**Puritan Documents**

**Document 1:**

Author:   John Winthrop   
Date:1629

**Reasons for Puritan migration**

1. It will be a service to the Church of great consequence to carry the Gospel into those parts of the world...& to raise a Bulwark against the kingdom of AnteChrist w[hi]ch the Jesuits labour to reare up in those parts.

2. All other churches of Europe are brought to desolation, & o[u]r sins, for w[hi]ch the Lord begins already to frown upon us & to cut us short, do threaten evil times to be coming upon us, & who knows, but that God hath provided this place to be a refuge for many whom he means to save out of the general calamity, & seeing the Church hath no place left to fly into but the wilderness, what better work can there be, then to go & provide tabernacles & food for her against she comes thither:

3. This Land grows weary of her Inhabitants, so as man, who is the most precious of all creatures, is here more vile & base then the earth we tread upon, & of less price among us then an horse or a sheep: masters are forced by authority to entertain servants, parents to maintain there own children, all towns complain of the burthen of their poore, though we have taken up many unnecessary yea unlawful trades to maintain them, & we use the authority of the Law to hinder the increase of o[u]r people....

4. The whole earth is the Lords garden & he hath given it to the Sons of men w[i]th a gen[era]l Commission: Gen: 1:28: increase & multiply, & replenish the earth & subdue it,...why then should we stand striving here for places of habitation...& in the meane time suffer a whole Continent as fruitful & convenient for the use of man to lie waste w[i]thout any improvement?

5...all arts & Trades are carried in that deceitful & unrighteous course, as it is almost impossible for a good & upright man to maintain his charge & live comfortably in any of them.

6. The fountaine of Learning & Religion are so corrupted as...most children (even the best wittes & of fairest hopes) are perverted, corrupted, & utterly overthrown by the multitude of evil examples....

R.C. Winthrop, Life and Letters of John Winthrop (Boston, 1864), I, 309-311

Source: R.C. Winthrop, Life and Letters of John Winthrop (Boston: Ticknor and Fick's, 1864), Vol. 1, pp. 309-311.

**Document 2:**

**Mayflower Compact**  
Date:1620  
**Document:** IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of Virginia; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience. IN WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape-Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini; 1620.

Mr. John Carver, Mr. William Bradford, Mr Edward Winslow, Mr. William Brewster. Isaac Allerton, Myles Standish, John Alden, John Turner, Francis Eaton, James Chilton, John Craxton, John Billington, Joses Fletcher, John Goodman, Mr. Samuel Fuller, Mr. Christopher Martin, Mr. William Mullins, Mr. William White, Mr. Richard Warren, John Howland, Mr. Steven Hopkins, Digery Priest, Thomas Williams, Gilbert Winslow, Edmund Margesson, Peter Brown, Richard Britteridge George Soule, Edward Tilly, John Tilly, Francis Cooke, Thomas Rogers, Thomas Tinker, John Ridgdale Edward Fuller, Richard Clark, Richard Gardiner, Mr. John Allerton, Thomas English, Edward Doten, Edward Liester.

Source: The Avalon Project at Yale Law School

**Document 3:**

**City Upon a Hill**

Author:   John Winthrop   
Date:1630  
**Document:** Now the onely way to avoyde this shipwracke and to provide for our posterity is to followe the Counsell of Micah, to doe Justly, to love mercy, to walke humbly with our God, for this end, wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in eache other, make others Condicions our owne rejoyce together, mourne together, labour, and suffer together, allwayes haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body, soe shall wee keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, as his owne people and will commaund a blessing upon us in all our wayes, soe that wee shall see much more of his wisdome power goodnes and truthe then formerly wee have beene acquainted with, wee shall finde that the God of Israell is among us, when tenn of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies, when hee shall make us a prayse and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a byword through the world, wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake evill of the wayes of god and all professours for Gods sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of gods worthy servants, and cause theire prayers to be turned into Cursses upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going: And to shutt upp this discourse with that exhortacion of Moses that faithfull servant of the Lord in his last farewell to Israell Deut. 30. Beloved there is now sett before us life, and good, deathe and evill in that wee are Commaunded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one another to walke in his wayes and to keepe his Commaundements and his Ordinance, and his lawes, and the Articles of our Covenant with him that wee may live and be multiplyed, and that the Lord our God may blesse us in the land whether wee goe to possesse it: But if our heartes shall turne away soe that wee will not obey, but shall be seduced and worshipp other Gods our pleasures, and proffitts, and serve them, it is propounded unto us this day, wee shall surely perishe out of the good Land whether wee passe over this vast Sea to possesse it;

Therefore lett us choose life,

that wee, and our Seede,

may live; by obeyeing his

voyce, and cleaveing to him,

for hee is our life, and

our prosperity.

**Document 4**

**The Idea of the Covenant**

Author:   John Winthrop   
Date:1630

God Almighty in His most holy and wise providence hath so disposed of the Condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity; others mean and in subjection.

The Reason Hereof:...so that the rich and mighty might not eat up the poor, nor the poor and despised rise up against their superiors and shake off their yoke; second, in the regenerate in exercising His graces in them, as in the great ones their love, mercy, gentleness, temperance, &c.; in the poor and inferior sort, their faith, patience, obedience, &c.....

When God gives us a special commission He wants it strictly observed in every article....

Thus stands the case between God and us. We are entered into covenant with Him for this work.... But if we neglect to observe these articles, which are the ends we have propounded, and--dissembling with our God--we shall embrace and prosecute our carnal intentions, seeking great things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us and be revenged on such a perjured people, and He will make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant.

Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck and to provide for our posterity is to follow the counsel of Micah: to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God. For this end, we must be knit together in this work as one man; we must hold each other in brotherly affection; we must be willing to rid ourself of our excesses to supply others' necessities; we must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience, and liberality. We must delight in each other, make others' conditions our own and rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and common work, our community as members of the same body.

So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.... We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, and ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies. The Lord will make our name a praise and glory, so that men shall say of succeeding plantations: "The Lord make it like that of New England." For we must consider that we shall be like a City upon a Hill; the eyes of all people are on us.

Massachusetts Historical Society Collections (Boston, 1838), [31]-48.