

A Civic Covenant

Principles to Unite Us for Change From Faith United

As members of diverse faith communities, we are heartsick and soul-afflicted at the current state of our nation. The polarization of ideas and tribal affiliations, the demonization of the “Other,” and the shattering of a sense of common purpose toward common goals have rendered our country divided and disconnected in unprecedented ways. We have lost trust in our shared institutions, lost faith in common understanding of our rights and responsibilities, and are losing hope in the possibility of a concerted way forward.

What we need is a renewal of our national conscience and a revitalization of the national soul. And while there are differences amongst our theologies, or even a lack of theology altogether, we cherish fundamental principles that provide the foundation for faith. They have played a significant role in the formation of our constitutional doctrines, and have provided fertile ground for our shared humanity.

In response to crises of the past, we have united under the canopy of these principles. Coupled with a will to action through the sanctity of our democratic process, we have healed this nation, bound the national soul, and returned to a purposeful path. *And we can again.* These are the guiding principles that unite us in faith, trust, and the promise of a better way forward:

1. Hope to Quell Fear

We share a commitment to the power of hope in our communities. Unique amongst virtues, hope frees us to envision a future of shared purpose emerging from collective values. Hope is a balm for the fears that arise in the face of what is uncertain and unknown. Hope compels us to elevate noble intents toward the realization of a shared promise. Above all else, hope is the decisive remedy to the narrowness of vision and baseness of the soul that reflects a concession to the darkness of our nature.

2. Unity Without Uniformity

A passionate devotion to common cause for the common good, while cherishing that which makes us distinct and precious, is far from paradoxical. It is the critical fulcrum that balances a diverse and pluralistic humanity, enabling us to live and thrive together. We are strengthened by the unique skills, perspectives and aspirations we bring to our joint pursuits, bound as one people in a sacred synthesis toward universal goals.

3. Community and Compassion

A deep regard for the inherent value of others, and a devotion to their needs, binds us to entities and perspectives beyond the self. These qualities are lauded as the hallmark of our humanity, and they unite us in a transcendent effort. Such an obligation to sustain the wellbeing and future of our concentric circles of community, compelled by an empathetic extension of the “Golden Rule,” is the very fundament of our civilization.

4. Civic Responsibility and Faith

We all have a role to play in our common national enterprise. Faith in our nation and its defining qualities inspires us toward a concerted purpose and a greater good. A commitment to that purpose and the pursuit of that good is the fulfillment of our mutual, civil covenant. This shared enterprise compels us to strive for success and the dignity it engenders, not only for ourselves, but for all through an unwavering commitment to liberty and the prospects it creates.

5. Freedom and Opportunity

Freedom is the catalyst of our being and an essential gift with which we are created. The freedom to choose and flourish, both to pursue or to desist, is the ultimate exercise of our humanity. The potential provided by a society ripe with opportunities through its institutions, and the capacity to reconcile the inequality of opportunities through law, speak to our innate drive to achieve our fundamental longing for meaning.

If our society, our nation, and our very civilization are to survive and endure, we must rise above that which divides us, and affirm the very essence of what we share. This is more than a prescription for cultural cohesion or a more productive political climate. It is a return to the building blocks of our humanity, the very basis of our being.

These are the values that bind us. This is the vision that will inspire us. This the only way forward if we hope to journey together.