

**A Draft Covenant
for Alliances Churches
including
_____ Lutheran Church (list churches)**

Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

.. it is through this functional diversity in the context of relational unity that God intends to accomplish his purposes in the world, 'so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 4:7-11).

Seeking to build up one another in Christ and move forward in mission together, (list of churches) covenant to partner together as Alliance Churches. Led by the Spirit this Alliance Church partnership was formed on _____ (date) for mutual benefit of each congregation.

This Alliance Churches Partnership will be lived out in these ways:

1. Continuity of Identity

Although we are joined together as one in the Body of Christ, this ministry partnership maintains the distinct identities of each congregation. This Alliance Churches partnership is not a merger, consolidation, nor a dissolution of any of the congregations. The churches will maintain their own buildings and constitutions, as they strive to find a balance between autonomy and unity.

2. Terms of Alliance Churches Partnership

Following approval of each church council and congregation, this ministry partnership officially began _____ (date). The congregations agree to continue engaging in this Alliance Churches partnership for three years. After three years, the Alliance Churches partnership will continue on an annual basis with the approval of each congregation. Dissolution of the Alliance Churches partnership cannot be accomplished prior to consultation with the Bishop of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

3. Alliance Council

An Alliance Council will be formed with 3 members from each congregation with at least one of the three being a member of the congregation's church council. Pastoral leaders will also be members of the Alliance Council. A quorum at the meeting includes at least one member from each congregation (not including pastoral leaders). The Alliance Council meetings will take place four times a year (quarterly). The agenda for these meetings will include a time of devotion/spiritual growth, a time of deepening our relationships with one another, review of the progress of our Alliance partnership, discussion of additional ways to partner together, and any other items proposed by members of the councils or the pastoral leadership. Location of these meetings will alternate between churches. A chairperson and

secretary for this Alliance Council will be elected each year from the members of the Alliance Council.

4. **Worship**

Worship of the Triune God is the epicenter of congregational ministry. Although each congregation maintains their own regular worship services, opportunities for worshipping God together will be lifted up throughout our ministry partnership as well. Alliance worship services may take the form of, but are not limited to: Mid-week Lenten services, holiday services (such as Thanksgiving and/or New Year's Day), select holy week services (such as Maundy Thursday and/or Good Friday), and 5th Sunday joint worship services. The Alliance Council in partnership with the pastoral leadership will determine the frequency of these joint services.

Weekly Worship Service Times:

5. **Mutual Benefits**

The mutual benefits for the three congregations in this Alliance Churches Partnership will take shape in the following ways:

Pastoral and Staffing Leadership:

Alliance Activities:

Small Groups:

Outreach:

Faith Formation:

Youth:

Engagement in the Community:

Administrative Tasks:

Problem Solving/Decision Making:

6. **Communication and Conflict Resolution**

The congregations covenant to practice healthy communication and conflict resolution with one another and the pastoral leadership. As Christians, we understand this to take the form of Matthew 18 when we are in community with one another. Matthew 18 outlines the importance of addressing issues directly and compassionately, while uplifting the values of transparency, truth-telling in love, integrity, forgiveness, reconciliation, and prayer.

7. **Being Church Together**

The congregations will continue to explore ways to expand our joint mission for the sake of God’s world, as well as ways to deepen our relationships with one another and our communities. We can do more as church together!

8. **Review of Alliance Churches Partnership**

The effectiveness of this Alliance Churches partnership will be reviewed annually. Affirmations and recommendations regarding this Alliance Churches partnership will be discussed annually at a meeting with the members of all three church councils and the Director for Evangelical Mission. This meeting’s agenda will also include review of the covenant and all agreements listed within it.

Covenant Approved by the Congregation of (name) Lutheran Church on: _____

Signature of Council President: _____ Date: _____

Covenant Approved by the Congregation of (name) Lutheran Church on: _____

Signature of Council President: _____ Date: _____

Covenant Approved by the Congregation of (name) Lutheran Church on: _____

Signature of Council President: _____ Date: _____

(list of other congregations can be added)