



**SYNOD
OF THE SUN**

**Covenant Agreement:
Ferncliff Camp and Conference
Center**

DRAFT COVENANT

Between Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center And the Synod of the Sun, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

I. Introduction

This covenant affirms a historic and ongoing relationship between **Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center** (hereafter *Ferncliff*) and the **Synod of the Sun** (hereafter *Synod*) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As distinct entities yoked in mutual mission, both parties agree to support, strengthen, and collaborate with one another in pursuit of shared goals rooted in faith, service, and formation.

II. Legal Standing and Governance

Ferncliff is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Directors and incorporated in the State of Arkansas. Its mission is:

“As an expression of God’s love, we welcome people into a life of caring for Creation, others, and themselves.”

Ferncliff operates on a 100-year lease from the Presbyterian Foundation of Arkansas, stewarding over 1,200 acres for use in Christian hospitality, faith formation, disaster response, and connection with creation.

The Synod of the Sun is a governing body of the PC(USA), serving a four-state region by fostering connection, collaboration, and innovation among its presbyteries, congregations, and ministries. This covenant reflects a desire to deepen the shared ministry between Ferncliff and the Synod.

III. Shared Purpose and Mission

This covenant is established to:

- Celebrate a mutual call to serve the Church and the world.
- Provide pathways for collaboration in leadership development, service, justice, and innovation.
- Recognize Ferncliff as a ministry partner of the Synod of the Sun.
- Affirm the historic connection and encourage deeper engagement between Ferncliff and Synod constituents.

IV. Ferncliff’s Commitments to the Synod

Ferncliff, through its Board and staff, commits to:

- A. Offer hospitality, staff leadership, and physical facilities for programs, retreats, conferences, and mission opportunities in alignment with the Synod's vision and needs.
- B. Welcome opportunities to co-create leadership or formation events with the Synod that align with its goals and serve its broader constituency.
- C. Prioritize Synod presbyteries and congregations as a core constituency by fostering relationships, extending hospitality, and seeking collaborative ways to align our collective resources in service to shared goals.
- D. Provide regular updates to the Synod on major initiatives, including new program developments, capital projects, and mission expansions.
- E. Maintain standards of excellence in safety, diversity, environmental stewardship, and faith formation, upholding the PC(USA)'s values and commitments.
- F. Nominate trustees to Ferncliff's Board or other leadership and advocacy committees with attention to Synod-wide representation and perspectives and welcome collaboration with Synod leaders in identifying strong candidates.

V. The Synod's Commitments to Ferncliff

The Synod of the Sun, through its leadership and staff, commits to:

- A. Recognize Ferncliff as a covenant partner within the PC(USA) and include Ferncliff in strategic conversations, leadership development initiatives, and mission collaborations.
- B. Give Ferncliff primary consideration as a host site for Synod-led programs and encourage its presbyteries and congregations to do the same when planning events, trainings, retreats, or mission or service trips.
- C. Collaborate with Ferncliff to promote and co-sponsor programs that advance mutual priorities in areas such as faith formation, disaster response, creation care, justice, and innovation.
- D. Interpret Ferncliff's mission and impact throughout the Synod through newsletters, reports, digital platforms, and direct engagement with presbyteries.
- E. Include Ferncliff in the Synod's network of mission partners eligible for financial support and connectional resources. The Synod will encourage congregations and presbyteries to support Ferncliff financially and relationally.
- F. Consider Ferncliff staff and Board members as valued participants in Synod working groups, networks, and advisory teams when appropriate.

VI. Covenant Maintenance and Review

This covenant shall be reviewed and renewed every five years, or at the request of either party. A review team composed of representatives from both the Synod and Ferncliff will assess progress, celebrate collaboration, and recommend updates to reflect evolving mission contexts.

Signatures

Executive Director, Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center

Date: _____

Chair, Ferncliff Board of Directors

Date: _____

Synod Leader and Stated Clerk, Synod of the Sun

Date: _____

Moderator, Synod of the Sun

Date: _____