

THE COVENANT  
BETWEEN  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF MESSIAH COLLEGE  
AND  
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST

The relationship between Messiah College and the Brethren in Christ Church has roots which are historical, traditional, and theological.

The College was established during the first decade (1909) of this century by decision of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church and the efforts of concerned and qualified churchmen within the denomination.

During the ensuing years the Church was the foundation of financial support, the principal base for leadership, and the main source of students. The growth of the College from its modest beginning as an academy and Bible School to a fully accredited, two-campus, liberal arts college, is evidence of the support of the founding Church.

The College has served through these years as the source of trained leadership in the Church--pastoral, missionary, and lay. The theological and cultural maturity of the Church is to a large degree the result of the interplay between the College and the constituency.

The Church has been through these years the principal support of the College. The College, on its part, has been a unifying factor within the Church. Within the congregations of the Church and at every level of leadership are those who regard Messiah College as their college. Cultural, traditional and religious events of the College draw an increasing number within the Church to the College. Each has contributed and each is indebted to the other.

In recognition of these deep and real relationships and with mutual respect for the contribution each has made and will in the future make to the other, the Trustees of Messiah College and the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church now enter into this covenantal relationship:

The College, on its part, covenants:

1. To grant to the Brethren in Christ Church the following representation on the Messiah College Board of Trustees:

- a. The bishops of the Regional Conferences.
- b. A representative from and chosen by the denomination's Board for Schools and Colleges.
- c. At least one representative from each of the United States Regional Conferences, chosen by the Regional Conference.

2. To include on the committee, appointed by the Board of Trustees for the selection and recommendation of a president for the College, the Chairman of the denomination's Board for Schools and Colleges and a representative from the Board of Bishops.

3. To counsel with the Board for Schools and Colleges in the appointment of the Chairman of the Division of Religion and Philosophy or the comparable office.

4. To teach the Christian faith and biblical studies within the framework of the Brethren in Christ understanding of Christian truth.

5. To pattern the life of the college community in a manner consistent with Brethren in Christ ethos patterns and the Church's understanding of Christian discipleship.

6. To be responsive to the needs of the Church for trained leadership by making available courses in theology and in Brethren in Christ history, practice, and polity which will assist in meeting these needs.

7. To submit the annual budget to the Board for Schools and Colleges which budget will include the anticipated support from the denomination.

8. To present an annual report--general and financial--to the Board for Schools and Colleges.

9. To grant to the Church the right to have an independent audit of the College's financial position made by a public accounting firm.

10. To provide facilities for the housing of the denominational archives and the Church's historical library.

11. To take the Church into consultation in respect to mergers with other institutions or in the entering into covenantal relationships with other constituencies.

12. To dispose, in case of dissolution, all the net assets of the College in accord with the Charter and in consultation with the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

The Church, on its part, covenants:

1. To regard Messiah College both officially and in practice as the denomination's college.

2. To encourage the youth of the Church to attend Messiah College for their

undergraduate training.

3. To accept responsibility for the denomination's share of the approved budget of the College.

4. To regard the College as the training institution, at the undergraduate level for pastoral, missionary, and other specialized ministries.

5. To encourage congregations to cooperate with the College in permitting college representation and ministries to represent the College in promotion, student recruitment, and solicitation of funds.

6. To cooperate in the support of capital fund efforts by the College among the denomination's membership.

7. To provide at General and Regional Conference level opportunity for promotion comparable to other agencies and institutions of the Church.

8. To counsel with the College Board of Trustees or their designated agent in regards to the distribution of net assets in case of the dissolution of the College.

In the interest of making these covenantal understandings meaningful the College and the Church both covenant:

1. To keep open the lines of communication in order to mutually share concerns, to appreciate each other's needs, and to seek the resolution of problems.


2. To share each other's resources of facilities and personnel in furthering the mission of the Church and the College and for mutual benefit.

Now, therefore, in recognition of the historical and spiritual ties between the College and the Church and the mutual benefits accruing from a relationship as herein covenanted, the undersigned, duly authorized by their respective authorities, do hereby affix their signatures, pledging their commitment to both the letter and the spirit of this Covenant.

The strength of the Covenant lies in the mutual Christian trust by the covenanting parties each for the other and shall be considered binding. However, in recognition of the Brethren in Christ understanding of Christian brotherhood both parties agree not to enforce this Covenant in any court of law. For the:

General Conference of the Brethren in Christ

Messiah College

  
Owen H. Atterger (SEAL)  
General Conference Secretary

  
Harold H. Engle (SEAL)  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

John E. Zender  
Chairman, Board for Schools & Colleges

D. Roy Hostetter  
President, Messiah College