

Partner Churches in the FGBC

(Updated 11/14/12)

A Proposal

Partner Churches in the FGBC are churches that are associated and affiliated with the FGBC and which fulfill the following requirements:

- 1) **Regarding Biblical Mission** - the church is involved in mission endeavors jointly with Grace Brethren churches and ministries
- 2) **Regarding Biblical Relationships** - the church is in active partnership with one or more GBCs
- 3) **Regarding Biblical Truth** - the church is fully committed to the FGBC *Covenant* (Scripture as foundation and rule) and the church is committed to respect and not act in opposition to the FGBC *Statement of Faith*.

Explanation

This approach uses already existing, well understood, concepts to define a category of Partner Churches. First, we already have a time-proven three-prong focus as a Fellowship: **Biblical Mission, Biblical Relationship, and Biblical Truth**. Second, we already have a long-term distinction between our **Covenant** and our **Statement of Faith**. Leaders of Partner Churches should be 100% in agreement with our Covenant, and should be neither opposed to nor disrespectful toward our Statement of Faith. In other words, they should agree that the Bible (not creeds, traditions, or hierarchies) is the final rule of our faith and practice (our Covenant). Therefore we can have profitable theological and practical dialog while we are on mission and share in fellowship together. In addition, Partner Churches would not be adamantly opposed to Brethren shared teachings (Statement of Faith). For instance, one church might teach and practice only the Eucharist for communion, but would not teach “against” foot washing as a foolhardy error. Another might prefer amillennialism, but would speak of dispensationalism with respect, not derision. *This is a natural and expected attitude toward those we disagree with slightly, but want to cooperate with substantially.*

Practically

Partner Churches would pay dues, but would have no voting privileges in business sessions. The list of Partner Churches would be managed by Fellowship Council. The following items would facilitate the application process...

Regarding Biblical Mission – the Partner Church would be required to demonstrate involvement in some ministry endeavor with GBCs. For instance, it could be partnering in mission trips to Mexico City, church planting with Go2, or shared youth outreach with a district or Momentum.

Regarding Biblical Relationships – the Partner Church would provide the names of one or more GBCs with which it is in active partnership (which could be verified by contacting the churches).

Regarding Biblical Truth – the Partner Church (its leadership) would sign a commitment to the Covenant and a commitment to respect and not act in opposition to the Statement of Faith.