FIRST BAPTIST MUNCIE

Church Pledge Welcoming New Members

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We enter this covenant[1]:

- **Inspired** by love for Christ who first loved us, and gave himself for our salvation.
- **Seeking** communion with him, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.
- **Desiring** to serve the Father, and those who are the work of his hand.
- **Praying** for God's guidance and aid, that all we do may be done in his love and for his glory.[2]

This day we give ourselves to the Lord and to each other.[3]
[We now invite everyone to join in receiving the new members with the words on the screen:]

Reception of the New Members

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place[4],

- **Bearing** your burdens, as you bear ours.[5]
- **Encouraging** you in the faith, as we are encouraged by you.[6]
- **Delighting** in the Lord's ways[7] *and*
- **Offering** our lives as a living sacrifice: Holy & Pleasing to God.[8]

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[1] Adapted from the ending of the full Church Covenant.

[2] 1 Corinthians 10:31, 16:14

[3] Taken from "Covenanting Together," in *Gathering For Worship: Patterns and Prayers for the Community of Disciples* by *The Baptist Union of Great Britain* (Canterbury Press, Norwich, UK), 2005, page 99.

[4] **[Sources:]** The opening line of the welcoming pledge for many churches; first encountered by the author at Seventh & James Baptist Church and Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

[5] Galatians 6:2 - "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (NRSV)

[6] 1 Thessalonians 5:11 - "... Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." (NIV)

[7] Ps. 37:4, 128:1; Mic. 4:2; Deut. 6:4-7; Lev. 19:18; Luke 10:27 etc. *Delighting* in God and loving God's ways is a common theme throughout scripture.

[8] Romans 12:1 - "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." (NIV)

Jonathan Balmer, 2022