

**A Covenant of Mutual Commitment, Accountability and Support  
between  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name of the community of faith)  
and  
Living Skies Regional Council**

**Preamble:**

Communities of faith and regional councils share ministry in mutual respect as part of The United Church of Canada. Together they celebrate God's presence, seek justice, and love and serve others. A covenantal relationship, intentionally and willingly entered into by parties, is an important symbol of this commitment.

A community of faith is recognized by the regional council through a covenantal relationship with the regional council. The community of faith and the regional council have the flexibility to negotiate and create a covenant that is responsive to the contextual reality of the community of faith and its unique needs and challenges.

The terms of the covenant include:

- a) the governance requirements for the community of faith in these bylaws;
- b) any applicable policies set by the General Council; and
- c) any other terms that the community of faith and the regional council may agree to include within denominational policies.

The terms of the covenant may be changed from time to time within denominational policies with the agreement of the community of faith and the regional council (*The Manual 2019* s.B.1.3.2)

**1. Community of Faith**

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of community of faith) covenants to fulfill the responsibilities of a community of faith as outlined in *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada and its accompanying handbooks. See especially sections B and G (for congregations).

**Governance:**

The governance structure for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of community of faith) is (*name the model used according to the handbook titled "Models of Board Governance", the committees established, and how frequently the governing body meets*).

**Ministry summary:**

*Outline the mission and vision of the community of faith.*

*Note: Additional clauses may be added with mutual agreement of the community of faith and the regional council. The additional clauses may name specific goals, areas of activity that both bodies should know about, commitments to one another that are not included already in The Manual, etc. Samples might include:*

In addition, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of community of faith) will...

- *Prepare a ministry action plan to be reviewed annually;*
- *Include the regional council representative on the community of faith's governing body;*
- *Be a contributing member of the Canadian Food Grains Bank;*
- *Participate in the \_\_\_ Green Energy Network;*
- *Develop plans to become a fully accessible church by 2025;*
- *Support the ministry of \_\_\_ Camp;*
- *Participate in regional council stewardship programs;*
- *Support the \_\_\_ Area Refugee Network;*
- *Participate in the \_\_\_ Regional Council Youth Ministry Cluster;*
- *Pay the assessments owed to Living Skies Regional Council, if any.*

## **2. Regional Council**

Living Skies Regional Council covenants to fulfill the responsibilities of a regional council as outlined in *The Manual* of The United Church of Canada and its accompanying handbooks.

In particular, Living Skies Regional Council will:

- provide support, advice, and services in human resource matters;
- provide support, advice, and services in dealing with congregational property;
- manage regional archives;
- provide ongoing leadership training for ministry personnel and lay people;
- provide funding partnerships with United Church educational and leadership training centres and camps as determined by the regional council;
- enable access to specialized technical and professional services from the staff of the denominational council if such services are beyond the knowledge of the regional council staff;
- ensure that sources of funds are widely known throughout the regional council;
- ensure ongoing communication between the regional council and communities of faith regarding events and opportunities; and
- encourage the development and ongoing activities of local clusters of communities of faith and of networks that lift up different aspects of the life of the United Church.

## Dispute resolution

If there is disagreement on any of the terms of this covenant, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of community of faith) and Living Skies Regional Council agree to:

1. as a first step, engage in conversation between the governing body and the Committee on Community of Faith support; if this process is unsuccessful in achieving resolution...
2. engage a conflict resolution facilitator to discuss the issues in dispute;
3. agree to binding arbitration under the Saskatchewan Arbitration Act if necessary to determine all outstanding issues; and
4. comply with any agreement reached or decision issued.

Dated at {insert place and date}

\_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of (name of community of faith)

Dated at {insert place and date}

\_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of Living Skies Regional Council