

## WHO IS THE MISSIONARY CHURCH?

The Missionary Church is an evangelical denomination committed to the authority of Scripture and the fulfillment of the Great Commission with roots in the Anabaptist and Wesleyan-Arminian traditions. The Missionary Church is a fellowship of local churches organized into interdependent regions/districts, committed to international and educational partnerships bound together by common values. These foundational values include a shared theology, shared vision, flexible methodology, shared opportunities for ministry, common ministry commitments, mutual respect and appreciation, supporting fellowship, and a belief that by working together the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts.



### Deeper than a Denomination

Although all of these phrases describe part of "who we are," our identity runs even deeper. Yes, we are certainly a denomination of regions, districts, and local congregations who have become a broader "family" known as the Missionary Church, primarily an interdependent Christian community, embracing a shared theology. Yes, we are congregations/districts/regions who share a common vision and ethos. Yes, we have a tradition, heritage, and culture that are uniquely "us." But, at our very essence, we are congregations who are bound together in a covenant relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and one another.

### A Covenant Relationship

There are major differences between "contractual" relationships and "covenant" relationships. "Contractual" relationships can just be legal agreements between two parties who may not love and trust one another. "Covenant" relationships are commitments between two parties who do love and trust one another. And, in a covenant relationship, there are mutual benefits as well as mutual responsibilities. As believers, our "covenant" relationship with one another is modeled after the "covenant" relationship that God the Father has with His people.

Consider these comparisons. God's covenant with His people includes:

1. **Mutual Love:** God says, "I will love you and I expect you to love me."
2. **Mutual Servanthood:** Jesus said, "The Son of Man came to serve..... and he who loves Me must serve Me."
3. **Mutual Sacrifice:** God sacrificed His Son for us...and now asks that we sacrifice for Him.

### A Family of Churches

This same kind of "covenant" relationship should define those who identify themselves with the Missionary Church. Each congregation should view the other congregations within this denomination as members of the "family." We should demonstrate mutual love, mutual servanthood, and mutual sacrifice toward one another as spelled out in 1 Corinthians 13.

Families enjoy one another. Family members defend one another. Family members engage with one another. Family members protect and provide for one another. Family members help and care for one another. Where there is mutual love, mutual servanthood, and mutual sacrifice in a family, mutual trust is cultivated.

In the same way, as churches/districts/regions within the denomination known as the Missionary Church, we are a family of believers, committed to Jesus Christ, who share a common mission, a common vision, a common ministry commitment, and a treasured culture. It is within this "covenant" relationship with one another that we believe God has called us to reach the world for Jesus Christ. By the help of His Holy Spirit we endeavor to fulfill that calling!