The Covenant  
between  
the Roman Catholic and Lutheran faith communities  
of Evanston, Illinois

Believing in the will of the Lord Jesus Christ that we “all may be one” (Jn 17:22), recognizing our common baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity, and encouraged by our common witness in worship and service as our people come together in faith, the Roman Catholic and Lutheran faith communities of Evanston, together with their pastors, enter into this Covenant with great joy.

WE AFFIRM

1. That we are united through baptism in the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This unity is already at work in our shared Evanston community and, in multiple ways, expressed tangibly through ministry. We also affirm that Jesus Christ calls us to make that given unity more visible among us.

2. That Jesus Christ is the living center of our faith and is the Savior and Lord of all. His love is transformative and he will walk with us in the challenging and joyful work of dialogue, from the theological interchange between the (our) Lutheran and Catholic communions to the joint interactions taken on by our individual parishes to the personal conversations which happen between our members as individual people of faith.

3. That the desire of Christ is that the Church be one people brought together from all races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, languages, cultures, abilities, and classes and that Christ is even now breaking down walls that separate us. (Eph 2:14-15)

4. That our life of grace is nourished by the Word of God which we receive through the Sacred Scriptures, the Sacraments, and the action of the Holy Spirit within the Body of Christ which is the Church.

5. That Lutherans and Catholics have a rich diversity of spiritual gifts and traditions and that our ongoing dialogue both reveals our points of unity and challenges us to move toward the goal of full communion as Christ desires it; we celebrate our history and the intentional study and dialogue.
which connects us; and we recognize that by working for unity, we give witness to the power of Christ in the world.

6. That the Holy Spirit empowers and guides us to recognize our common bonds in Christ so that, through grace, we can overcome the separation which now exists in doctrine, sacramental life, and church order and achieve the full communion Christ desires for his Church.

WE STAND TOGETHER IN HOPE

1. That we might continue to be transformed by deepening Christian unity as we move toward full communion with one another in the years to come.

2. That we might one day come to the Eucharistic table through Christ and eat together as a family, affirming the gift we are to one another.

3. That the gathered Lutheran and Catholic faith communities together with their leadership might reflect the unique and full diversity of the Evanston area.
THEREFORE WE WILL

1. Demonstrate our emerging unity by actively collaborating to live out our baptismal promises at the parish level. Such collaborations might include:
   a. gathering in common prayer at least once each year to pray with each other and to pray for complete reconciliation of our communions;
   b. including in our intercessory prayers each Sunday a short common intercession for Christian unity;
   c. conducting joint scripture studies, book discussions, and social gatherings where we might mutually witness to the power of faith and come to understand more deeply what unites and what divides us;
   d. advocating as one body for causes that promote peace and justice in our community, country, and world and seeking opportunities to serve the poor and care for creation;
   e. bringing our youth groups and parish communities together whenever possible to share our common faith and work;
   f. opening our facilities to one another as needed, particularly for joint programs or training.
   g. publishing a joint Catholic-Lutheran prayer book;

2. Demonstrate our emerging unity by creating opportunities for our clergy and other leaders to visibly acknowledge and share in our one baptism through Christ and ensuring all collaboration and sharing reflects the diversity of Evanston. Such visible sharing might include
   a. allowing our preachers to visit each other’s churches and preach the good news;
   b. Recognizing that we all long to share fully at the Eucharistic table, we request our pastoral leaders to offer guidance and careful discernment about this matter as we continue on our way toward the full communion that Christ desires.
   c. taking on the joint responsibility to educate our own communities about our quest for full unity;
   d. promoting natural partnerships between our faith communities

3. Share responsibility to form, sponsor, and support a Task Force for ongoing Lutheran-Catholic dialogue which will consist of three parts:
   a. planning and coordinating at least one large Catholic-Lutheran event for the Evanston communities each year;
   b. seeking monetary support from the participating communities to help hold such events;
c. reviewing and celebrating our Covenant commitment regularly and reaffirming the Covenant on a set date and time.

4. Organize and participate in a public celebration to commemorate the signing of this Covenant.

Signed this day, October 29, 2017 in Evanston, IL.

Pastoral Leaders

Representatives