

THE FIFTH COVENANT for  
"PARTNERS IN MINISTRY"  
IN THE EASTERN CONVOCATION of  
THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE of WEST TEXAS

This document evidences the Covenant of the following Congregations, namely:

Trinity Church, Edna  
St. Stephen's Church, Goliad  
St. James' Church, Hallettsville  
St. Matthew's Church, Kenedy  
Grace Church, Port Lavaca  
Ascension Church, Refugio

and the Diocese of West Texas to be Partners in Ministry, clearly committing as congregations, as Bishop's Committees, as Vestries, as orders of lay, as bishops, priests, and deacons, to each and all, to minister to the needs of all Episcopalians in the Partners group, to strengthen the Church, and to seek to spread the Gospel to those outside the Church

In furtherance of our Covenant, we each adopt the following principles:

1. Our Vestry/Bishop's Committees and each congregation are committed to regular prayer for Partners in Ministry in this Convocation. A prayer for Partners in Ministry will be included at every service conducted in our churches. (See Exhibit A for the recommended prayer written for this purpose.)
2. We agree that Partners in Ministry will be served by the ministry of a team of clergy that will be versed in approaches to area ministry and have the ability to meet diverse congregational needs.
3. It is agreed that for the duration of this covenant, each congregation will agree to be served collectively by the Clergy Team called forth and appointed with the Canon Missioner officially designated as Rector or Vicar of each congregation.

All other canonical and fiscal responsibilities of each congregation's Vestry/Bishop's Committee will remain undiminished.

4. It is agreed that a Partnership Council will be established to plan, coordinate, and administer the work and corporate budget of Partners in Ministry in this Convocation. The Senior Warden or Bishop's Warden of each congregation and one other member designated by each congregation shall be members of the Council. The Canon Missioner will serve as the presiding officer of the Partnership Council.
5. The Bishop or his designee shall be a member ex-officio of the Partnership Council and shall function in his own right or as the Bishop's designee.
6. It is agreed that the Partnership Council will establish its own rules of order and by-laws, and will have as its functions:
  - a. To call forth the Canon Missioner from a list submitted by the Bishop
  - b. To ratify other clergy and lay staff upon the recommendation of the Canon Missioner
  - c. To prepare, define, and adopt a budget on behalf of all participating congregations inclusive of at least all staff expenses for the team
  - d. To prepare, define, and adopt an income budget based upon an agreed common percentage of each congregation's net disposable income as established by the Council as defined in the Parochial Report
  - e. To define objectives for Partners in Ministry
  - f. To develop a structure for the Partnership Council for the proper administration of Partners in Ministry, including a set of written by-laws for the Partnership Council.
7. It is agreed that the Partnership Council, in the accomplishment of its functions above, will be empowered by Vestry/Bishop's Committee to act on their behalf.
8. Participating congregations agree to pay over to the Partnership Council such common percentage of their net disposable income as defined in the annual

Parochial Report, toward the payment of clergy, lay staff, and other costs of Partnership Council Activities as is determined by the Partnership Council. These funds, plus whatever funds the Council obtains from the Diocese and other sources, shall be the basis for paying the Partnership Council's expenses.

9. It is agreed that the Clergy Team called forth and appointed to this ministry will be composed of a minimum of one full-time clergy with other full-time or part-time clergy or lay staff to be appointed, subject to available funding. Housing within the Eastern Convocation and other details will be negotiated by the Partnership Council.
10. It is agreed that the Canon Missioner, assisted by the clergy and lay team members, will have primary responsibility for the building of the appropriate team structure. The advice of the Partnership Council and congregations will be actively sought for the accomplishment of stated objectives.
- II. It is agreed that the following functions for clergy responsibility are appropriate, though functions may vary in each congregation:
  - a. Be an evangelist
  - b. Administer the Sacraments
  - c. Provide the Eucharist every week in each congregation
  - d. Share in the intentional calling forth of lay leadership and Share in the discernment of laity being called for ordained ministry
  - e. Train the laity
  - f. Provide pastoral care
  - g. Provide spiritual direction and support
  - h. Lead liturgical planning
  - i. Continue a review of structure and program
  - j. Evangelism training and leadership

- k. Develop and maintain connections with diocesan staff and resources and participate in diocesan life.
- 12. We agree that lay leadership in the churches who make up Partners in Ministry will be called forth and trained to serve with the clergy in the ministry of the church.
- 13. In order to equip them for the ministry of the Partnership, leaders in the churches in the Partnership, and all members of the Partnership Council, agree to undertake such education, training, and preparation for licensing for ministry as the Bishop or his designees shall from time to time provide.
- 14. It is agreed that the following areas of lay responsibility are appropriate:
  - a. Evangelism of community
  - b. Share in the discernment of laity being called for ordained ministry
  - c. Share in the calling forth of lay leadership
  - d. Lay leadership
  - e. Renewal of lapsed members
  - f. Catechism training
  - g. Serving with clergy in pastoral matters
  - h. Conduct appropriate liturgy in absence of clergy
  - i. Various ministries in the community
  - j. Educational leadership
  - k. Ministries in church administration
  - l. Participate in diocesan life.
- 15. It is agreed that the member congregations of Partners in Ministry, in order to implement the objectives, will covenant for a period of five (5) years from the date of the signing of the Covenant. All congregations will commit themselves to

active and determined participation for the duration of that period.

