Welcome and Belonging

September 2026

Who We Are

We are an association of Canadian congregations, ministries, agencies and individuals who share a love for Jesus Christ and the hope of renewal found in him, and who share a commitment to journeying on God's path of reconciling all things in Christ. We are:

• **Centered in Christ**: robustly Christian with deep reformational roots, eager to learn from others.
• **Local**: focused on strengthening and serving The Church for mission in the Canadian context.
• **Connected**: enjoying, supporting, challenging, and equipping one another.
• **Dynamic**: navigating challenges and opportunities together so each can flourish.

Why We Exist

Together, we seek to be a community:

• that glorifies God through **unity** without uniformity **and diversity** without division.
• that pursues a **shared mission** with courage, creativity, compassion and delight.
• that actively promotes respect for diverse Christian perspectives in the context of thoughtful dialogue and mutual discernment.
• that **trusts and encourages one another** to pursue their local God-given mission.

What We Do

Working together, we will create opportunities for growth and collaboration by:

• **Gathering** regularly to celebrate and worship, to support one another, to collaborate in mission.
• **Listening** to one another so we can discern what the Holy Spirit is doing among us.
• **Equipping** one another by sharing best practices and timely resources.
• **Offering accountability** to one another as each discerns God's local calling.

We network together to strengthen each ministry and amplify our collective impact.

We network together so that each ministry might better love their neighbours.

We network together so that God's kingdom may come and God's will may be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

We welcome all churches, ministries and individuals to embark on a journey of discernment to consider joining with us in Covenant solidarity. That journey consists of these **Pathways into Belonging** as follows:

What belonging means

Belonging here is **covenantal** -- received as gift from Christ in whom we live and move and have our being, expressed in a sacred mutual bond of trust and loyalty before God, richer than membership in an organization and deeper than agreement on every doctrine. Belonging to the association does not diminish the autonomy of the local church which retains the right to make decisions about their own identity, values and mission within the bounds of our Covenant.

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To belong is to:

1. **Seek Christ together** through Scripture, the witness of Creation, prayer, and mutual accountability
2. **Practise hospitality** — receiving one another with respect at the table where Christ has made room for all
3. **Participate in shared life** — worship, discernment, mission, and governance of the association
4. **Honour difference while seeking to learn from each other** — presuming good faith while ministries discern local practice
5. **Pursue repair** — actively pursue healed relationships with Indigenous peoples, others harmed by exclusion and abuse of power, the broken creation and wherever there is suffering

Belonging is expressed through **action**: hospitality, participation, shared discipleship, and accountability.

Step 1 — Inquiry and conversation

Initial contact is made with the association. Shared materials on mission, values, and this covenant are reviewed together. Questions about local practice, inclusion, and mutual expectations are addressed openly.

Step 2 — Discernment in the congregation/agency/individual

The congregation/agency/individual studies these materials with the opportunity to discuss how local practice relates to association standards. A vote or consensus decision is recorded.

Step 3 — Covenant signing

Authorized persons sign the **Covenant of Belonging** (Appendix A), naming their congregation/agency/individual and committing to the shared statements of values and mission, association inclusion standards, and local discernment framework.

Step 4 — Public welcome

The congregation/agency/individual is welcomed in an association gathering or local worship service using the **Rite of Welcome**.

To God be the glory.

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Appendix A — Covenant of Belonging (signing form)

Congregation / Ministry / Individual name: _____

We/I hereby declare our/my commitment to participate in the shared mission of this association and to live together according to its statements of identity, vision, values, and covenantal commitments.

Authorized signature(s): _____

Date: _____

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Appendix A

Rite of Welcome — Congregations, Ministries, and Individuals

Use when a congregation completes affiliation, a ministry joins the association, or an individual enters through personal affirmation. Adapt names and titles as needed.

For a congregation or ministry

Leader: [Name of congregation/ministry], you have studied the statements that describe our identity, vision, mission and values, our covenant, and our commitment to welcome one another. You have chosen to join this association as a covenant partner.

Representative(s): We commit our congregation [or ministry] to the shared mission, values, and covenant of this association — to seek Christ together, to practice hospitality, participate in shared life, to honor difference while seeking to learn from each other and to pursue repair.

Leader: Will the association receive [name] as a covenant partner?

People: We receive you with joy. There is room among us.

Leader: [Name], you are welcome among us. Go in peace to serve Christ in your place and return to this fellowship for mutual support and shared mission.

People: Welcome. We belong to Christ and to one another.

For an individual

Leader: [Name], you have studied the statements that describe our identity, vision, mission and values, our covenant, and our commitment to welcome one another. You have chosen to join this association as a covenant partner.

Individual: I do.

Leader: Do you commit to the shared mission, values, and covenant of this association — to seek Christ together, to practice hospitality, participate in shared life, to honor difference while seeking to learn from each other and to pursue repair.

Individual: With God's help, I will.

Leader: [Name], we welcome you with joy into the life of this association.

People: Welcome. We belong to Christ and to one another.

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