

Sample Learning/Serving Covenant

Note: This sample is **NOT** a required format and indeed should not be copied verbatim. The only necessary thing is to have all elements of your Covenant covered. These elements are

- The purpose of the covenant
- Vision of ministry by the church and by you in the setting
- Ministry goals – what you want/need to learn/teach and what the church wants/needs to learn/teach
- Job description
- Timeline for work to be accomplished (unless student pastor, in which case, simply state the length of your appointment to date)
- Any special needs
- Plan for weekly supervision specifically (day of week, time, length)
- Plan for meetings with lay committee (6-8 weeks)
- Compensation and compensation schedule

The reason you are required to have signatures of supervisor, lay committee, academic advisor and FE instructor is to make sure that you are having meaningful conversation with each of these groups/individuals about the work that you do. Without these conversations, the experience has less focus and differing, often unspoken expectations may arise. The Covenant's purpose is to invite everyone to think about your ministry experience similarly. Should there be conflict about the role of the student, the Covenant will be a good reference point for clarification.

The Learning-Serving Covenant for Renee Bizet and Cokesbury Community Church 2012-2013

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This Learning-Serving Covenant is designed to initiate a year-long ministry development program for Cokesbury Community Church and Renee Bizet, with the option of continuing work together beyond the academic year. Through this covenant relationship, all parties involved agree to be open to both teaching and learning together in the areas outlined below for the 2006-2007 academic year. The covenant itself has been designed through conversations with both supervisor and lay committee to build intentional dreams and goals for our ministry opportunity together. We make this covenant before and with God, in whose service and for whose people this ministry is offered.

Vision of Ministry at Cokesbury Community Church

Cokesbury CC, established in 1858, has always hoped to further its mission to fulfill the Great Commandment as effectively as it can. The church recently has begun to decline in membership, though the faithful attendees have significant energy for ministry outside the church building. CCC has weathered conflict, illness, death and frequent pastoral change, but remains faithful to its calling to be a beacon of love in the community. The vision for the church in 2006 is to find new ways to love neighbor and show neighbors the love of God. To do so, CCC and Renee Bizet covenant together to develop several new programs to reach out to the local community of teenagers who are in foster care or have a prison record. The grace of God that members at CCC have experienced in their own lives must be shared with the hurting people of the world in ever-changing ways. CCC and Renee Bizet agree that this vision is a process and both parties agree to continue revisiting the vision throughout the year.

Ministry Goals *(this section can be in list or narrative form)*

For Renee Bizet

- Learn to preach effectively in a 200-member congregation
- Learn elements of community organizing
- Address the theological issue of theodicy and perhaps ecclesiology (where is God in the hard times and what is the nature of church for these times?)
- Integrate academics with practice of ministry
- Learn basic ministry competencies – leadership skills, clear communication, centered decision-making, non-anxious presence, listening and follow-through
- Learn to balance academic life, family life and church life
- Learn how to turn prayer into prayerful action
- Learn how to communicate effectively when there is conflict

- Teach church members what it means to be a student in seminary
- Share insights from seminary
- Teach bible study
- Teach how laity can be empowered to be ever-more effective ministers of the Gospel to a hurting world

For CCC

- Be faithful to the church's mission and vision
- Learn elements of community organizing
- Understand and support the student's schedule
- Improve spiritual life of church
- Give feedback to the student about preaching, pastoral care and outreach
- Invite to church those who have no church home
- Learn what seminary teaches students/ministers, including some of the vocabulary and why it makes a difference to know

- theology
- Be faithful stewards of resources

Renee and CCC agree to focus primarily on preaching and community organizing for this academic year, with attention to other matters listed as time and need indicate necessary.

Job Description as agreed upon by CCC and Renee Bizet

Renee will spend 14 hours per week at CCC, with an additional 6 hours per week preparing for sermons and study, as well as researching how to become a community organizer. Her job will include

- Preaching and leading worship 3 of 4 Sundays per month (4th and 5th Sundays – lay speaker or substitute)
- Visiting parishioners in the hospital in emergencies as she is available
- Developing and teaching a committed group of laity to become community organizers after she has completed her own training
- Teaching bible study and theology based on recent movies/books that have led many Christians to question their faith stances
- Being available by phone
- Continuing beyond the 2006-2007 academic year should the personnel committee and Renee agree that this placement is a good match
- Attending personnel and evaluation meetings with supervisor and lay committee (meeting every 6-8 weeks for updates)

Timeline

Renee and CCC hope for ongoing ministry for the first two aspects of her job description. Renee's training for community organizing, with particular attention to the youth culture, should be completed by December. She then will spend January training CCC members to work in the community within the framework CCC and Renee design together. February – May will include implementation of the plan as well as a supporting prayer group to provide spiritual direction and discernment for the community work.

Special Needs

Renee needs to spend time with her family and with her books; CCC has agreed to be sensitive and flexible to her needs while at the same time making sure that ministry continues when Renee is not available. However, there is the expectation that Renee fulfill her weekly commitment as she can unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Plan for Weekly Supervision

Renee's supervisor, Rev. Sydney Lee, will meet with Renee on Tuesdays from 11-12. Their discussions will include church issues, communication concerns in the parish and community and theological reflection on not only the mission and vision, but the daily work of ministry. They commit to have prayer time together each week and to explore the dimensions of theology that Renee wishes to explore – theodicy and ecclesiology – throughout the year. Sydney agrees to work on the evaluations required by the FE Office so that Renee can have a completed file for her judicatory credentialing.

Plan for Lay Committee meetings

The lay committee, consisting of 4 church leaders, agrees to meet with Renee every 6-8 weeks for ongoing feedback and mutual learning. The lay committee has read the description for its task provided by the MTSO Field Education office and will set its agenda with these suggestions in mind. Renee will also give the committee feedback about her experience of the ministry of the church thus far. The committee will fill out the evaluation forms due in February and May as required by the Field Education office so that Renee can have a completed file for her judicatory credentialing.

Compensation and Compensation Schedule

Renee Bizet will be paid \$12/hour for her on-site and preparation work. She also will be paid 0.38/mile for visitation mileage and \$10/week for her phone bill. Pay and reimbursement will occur twice monthly.

Signatures

I have discussed this Covenant with the following people, who have signed their approval of this agreement on the signature sheet.

Signed,
Renee Bizet