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# CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH AND LAKE EDGE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## **An Alliance Covenant**

### Introduction

Standing firmly rooted in the love of God, the transformational Word and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, the congregations of Christ the Solid Rock Baptist Church (CTSRBC) and Lake Edge United Church of Christ (LEUCC), following two years of intentional study and conversation, enter into this Covenant of Relations to become an Alliance.

Each congregation exists to give people a place to worship God, to share the Gospel inside and outside of the church, and to continue the work of Jesus Christ in our communities and beyond. In this Covenant, the term “member” includes anyone associated with either church community and/or its ministries, regardless of whether they have declared official membership in the church.

### Vision – What The Alliance Will Accomplish

This Covenant binds us, two churches from different faith traditions and ethnic cultures. Together we strive to model God's Shalom (right relations with God, with each other, and with all creation).

Within this Covenant we hold a vision of a stronger witness and presence together as we engage in shared social justice work. Our broad Vision is to be a positive model and influence for interracial relationships in Madison. This Vision is dynamic and will change and be more specifically defined as we live into the Covenant. The pastors and leaders of both congregations believe living this Vision will attract community partners that advance our Vision, produce tangible results for Madison, and serve as a model beyond our city.

*“Do not follow the path that has been given. Instead, go to where there is no path and leave a trail.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson*

In Covenant together, we remain individual congregations with unique worship styles and services, pastors, and governance structures; however, we share one community building and engage in ministries together under a united vision and Covenant as one faith community in seeking God's vision of Shalom for our world.

In unifying for this pursuit, Scripture informs us:

*“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)*

*“For (Jesus) is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.”  
(Ephesians 2:14)*

In order to live into this Covenant and realize the full potential of its Vision, we promise to practice patience, understanding, trust, and forgiveness with one another, and we promise to support the Vision by engaging in the joint ministries of this community of faith, supporting the work of the Joint Governing Board and joint teams, engaging in the joys and activities of each other's congregations, and supporting and loving one another as God has loved us.

*“I think it is one of the tragedies of our nation, one of the shameful tragedies, that 11 o'clock on Sunday morning is one of the most segregated hours, if not the most segregated hour in Christian America. I definitely think the Christian Church should be integrated, and any church that stands against integration and that has a segregated body is standing against the Spirit and the teachings of Jesus Christ, and it fails to be a true witness, but this is something that the church will have to do itself. I don't think church integration will come through legal processes.”*

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. – April 17, 1960 – Meet the Press*

## Values – The Core Values We Hold As An Alliance

Historically, CTSRBC and LEUCC have placed value in social justice action locally, nationally, and abroad. In this Covenant, we commit to the following justice ministries and agree to practice the tenets of these ministries internally and externally:

- Racial Justice (anti-discrimination; health & education equity, prison reform; etc.).
- Economic Justice (living wage; pay equity; employee protections; etc.)
- Environmental Justice (recycling practices; pollution reduction; protection of natural resources; etc.)

- Immigration Justice (family unity; anti-ICE raids & unfair deportations; etc.)
- LGBTQ+ Justice (anti-discrimination; protections of marriage & family rights; etc.)

This is not meant to be an all-inclusive list. As an Alliance, we will determine future joint ministries together.

## Strategy – How The Alliance Will Enact The Vision

This Covenant is only effective if the Vision is known, used, and practiced. The Joint Governing Board and individual church governance boards will regularly review this Covenant. It will be made accessible and available to all. We will celebrate this Covenant and Vision together on a regular basis. We will assure that visitors, new members, and community partners are aware of this Covenant and Vision.

### Relationship Building

To unify two churches as one faith community in an Alliance to do God's work, we endeavor to develop and strengthen personal relationships and build trust and understanding with each other. This Covenant establishes that all members from each church are invited and welcomed to all activities, events, and ministries (internal and external) of both churches. In Covenant together, members from both churches commit to attending the other church's activities and events whenever possible. An Alliance web page and calendar, created together, will promote attendance at such events.

Continuing education and conversations around justice issues/topics such as race, immigration, and oppression will be provided on a regular basis to promote understanding and trust. Members from both churches are strongly encouraged to participate in these activities.

### Joint Governing Board

The Joint Governing Board (JGB) will serve as the leadership team in charge of joint interests and activities for the Alliance and will consist of three appointed representatives from each congregation. In addition, the senior pastors will serve as advisors to this board, and representatives to the JGB will be appointed by the respective governing bodies. Areas of responsibility will include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure financial viability of Alliance and manage joint financial interests (review annual budgets and other tenant leases, authorize payment of joint bills, etc.)
- Create joint name and marketing materials for the building and the Alliance
- Create joint policies and covenants (safe church, building use, etc.)

- Direct and oversee major changes to the building or property
- Hire joint personnel (not including pastors)
- Form joint teams for the Alliance and direct the scope of those teams
- Review and promote the Alliance and Vision as it evolves, and regularly assess the status of the Alliance relationship
- Serve as a conflict resolution team and make a final decision if there are disagreements related to the Alliance

The JGB commits to making decisions that align with the vision, values, and strategies of this Alliance, and will continuously engage the faith community in helping us nurture and realize the Vision.

Living into this Covenant will create change for everyone and will require attention, acceptance, patience, and trust by every person in this joint faith community. This Covenant will change over time in order to live into the Vision we are creating, and to be in Shalom, in right relations with God, one another, and all creation.

Rev. Everett Mitchell, Rev. Alexander Liberatore, the United Vision Team, and other church leaders pray you will continue to be excited by the possibilities and energy this Alliance brings to our churches and wider communities. May God bless you all, and may our communities be blessed by our work together in the future.

Signed on this Date:

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Rev. Everett Mitchell, CTSRBC Pastor

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Rev. Alexander Liberatore, LEUCC Pastor

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Authorized Leadership Representative, CTSRBC

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Authorized Leadership Representative, LEUCC

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United Vision Team Co-Chair, CTSRBC

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United Vision Team Co-Chair, LEUCC