

A Discipleship-Core Covenant

A Discipleship Core is a group consisting of 4-8 people who meet weekly for an intentional season of discovery, reflection and practice in following Jesus. Those who participate in the Discipleship-Core are seeking a next level of accountability in a bounded cluster of community. One of the first things Jesus did in His ministry was to choose a community of disciples to share in and continue His ministry.

The Celtic tradition has long held that “we become what we do”, which is why discipleship in community is so essential. This group is seeking transformation through responsibility to each other, the disruption of the Holy Spirit, and concrete practices in our day-to-day. Our primary calling is to commit ourselves to a way of life as Disciples.

Many in our day fear promise-making; seeing it as constricting and controlling. But making promises to each other is not about rigid regulations; it is about relational commitment to each other. It is not about spiritual law but about deeper spiritual friendship. Promises cultivate trust and create stability to our discipleship journey. They help us depend on one another and move us out of the silo of individualism into the garden of community. When we make promises to a group of people they can keep us “on track” when other aspects of our lives may pull us away.

To *Covenant* with each other is to create a promise-making space as we seek God’s grace to live into life-forming Discipleship. A Covenant for those gathering for discipleship is a time-honored practice that has helped ordinary people live extraordinary spiritual lives. Within the context of Christian theology the word covenant principally refers to the promises made between God and the Israelites in the Old Testament and the followers of Christ that patterned their habits after the life of Christ in the New Testament. A covenant calls us into committed practice with each other rather than mere reading and digesting. The covenant is not a set of rules; rather, it is a path for a season of faithfulness. A covenant puts into words our desires and chosen priorities. The end goal of this covenant is not the covenant but the fruit of surrendering ourselves to God’s work in our life.

The following are our promises to the Discipleship-Core:

COMMITMENT

- I promise to complete the entire journey of working through the Church as Movement. During this time, I will prioritize my schedule to faithfully read and reflect on our shared material.
- I promise to be accountable to make every meeting (emergencies and vacations are exceptions) at the time and place we agree upon. I seek to be faithful to attend our gathered times together with my heart prepared to share the insights the Holy Spirit has revealed.

CHARACTER

- I promise to walk with my group members in humility, in honesty, in love and in patience. I refuse to judge others while I have log in my own eye. I will not gossip or speak ill of others in our group when they are not present.
- I promise to remain teachable as we encounter new concepts, new practices and new theologies that rub up against my current understandings. I seek the spirit of conversation rather than merely sharing my opinion. keep discussion on topic
- I promise to share the space equally with others in the group, resisting the urge to dominate the conversation. I will seek to listen and practice curiosity about others stories and experiences. We will respect diversity and value our differences
- Although there will be times I and others fall short of the expectations of the Covenant, I will be quick to extend grace, mercy and support in getting back up on the tracks.

CAUSE

- I understand that this group's cause is specific to learning and living into being the church as a movement.
- I understand that this group is not a therapy group, a book club or a bible study it is specifically a training space to recover practices of tight-knit community, life-forming discipleship, locally-rooted presence and boundary-crossing mission.
- I understand that this Discipleship-core seeks to multiply another group for the sake of God's mission. I will pray for Christ to lead us to People of Peace that may want to participate in a Discipleship-Core to facilitate a life of mission with God.
- I understand that the hope of this group is to foster discipleship relationships that help each other become more like Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. The goal of this groups is to offer safety for one another to belong and be ourselves in our all our weakness but we also offer a space that stretches us to be sent-ones in our neighborhoods and networks.

Helpful Extras:

Enjoy a meal together before hand.

Meet in a setting that is casual but still safe enough to be honest.

Take good notes in your book or notebook.

Get to know each other outside regular scheduled meetings.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____