16. It is agreed that the design and objectives for the Partners in Ministry will be reviewed annually by the Partnership Council and the Office of the Bishop, and the results communicated to each congregation.
17. Six (6) months prior to the conclusion of the five year period, participating congregations through their representatives to the Council will review their relationship to the area ministry. The Council will be advised by member congregations no later than ninety (90) days prior to the termination date whether their participation in Partners in Ministry is to be terminated, or continued into the future.
18. A congregation may withdraw from the Partnership before the end of the Covenant period providing they can demonstrate the fiscal independence of parish status and have the properly trained lay leadership, lay ministers, and administrative capability to function as a parish.
  - a. At this time, a one year probationary period will be initiated, while still participating in the Partnership Covenant, in order to demonstrate the ability to become and remain a self-sustaining parish.
  - b. At the end of the probationary period, the congregation will withdraw from the Partnership Covenant and continue its life as an independent parish in the Diocese of West Texas.

This covenant is adopted on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015, by the following Partner congregations, whose Senior Warden or Bishop's Warden or specifically named by resolution representative signs below to evidence the consent of the respective Vestry/Bishop's Committee as incorporated into a Resolution duly passed at a meeting

of such body, a copy of which is attached, and by the Bishop as evidencing the consent of the Diocese.

CHURCH

NAME & POSITION SIGNATURE

Trinity, Edna

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St. Stephen's, Goliad

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St. James', Hallettsville

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St. Matthew's, Kenedy

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Grace, Port Lavaca

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Ascension, Refugio

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For the Diocese of West Texas

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The Rt. Rev. Gary Lillibridge, Bishop

## **Design Team who created the form of the original Covenant**

Glen Naylor - Refugio  
Cathy Dawson - Refugio  
George Dawson - Refugio  
Judy O'Neil - Port Lavaca  
Howard Hartzog - Pt. Lavaca  
The Rev. Allen Price -Port Lavaca  
Gwen Dugat - Victoria  
The Rev. William Dugat,Jr.-Victoria  
Robert Cheever - Yoakum  
Verna Cheever - Yoakum  
Mary Ann Pagel - Yoakum  
Emma Williams - Yoakum  
Dorothy Anderson - Hallettsville  
John Simpson - Hallettsville

Pelinda Smith - Kenedy  
Lillian Hester - Kenedy  
Jane Robisheaux - Goliad  
Beall Emmord - Goliad  
John C. Brooke - Goliad  
Brenda Johnson - Edna  
Harrison Stafford - Edna  
Archdeacon C. Eugene Jennings  
Bishop James E. Folts  
The Rev. Canon Edmund L. Dohoney  
The Ven. Gary R. Lillibridge  
Donna S. Key- Secretary

The First Canon Missioner selected by the Partnership Council:  
The Rev. Canon Dr. Robert F. De Wolfe  
on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of November 1995.

# EXHIBIT “A”

## Partners in Ministry Prayer

Almighty God, you have given to your Church

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers

For the work of ministry in building up the Body of Christ:

Grant that we may faithfully respond to the vision of Partners in Ministry

And that we all gain a unity of faith, and knowledge of the Son of God

Until we reach a measure of the full stature of Christ,

To whom be praise and glory, now and forever. Amen



# TRINITY CHURCH, EDNA

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Vestry of TRINITY CHURCH, EDNA, authorizing and consenting to our Senior Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Senior Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Vestry and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

# St. Stephen's Church, Goliad

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Bishop's Committee of St. Stephen's Church, Goliad, authorizing and consenting to our Bishop's Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Bishop's Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Bishop's Committee and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary

# St. James' Church, Hallettsville

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Bishop's Committee of St. James' Church, Hallettsville, authorizing and consenting to our Bishop's Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Bishop's Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Bishop's Committee and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary

# St. Matthews' Church, Kenedy

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Bishop's Committee of St. Matthew's Church, Kenedy, authorizing and consenting to our Bishop's Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Bishop's Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Bishop's Committee and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

# Grace Church, Port Lavaca

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Vestry of Grace Church, Port Lavaca, authorizing and consenting to our Senior Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Senior Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Vestry and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

# Ascension Church, Refugio

A Resolution was passed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, by the Bishop's Committee of Ascension Church, Refugio, authorizing and consenting to our Bishop's Warden signing the Fifth Covenant of Partners in Ministry on behalf of our congregation.

In the event that our Bishop's Warden is unable to be present for the signing of the Covenant, we authorize

\_\_\_\_\_ to sign the Covenant on behalf of this Bishop's Committee and congregation.

Attested to by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary