

# First Call Pilot Covenant (sample copy, to be modified as needed)

**Note: This covenant is to be reviewed by all parties and updated and renewed annually.**

Believing God is calling the people of \_\_\_\_\_ Church to be a thriving and missional congregation;  
and believing that God has prepared and equipped the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_  
to encourage and lead this congregation;  
and trusting that God has brought together this congregation and this pastor into a Christ-honoring "First Call" relationship aimed at mutual growth, transformation, and engagement in mission together;  
and in assurance of support by the classis, regional synod, and RCA staff; we joyfully enter into this covenant in faith that God will work in us, through us, and ahead of us to achieve congregational health and growth that will bear witness to God's kingdom and contribute to a positive beginning in ministry for the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Church**

The congregation agrees to:

- Accept in Christ's love Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, his/her family and his/her leadership.
- Work with Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, the congregational First Call Team, the Classis Support Team, and the regional representative to faithfully follow Christ together in mission.
- Provide prayer support, encouragement, and appropriate financial support for Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ and his/her spouse and family, and the spouse's career where appropriate.
- Ensure that the pastor has time allocated for a pastor's network, coaching, and ongoing continuing education.
- Provide someone who will offer personal financial guidance with budgeting, social security, retirement planning, insurance, taxes, etc.

## **Consistory**

The consistory agrees to:

- Work faithfully on prayerfully and mutually established goals and objectives with Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, the congregational First Call Team, the Classis Support Team, and the regional representative.
- Engage in ongoing learning on a wide variety of topics with the pastor.
- Speak the truth in love, offering honest feedback and receiving feedback.
- Appoint a congregational First Call Team committed to facilitating mutual growth for the pastor, the congregational leadership, and the congregation.
- Develop clear ministry expectations between the pastor and consistory for one year and three years.
- Evaluate the relationship and achievement of ministry expectations regularly, with a full review annually.

**Pastor**

The pastor agrees to:

- Accept the people of \_\_\_\_\_ Church in Christ’s love.
- Faithfully preach, teach, lead, and live out God’s Word among the people of \_\_\_\_\_ Church in this ministry effort.
- Humbly receive feedback, counsel, and mentoring from congregational leaders.
- Work with the consistory to develop and implement a ministry plan to jointly lead the congregation into faithful and fruitful ministry to the glory of God.
- Develop clear expectations for the working relationship between the pastor and the consistory.
- Invest in the congregation’s First Call Team with authenticity and integrity.
- Strive to bring positive, motivating leadership to this ministry and equip lay leaders to serve faithfully.
- Participate in regular learning opportunities provided by the RCA, the seminaries, and other relevant events.
- Participate in a pastors network.
- Engage in a coaching relationship with a trained RCA coach.

**Classis**

- Ensure that the pastor has a coach.
- Appoint two classis members who will meet with the congregation’s First Call Team at least twice a year.
- Offer the option of a mentor.
- Ensure that all financial aspects of the call are being observed.
- Make the First Call pastor aware of the history, heritage, and culture of the congregation (usually the supervisor does this).

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **VP of Consistory** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Pastor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Leader of First Call Team** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Classis Representative** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**