

# The Core Covenant for Communities in the Sword of the Spirit

*Local covenants vary in their expression, but in essential matters they express the same understanding of our commitment to God and to one another as members of the same people. Moreover, the local communities are committed to one another through our covenant of membership in the Sword of the Spirit and therefore each member has a personal commitment to the members of the other communities.*

## Preface

In Christ God has made a covenant with us, a covenant which we have joyfully received and entered into by faith and baptism. He has become our God and we have become his people. As members of *[name of community]* he has called us to express in a special way the covenant established by his son, Jesus, through his sacrifice on the cross. He has joined us together in the bond of steadfast love and faithfulness, and has given us a particular call and mission.

As we enter into this relationship of steadfast love and faithfulness with one another and accept as our own the particular call and mission he has given to us as a people, we understand that we remain in our commitment to our churches, and that we will all support each other's commitments to those bodies. And, although this covenant as members of *[name of community]* is intended as a stable commitment, we understand that it does not necessarily mean for everyone a lifelong commitment to being part of our community. We can foresee that changing circumstances in a person's life may make active involvement in *[name of community]* no longer possible, although such a change would be undertaken only with serious prayer and counsel.

It is with deep joy and gratitude, realizing the overwhelming goodness of God in giving us this opportunity, that we enter into the life of this people that God has called together. We accept the particular covenant relationship that God has established among us as a community, and we express this acceptance publicly as individuals and as a people.

## The Covenant

In order to respond to what God is doing among us, in order to be that people he is calling us to be, we desire to give our whole lives to him, to follow his Son Jesus, and to live more and more in the Holy Spirit. We desire to love and serve him in lives of daily prayer and service; to praise and worship him always; to ever seek his face; to know and serve the truth of his Word in the joy, peace, and love of the Holy Spirit; to believe what he speaks to us and to be obedient to the truth of his Word and the guidance of his Spirit; to offer hospitality to those whom he sends us; to widen our hearts to receive those he adds to our number; and to carry out the mission that he is entrusting to us. Above all, we desire to be a people who always grow, by his great mercy, in the fervor of that first love he has given us, he who is our all. We desire to consecrate our lives to him not simply as individuals but as members of a people, members of *[name of community]*.

We recognize that by virtue of our membership in *[name of community]* we are also members of the Sword of the Spirit, an international community of communities. We commit ourselves to love

and support our brothers and sisters in the Sword of the Spirit throughout the world, and to serve with them in a common mission.

We know that in order for us to be truly a community, a people of one mind and heart in our response to the Lord, we must serve and care for our brothers and sisters in *[name of community]*, and we must understand and accept those things which make our life as one body possible. We know that we must meet together when the community meets. We must respect and support the pattern and order of our life together. We must support the life of the community with our material and financial resources. All this is simply to take responsibility for those the Lord has given us; to be a new family, members of the same body, brothers and sisters working together in the mission he is entrusting to us as a people.

We desire to put our lives into his hands completely, and follow him as a people wherever he may lead.

## Statement of Covenant Commitment

As a sign of your intention to become part of this people and to enter into the particular covenant relationship shared by its members, the following response should be made:

I, *[name of the individual making the commitment]*, want to give my life fully to God, and live as a member of *[name of community]*.