**Covenanting Service for**

***Ministers Name***

***Name of Pastoral Charge***

**And**

**Shining Waters Regional Council**

***Date***

**Gathering Music and Prelude**

**Acknowledgement of Territory**

**Words of Welcome**

Presider:

We joyfully gather to mark a new ministry relationship in Shining Watersregional council between *N* and *NN*. We welcome [*name guests*] who are a part of our wider community. Today we commit to and celebrate how we are the church together.

**Call to Worship**

Presider:

Sisters and brothers, as we gather in the welcome of God’s love,

as we gather in the joy of our unity in Christ,

as we gather in the power of the Spirit,

let us listen for the voice of God.

People**: Let us worship God, who has spoken and still speaks to those who attend to the roar or the whisper of the Holy One.**

**Prayer of Approach (Unison)**

**Loving God, we cry aloud this day for your guidance. You have called us into ministry as we follow the pathways that you set down for us. Grant us, we pray, strength to believe in your gospel and courage to trust in your Word. We pray that the ministry of this pastoral charge will be strengthened and nurtured by your life-giving Spirit. All glory and honour are yours, God most compassionate. Amen**

**Hymn:**

**God’s Word Proclaimed**

**Scriptures passages**

**Ministry of Music**

**Meditation**

**Hymn:**

**The Act of Covenant**

**Affirmation of Faith - A New Creed (pg. 918 VU)**

We are not alone

we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating

who has come in Jesus the word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God’s presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hop.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

**Covenanting Action**

**Statement of Living Faith Story**

*Share or re-articulate the living faith story of the community of faith and why the called/appointed minister is a good fit. Share what gifts and skills the called/appointed minister brings to the new pastoral relationship. Ideally this would be done by members of the community of faith and/or search team.*

**Statement of This New Ministry**

*The new minister comes forward at the invitation of the presider.*

*Regional council liaison:*

We are here to join into a covenantal relationship with God and between *NN, N* community of faith, and the wider United Church as represented by *Shining Waters* regional council. Although God’s covenant with us never changes, our covenants with one another evolve as we seek ways to faithfully deepen our commitment to Jesus and live into our call to embody God’s love in the world.

*Member of Search Team:*

After prayerful discernment, and the approval of *N* community of faith, we present *NN,* who has been called to a ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care *[or]* education, service, and pastoral care in *N* community of faith. We believe that their skills and talents complement our faithful witness, ministry needs, and community context.

*Regional council liaison:*

*NN,* you are here in response to the call of *N* community of faith and Shining Waters regional council. We come together to mark this new relationship within our regional council for the sake of our shared ministry.

*NN*, you are about to undertake the ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral care *[or]* education, service, and pastoral care in this place.

You, the members of this community of faith, are called to join *NN* in worship, study, prayer, and action.

We, Shining Waters regional council, will be responsible for supporting this ministry.

Let us pray for God’s grace as we covenant together:

**Prayer of Faith**

**Uniting God,**

**you call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship:**

**to celebrate your presence,**

**to live with respect in creation,**

**to be your servants in the service of others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

**to share in Christ’s baptism and eat at his table,**

**to proclaim Jesus crucified and risen,**

**our judge and our hope.**

**Send your Holy Spirit to bind us in full communion**

**so that we may be a uniting church**

**embodying your love for the world.**

**As one, we proclaim:**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,**

**you are with us,**

**we are not alone,**

**all glory and power be unto you.**

**Amen.**

*A prayer for the church inspired by John 17:21 and based on The United Church of Canada’s “A New Creed” and The United Church of Christ’s “Statement of Faith (in the Form of a Doxology).” Written for the full communion service of these two denominations.*

**Hymn or Sung Response**

**Promises of the New Minister**

*Regional council liaison:*

*NN*, do you, in the presence of this community of faith, take on the new trust and responsibility of ministering with *N*?

*New minister:* I do.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you accept the guidance of *Shining Waters* regional council and, together with its other members, be responsible for the health of *N* community of faith?

*New minister:* I will.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you share in the ministry goals and faith story of this community of faith?

*New minister:* I will.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you accept the support and encouragement of this community of faith and this regional council?

*New minister:* I will.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you work cooperatively with the wider church and wider community to embody God’s love in the world?

*New minister:* I will.

**Promises of the Community of Faith**

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you join with *NN* in a ministry of worship, study, prayer, and action within N Community of Faith, Shining Waters regional Council and within the wider church?

*Members of the community of faith:* We will.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you support them as they serve among you in this ministry?

*Members of the community of faith:* We will.

