

## AREA COUNCIL COVENANT

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 17, 2011

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UPDATED SEPTEMBER 9, 2019

### YOKEFELLOWSHIP PRISON MINISTRY

(Central Office)

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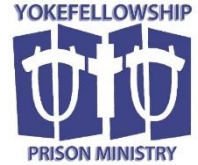
Carl Geissinger, Executive Director, 570-765-3923

*"Helping at-risk youth, inmates and returning citizens  
yoke themselves to Christ for salvation and changed lives."*



## Yokefellowship Prison Ministry, Inc.

*“helping at-risk youth, inmates and returning citizens YOKE themselves to Christ for salvation and changed lives.”*



### AREA COUNCIL COVENANT

*“The crimson thread of covenant is woven throughout the fabric of God’s truth from Genesis to Revelation.”*

Author Unknown

This covenant is rooted in the account of the covenant relationship between God and God’s people, a relationship graced, loved, and empowered by God’s action embodied in Jesus, the Christ, who in being both human and divine atones for our human sinfulness, and by the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit creating a relationship of love, peace, harmony, well-being, fulfillment, and righteousness with God and with one another.

Similarly, this covenant pursues love, peace, harmony, well-being, fulfillment, and righteousness with God and one another as we work together for His kingdom. Our goal is to form and maintain a relationship graced, loved and empowered by God while pursuing our mission (above) and our vision:

*YPM’s vision is to have organized weekly small group ministries throughout Pennsylvania and surrounding areas such that inmates and returning citizens, regardless of their history, along with their loved ones, can attend a meeting wherever they go. Yokefellowship will be known for its “relational” approach and “relevant” discussions.*

*YPM volunteers will: model and share the life-transforming truth of God’s Word; help participants understand and apply the Word of God to their lives as well as specific situations; and, encourage participants in their walks. Practical advice on dealing with prison life, preparing for re-entry, and transitioning into society will also be provided. (Adopted Full Board Meeting 9/11/10)*

This *covenant* is a moral and spiritual document. The covenant relationship is on a higher plane and requires more than would a legal relationship. This covenant defines the relationship between and the responsibilities and accountabilities of both parties.

**Area Councils** - Area Councils are affiliates or subordinates of YPM, Inc., and, as such, fall under YPM, Inc.’s federal tax-exempt status. The federal Internal Revenue Service requires that central organizations provide oversight and general supervision of their affiliates to assure the affiliates initially and continually qualify for federal tax exempt status as defined in YPM, Inc.’s application.

Area Councils are responsible for a continuing ministry within a given geographical area. Area Councils initially enter into a covenant relationship with YPM upon formal acceptance and recognition by YPM Inc. and at that time sign and receive a Charter. Area Councils are asked to renew their covenant every 3 years to assure the Area Council and YPM Inc. continue to be of one accord (Acts 2:1).

In recognition of YPM’s mission and the above vision, YPM Inc. and \_\_\_\_\_ covenant as follows.

#### *YPM Inc. covenants:*

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##### Organizational Commitment

- To guide the organization towards accomplishing its mission and vision;
- To communicate YPM’s essence to and develop working relationship with those who can assist YPM in accomplishing our mission;
- To protect and promote the good name of YPM;
- To keep abreast of current issues, trends, significant developments, and opportunities relevant to YPM’s mission;

- To maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations;
- To develop sound and effective programs and manage programs within budget;
- To identify and nurture possible funding sources;

#### Regional Commitment

- To provide an opportunity for Area Councils within same region to meet, discuss and address regional issues and opportunities via Regional Advisory Councils.
- To provide an avenue of communications between Area Councils and YPM Board via Regional Advisory Council Chairperson.
- To provide, as funding permits, regional staff to assist in regional and local Commitment.

#### Local Commitment

- To support the work of YPM Area Councils both directly and indirectly through regional staff and Regional Advisory Councils:
  - To provide training for volunteers and leadership;
  - To provide training on YPM's small group relational approach to prison ministry;
  - To assist as needed, in opening doors of opportunity within Area Council; and
  - To help solve problems and conflicts within Area Councils when requested.
- To assure Area Councils remain in compliance with government requirements, including filing federal 990-N Forms for all ACs with incomes less than \$25,000;
- To keep Area Councils informed of YPM Board activities via regular communications.
- To provide opportunities for Area Councils to provide direct input to YPM Board.
- To hold an annual meeting of the membership in the third quarter of each year in which voting delegates from each Area Council provides direct input into YPM Inc.

### *The Area Council covenants:*

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#### Local Commitment

- To conduct its operations in a manner that protects and promotes the good name of YPM.
- To assure all volunteers are in complete agreement with YPM's Statement of Faith.
- To assure all volunteers in direct contact with inmates and returning citizens are in compliance with YPM Volunteer Certification policy. An initial grace period is permitted. NOTE: Administrative and fundraising volunteers are encouraged but not required to be certified.
- To use YPM's signature small group relational approach to effective ministry.
- To demonstrate sound financial stewardship and public accountability.

#### Regional Commitment

- To appoint two representatives to serve on the Regional Advisory Council, preferably one representing in-prison ministry and one representing aftercare.
- To actively support regional efforts to promote and grow YPM, providing input and regular activity reports as requested to the Regional Advisory Council.

#### Organizational Commitment

- To appoint two voting delegates and one alternate to attend the YPM Annual Meeting.
- To submit a quarterly report of the previous three month's ministry activities to the YPM Executive Director and Regional Director by the 15th of the month following the end of the quarter. The first quarter report would be due by April 15, the second by July 15, etc.
- To submit to the Board a roster of all volunteers, active and inactive, including name, contact information, ministry involvement and location, and the date of last certification training, two (2) months prior to the Annual Meeting.
- To submit a report of all financial activities to YPM Inc. by May 1. AC's with incomes \$50,000 and above are responsible for filing their own Form 990 and submitting a signed copy to YPM Inc. for the record.
- To submit a Faith Promise of at least 25% of projected income to YPM by November 15<sup>th</sup> annually.
- To comply with all YPM policies and procedures.
- To maintain an open door policy to representatives of YPM Inc. with the purpose of assuring sound ministry practices and compliance with regulatory requirements.

