

## COVENANT FOR STAFF RELATIONSHIP

### Synod of the Northeast

July 9, 2003

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. (I Corinthians 12:4-6)*

Though the roles and responsibilities in the work we share are varied, our common thread of connection is that we are capable persons made by God to care and share. Each of us has unique and important perspectives and if we are to serve the Synod well, the attentiveness of each staff member is needed to create and nurture a fabric of relationship woven from our individual strands.

Because we care about our work together, we agree to respect and embrace each person's gifts as expressions of God's goodness and will work to honor them. Therefore, we are willing to honestly and openly walk, talk and work redemptively with one another to clarify the goals, beliefs, and values we hold and to actively work to resolve conflict when that interferes with the effectiveness of our working together.

In that spirit, I will attempt to listen with care to the needs of other staff members and their concerns. I will avoid trying to judge or analyze motives, trusting that my co-workers have at heart the best interests of the Synod and its mission. When others are working on problems in their own area of responsibility, I will leave them free to find their own solutions unless asked for my suggestions. When collaboration is invited, I will participate fully for the good of the whole.

When the actions of a staff member keep me from meeting my own personal needs or work requirements, I will care enough to follow Christian principles of honest and caring engagement – to first share directly perceptions, feelings, and negative impacts without drawing others in; to invite a commonly trusted person into the conversation when resolution fails to occur; and to seek the help of the entire staff if the second step misses the mark. The goal of these conversations is to strengthen how we work together, to create win-win solutions wherever possible, and to avoid power that “lords it” over the other.

In creating this covenant, our desire is to experience the benefits of each person's gifts and skills by guaranteeing to one another an atmosphere of trust and safety in the midst of mutual accountability, consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (I Corinthians 12:7)*