

# **A COVENANT OF MUTUAL COMMITMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT BETWEEN**

---

## **AND SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

Shining Waters Regional Council and Shining Waters' Communities of Faith work together in mutual respect as part of The United Church of Canada. Together we celebrate God's presence, seek justice, live with respect in creation, and love and serve others. A covenantal relationship, intentionally entered into between a community of faith and the regional council, is an important symbol of our commitment to one another to support and encourage the ministry we share.

Covenants between communities of faith and the wider church have been in place since the Basis of Union of The United Church of Canada to articulate an understanding of mutual accountability and support. The Manual identifies that a community of faith is recognized by the regional council through a covenantal relationship with the regional council. Components of the covenantal relationship include requirements for communities of faith in The Manual as well as applicable policies set out by the General Council and by the regional council.

Our covenant begins with the shared vision and call of The United Church of Canada as approved by the annual meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Council October 23, 2021:

### **VISION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

Called by God, as disciples of Jesus,  
The United Church of Canada seeks to be a  
bold, connected, evolving church  
of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities  
united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.

### **CALL OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

Deep Spirituality  
Bold Discipleship  
Daring Justice

Shining Waters Regional Council commits to its mission of "Encouraging and Connecting Communities of Faith." To fulfil this mission the regional council and the regional council executive will encourage and engage in:

- 1) living in right relations with Indigenous peoples, and responding positively and meaningfully to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Caretakers of Our Indigenous Circle Calls to the Church;

- 2) becoming an anti-racist church (declaration of the Commissioners of the 43rd General Council, October 24, 2020);
- 3) welcoming people of all ages, abilities, races, sexual orientations and gender identities, and any other forms of marginalization into, and removing barriers to, the life, work and leadership of the Region and our communities of faith.

These objectives are in addition to those declared in The Manual as the mission and ministry for every regional council of encouraging and engaging in:

- 4) joining our collective hearts, voices, and resources to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- 5) local, regional, national and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical and interfaith) for ministry, mission and justice work;
- 6) ministry with children, youth and young adults;
- 7) honouring and living into intercultural mission and ministry; and
- 8) living in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

The regional council commits to providing service, support and oversight to communities of faith as outlined in The Manual and its policies on the regional website [www.ShiningWatersRegionalCouncil.ca](http://www.ShiningWatersRegionalCouncil.ca)

Communities of Faith in Shining Waters Regional Council commit to awareness of and adherence to the policies of the regional council, General Council and The Manual, and to living into the purpose of a community of faith as described in The Manual:

#### The community of faith

- a) lives in covenant with the regional council with mutual responsibilities for the life and mission of the community of faith, and for fulfilling its responsibilities under the covenant;
- b) regularly self-assesses its ministry and files the self-assessment report with the regional council;
- c) joins the hearts, voices, and resources of the community to witness to the gospel and vision of Jesus for a compassionate and just society, both in Canada and around the world;
- d) engages in local, regional, national, and global initiatives and partnerships (community, ecumenical, and interfaith) for ministry, mission, and justice work;
- e) ministers with children and youth and young adults;
- f) honours and lives into intercultural mission and ministry; as described in Vision for Becoming an Intercultural Church (in Check List & Resource Guide in the Self-Assessment process);
- g) lives in covenant with Mother Earth and All My Relations in the Earth community.

Communities of Faith that are congregations and/or pastoral charges commit to participate in the work of the regional council by:

- a) electing a regional representative(s) who participate in regional council meetings and who communicates information from the regional council to the community of faith and the governing body,
- b) encouraging ministry personnel and lay people to consider leadership roles within the regional council and denomination.

Communities of Faith commit to explore possibilities to strengthen our capacity to engage the world around us through

- a) clusters or networks as described in The Manual,
- b) collaboration agreements to share staff with other United Churches as described in the regional council policy,
- c) ecumenical shared ministries described in the handbook
- d) local partnerships engaged in your neighbourhood

The regional council and communities of faith commit to:

- 1) working together in positive ways;
- 2) cultivating a culture of beloved community in which we continue to remove physical and other barriers to participation in the life and work of the church and society, committing ourselves to resisting all forms of oppression with zero tolerance for racist speech, discrimination and or other forms of bigotry; (SWRC Equity Action Plan)
- 3) being pro-active to address the possibility of conflict; resolving conflicts as quickly and as fairly as possible using informal or formal processes and responding pastorally to the pain caused (based on the Principles of Conflict Resolution in section J.3 of The Manual)

A component of this covenant is a governance structure approved by the community of faith and the regional council. A copy of the governance structure, as of the date of this agreement, is attached.

A component of the covenant is the development of a living faith story. A copy of the community of faith's living faith story is attached to this agreement or, with approval of the regional council, will be submitted as soon as complete.

We ask that God bless this covenant between Shining Waters Regional Council and the Community of Faith of

---

located in \_\_\_\_\_

On this day \_\_\_\_\_ the covenant is signed by the chair of the governing body based on a motion of the community of faith to recognize, acknowledge and celebrate this covenant:

---

On this day \_\_\_\_\_ the covenant is signed by the chair of the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council:

---