*If there are other members of the order of ministry and/or lay people working together with* NN *in a team ministry, they come forward. The presider introduces them by name and office and addresses them, together with the new minister.*

*Regional council liaison:*

*NN* and *NN*, you have been called by God to work together in this community of faith. Will you promise in faith and obedience to Christ to share this ministry, supporting one another in love and, through your unity of spirit, inspiring all God’s people here in their common ministry for Christ?

*Team ministers:* We will.

**Promises of Regional Council, Wider Church and Community**

*Members of the wider church and community come forward [this could include community partners, members of other faith traditions, United Church of Canada members, affiliated partners, as well as members of any other United Church body].*

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you, as members of Shining Watersregional council and members of the wider community, join with *NN* and this community of faith in the ministry that is both theirs and ours?

*Wider community members:*  We will.

*Regional council liaison:*

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

*Wider community members:*  We will.

**Hymn of Celebration**

**Presentation of Symbols**

*Symbols of ministerial function will vary, depending on the people involved in the covenant, but they may include the following:*

**A BIBLE**

*A member of the community carries a Bible to the new minister.*

*Presenter:*

Take this Bible. Be with us as one who teaches and proclaims the Word.

*People:* **Amen.**

*The new minister places the Bible on the pulpit or lectern.*

**WATER**

*A member of the community carries a pitcher of water to the new minister.*

*Presenter:*

Be with us as one who baptizes in the name of Christ.

*People:* **Amen.**

*The new minister takes the pitcher and pours the water into the font.*

**WATER, TOWEL, AND BASIN**

*Members of the community carry these symbols to the new minister.*

*Presenter:*

Be with us as one who seeks justice.

*People:* **Amen.**

*The new minister pours the water into the basin. Basin, towel, and pitcher are set in a visible place before the congregation.*

**BREAD AND WINE**

*Members of the community carry a loaf of bread and a cup of wine to the new minister.*

*Presenter:*

Be with us as one who cares for those who hunger and thirst.

*People:* **Amen.**

*The new minister places the bread and wine upon the table.*

*[add other signs and symbols as is appropriate to your ministry context]*

*Regional council liaison:*

*NN* and *N* community of faith, let all these be signs of the ministry that is and that will be in this community.

*People:* **Amen.**

**New Minister’s Prayer**

*The new minister prays in thanksgiving and supplication for all who have entered this covenant for the ministry of the community of faith.*

**Response to Covenant**

*Regional council liaison:*

Let us rejoice in the covenant we have made.

*The people may express their joy with applause and/or the singing of a doxology, the pealing of bells, or a fanfare.*

**Offering**

*Note for worship planners: It is not mandatory to send the offering from a covenanting service to the Regional Council. A community of faith may keep the offering for its ministry and work. If a community of faith does wish to share the offering, the Regional Council provides this opportunity:*

1. *Communities of faith can direct offerings from covenanting service to the Ministry Candidates Support Fund. This fund will provide financial support to candidates for ministry within the Shining Waters Regional Council.*
2. *Communities of faith can write a cheque to “Shining Waters Regional Council”, marking the cheque, directing it to the Ministry Candidates Support Fund.*
3. *Please send the cheque to the main office: Shining Waters Regional Council, 59 Line 4 North, Oro-Medonte, ON, L0L 2L0.*

**Doxology**

**Prayer of Dedication (Unison)**

**Holy and Beloved God, We dedicate our lives and all that we have to the work of life, of love, of peace. Receive our gifts and lead us in wisdom and courage. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen**

**Prayers of the People**

*If possible share the prayers of the people in the languages of the people in your community, asking different people to share each petition in their first language.*

Let us pray in different languages, concluding each petition in English with

call: Uniting God, receive our prayers; and response: **And in your love, answer.**

For the ministries of *N* community of faith, Shining Waters regional council, and The United Church of Canada, and our ministry partners around the world who work toward our common vision of a united and uniting church …

Uniting God, receive our prayers: **And in your love, answer.**

For faithful disciples in our communities of faith who work towards our common purpose of extravagant welcome, proclaiming the gospel, and mending God’s world…

Uniting God, receive our prayers: **And in your love, answer.**

For the dreamers, teachers, and prophets who share our common longing to be one in Christ, with creation and with each other…

Uniting God, receive our prayers: **And in your love, answer.**

For those around the world who work towards our sacred message of justice and peace in harmony …

Uniting God, receive our prayers**: And in your love, answer.**

For the prayers we name to you now in the silence of our hearts *[moment of silence]*

Uniting God, receive our prayers**: And in your love, answer.**

We join these prayers together in the prayer that Jesus taught us …

**Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Beloved Church, we are one in Christ!

The peace of Christ, who unites us in love and discipleship, be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Let us greet each other with signs of this peace.

*The Service of the Table may complete the liturgy.*

**Hymn:**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

**Musical Postlude**