

As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you.

Genesis 9:9

I will take you as my people, and I will be your God.

Exodus 6:7a

May

Stewards in Covenant:

Walking Together in All God's Ways



At its heart, covenant is about belonging. We belong to God. As the Body of Christ we also belong to each other. God commits to us and we, in turn, commit to be God's people. "Covenant knits us together. God initiates covenant and never betrays the call, gifts, and promises given to God's people."¹

The church exists because God's Holy Spirit has called us together and bound us in covenant for the purpose of a particular mission: "God

calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory."²

Bound together in this covenant, as disciples, we form what many call the beloved community. We have insisted, always, on the importance of "walking together in all of God's ways."³

As centers of hope and transformation, local churches, Associations, Conferences and national ministries join in Our Church's Wider Mission. It's who we are together!

SUGGESTED LEADERS/PARTNERS:

Stewardship, Mission and Christian Education ministries.
Association and Conference OCWM committees.

IDEAS FOR LEADERS:

(Resource Websites and links: www.ucc.org/stewardship)

- **Continue the sermon series** with “Stewards in Covenant.”
- **Promote the Strengthen the Church** special mission offering (see www.ucc.org/stc).
- **Engage in spiritual practices** of openness, honesty, speaking the truth in love, listening, shaping communities, testimony, Christian fellowship, covenanting, community discernment, being the Body of Christ.
- **Study the Manual on Church** and offer feedback (see www.ucc.org/ministers/manual-on-church).
- **Adopt a policy** to grow giving to Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) to 10% of church expenses or more. Include support for your regional UCC seminary. Put up an OCWM poster (free). Give OCWM brochures (free) to every member. Keep some in the pews.
- **Celebrate Churches Uniting in Christ** with local ecumenical partners.

“When we give to our churches, we do so to empower the church to live into God’s call. We also sanction the wider church by giving to Our Church’s Wider Mission. The church in turn shepherds us to live into [our] calling as a new kind of community.”⁴

As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

1 Corinthians 12:20-21

1 UCC Manual on Church

2 UCC Statement of Faith, adapted by Robert Moss.

3 UCC Manual on Church, UCC Constitution, Article III, paragraph 6.

4 Rochelle A. Stackhouse, *The Gifting God*, 10.