trip, and living and working together as a group.

Basic Assumptions about Servant Event participation:

- We come as students not as saviors. We come to learn new things while bringing our gifts and abilities to work alongside others using theirs.
- We come not as perfect servants but willing to work at servanthood. We expect to learn and to grow during these days of service to our Lord.
- We come committed to living and working as a group – responsible for each other as part of a community. There is no room here for "solitary servants."
- We come to discover what being a servant of Jesus Christ means and to accept the challenges of that task in our lives where we live as well.

As a group consider these other pieces that are helpful in designing a covenant. It can be helpful to write out your agreements together and have everyone sign it as a way of understanding before going into the event.

- If we have a conflict with someone in our group, we will resolve it promptly through both challenge and grace.
- We will live out Philippians 2:4 in our group, "...look(ing) not to our own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- We will live out Ephesians 4:32 in our group, "Be(ing) kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."
- We will focus on why we are participating and seek to understand how God is teaching and preparing us.
- We commit to being respectful of the facilities where we travel and each other's property as we are ambassadors for our church and Christ.
- We will plan for each day and communicate with our adult leaders about where we are going.
- We will be respectful of those in our group, our adult leaders, event authorities and those we encounter along the way.
- We will represent Jesus in our dress, speech, and behavior, recognizing that God is giving us opportunities to witness to and share His love with others.

As a closure to this exercise, pray silently this prayer by filling your own name in the blank. Go off by yourself for a few minutes in prayer time with God.

Lord, this is your servant, _____, We are preparing to embark on a new adventure as Your servants. Sometimes I am apprehensive, other times I am really excited. Please, Lord, give me patience in dealing with the weaknesses of others and the weaknesses in me. Send Your Holy Spirit to live with us during our travel, our work and our play so that all that we do may be pleasing to You. Be with our leaders and planners of our event. Guide us in our travel and our work so that we may share a message of love in all we do. In Your Son's name I pray. Amen.