

Covenant Agreement ("~~Agreement~~Covenant")

between

_____, a _____ corporation
[insert corporation's full legal name] [insert state of incorporation]
("Local Church")

and

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, a California nonprofit religious corporation
("~~Foursquare~~ICFG")¹

Introduction

The above named Local Church is either (1) a corporation started by a local Foursquare church that was previously a subordinate unit under International Church of the Foursquare Gospel or (2) a church incorporated separately from International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (~~"Foursquare"~~). Understanding that each local church is an autonomous body of Christian believers that seeks to follow God's leading in ministry and mission, this Covenant Agreement is a covenant between Local Church and International Church of the Foursquare Gospel to work together, with other Foursquare churches and with ~~Foursquare~~ICFG, to develop common vision and values and to achieve common goals. This Covenant describes the nature and details of the relationship between Local Church and ~~Foursquare~~ICFG.

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel is the incorporated entity, which was created by Aimee Semple McPherson and others working together to act on behalf of its members and the local churches planted by its members. Foursquare members and churches work together to assist each other in ministry and mission through co-operative and supportive ministry. Through the decades, in a sincere spirit of unity and co-operation, the churches have and continue to join together in our interdependent work of local and global mission, development of leadership, disciples and churches, and supportive fellowship. *The DECLARATION OF FAITH compiled by Aimee Semple McPherson* is the document that best describes the faith of the churches that are local churches of Foursquare.

The intention of this Covenant is that Local Church will be considered a Foursquare Church (as defined in the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws) and, except for the separate legal structure and legal separateness of the two entities, Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ shall consider Local Church "fully" Foursquare for ecclesiastical, polity, and relational purposes.

Part I: The commitment of ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ to Local Church.

~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ commits, by this Covenant, that Local Church shall be a Foursquare Church as set forth in the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws, which means that Local Church shall be considered a Foursquare Church just as much as the local Foursquare churches that do not have a separate legal existence and are under the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ corporate structure. Local Church shall be treated in a similar manner and with similar expectations that ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ has of its local churches under its corporate structure.

~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ covenants to support the ministry of its local churches, including Local Church, by:

- Praying for the work and ministry of each local Foursquare church throughout the year;
- Developing and resourcing churches and ministries within the Foursquare movement in the United States (e.g., pastors, administrators, youth ministry, camping, and community ministries);
- Supporting the development of the local church including the fostering of church health, church planting, and ministry effectiveness;
- Providing a minister license and ordination process for the mutual benefit of churches and pastors, including a discipline process for cases of moral and ethical failure;

¹ For purposes of the Covenant Agreement, "ICFG" will mean and refer to the corporation that is International Church of the Foursquare Gospel; and "Foursquare" or "The Foursquare Church" will mean and refer to the Foursquare denomination as a whole, here in the United States.

- Accepting the responsibility and authority to appoint and remove the senior pastor of Local Church.
- Supporting the professional development of licensed ministry leaders within the Foursquare constituency; providing strategic leadership resources and stimulating intentional lifelong development (professional, personal, spiritual) for ministry leaders; developing a mentoring culture that supports leadership;
- Supporting strategic partnerships with Foursquare organizations and ministries in other nations; and
- Co-operating and forming strategic partnerships interdenominationally to extend Christ's Kingdom and to provide additional resources and benefits to our churches.

Part II: The commitment of Local Church to ICFG/Foursquare.

Local Church commits, by this Covenant, that Local Church shall be part of The Foursquare Church as set forth in the Foursquare-ICFG Bylaws. By entering into this Covenant, Local Church voluntarily agrees to submit to Foursquare polity and modified episcopal form of governance. Local Church voluntarily agrees to apply Foursquare ICFG Bylaws in place of its own Bylaws and also agrees to follow and operate Local Church under all ICFG/Foursquare adopted policies and procedures, and voluntarily agrees to be subject to the discipline of Foursquare-ICFG for failure to abide by Foursquare-ICFG Bylaws, policies, or procedures. By signing this Covenant, Local Church acknowledges its agreement with and adherence to *The DECLARATION OF FAITH compiled by Aimee Semple McPherson* and the *Foursquare Global Distinctives and Values* and all other tenets of the Foursquare faith. Local Church commits to uphold the provisions of the Foursquare-ICFG Bylaws and apply them as their own.

Local Church covenants that it will assume the following rights and responsibilities:

- Actively work to further the Foursquare mission and the Foursquare Global Distinctives and Values as set forth on www.foursquare.org;
- Respecting, upholding, and adhering to the provisions and procedures of ICFG/Foursquare as expressed in its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as amended from time to time;
- Contributing their time, talent, and treasure to the work of Foursquare; receiving tithes and offerings for the ministry, maintenance, and expansion of the Local Church and designating a tithe of its tithes and general offerings as its "ministry extension tithe", which shall be transmitted to Foursquare-ICFG and/or retained and used by the Local Church as determined by the Foursquare ICFG board; supporting Foursquare Missions International's Global Fund, special world missions projects, and locally funded Foursquare missionaries, to the best of its ability;
- Providing written reports to Foursquare-ICFG in a form provided to the Local Church by FoursquareICFG;
- Baptizing new believers in water by immersion; qualifying applicants for church membership on the basis of their profession of faith in Christ as their savior or transfer of membership from another Foursquare local church;
- Receiving notice of, attending, and participating at conventions and meetings of members through its ministers and delegates, to the best of their ability;
- Respecting the use of the name, licensed trademarks and service marks, symbols, copyrighted materials, and other intellectual property of ICFG/Foursquare to further the Foursquare mission and the Foursquare Global Distinctives and Values;
- Agreeing that all credentialed leaders should seek and maintain current ministry credentials with Foursquare-ICFG and will refer cases of moral and ethical failure of credentialed ministry leaders to the Foursquare-ICFG disciplinary process; and

- Agreeing that ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ shall have the responsibility and authority to appoint and remove the senior pastor of Local Church.

Part III: The relationship between ~~ICFG~~~~Foursquare~~ and Local Church.

As partners in the Gospel and faith in our Lord we covenant to each other that we will:

- Pray for one another;
- Encourage and support one another;
- Honor and respect each other's freedom to determine our respective God-given purpose and mission;
- Affirm our mutual responsibility to work together to further the Foursquare mission and the Foursquare Global Distinctives and Values; and
- Contribute our time, talent, and treasures in support of our common goals and objectives.

Part IV: Local Church Governance

In faithfulness to God, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and led by the Holy Spirit and in conformance with ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws, Local Church may: develop its own ministries, mission, and service; choose its own corporate directors and officers; manage its own finances; and, own and control property held in the name of Local Church's corporation without the permission or approval of Foursquare (except for real estate that ICFG has a reversionary clause interest in)². All transactions relating to real property that is held in the name of ~~International Church of the Foursquare Gospel-ICFG~~ (which may include real property utilized by, or designated for, Local Church) are subject to the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board approval process set forth in the ~~ICFG~~ Bylaws and in other policies and procedures adopted by ~~Foursquare~~~~ICFG~~.

For purposes of applying ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws to Local Church, the terms "board of directors" or "board" in the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws shall always mean and refer to the board of International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and the term "church council" shall mean the board of directors of Local Church. The board of Local Church shall remain intact for purposes of Local Church's corporation, and shall also serve as the "church council" as that term is used in ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws and other ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ policies. The board of Local Church shall maintain all of its separate powers and authorities as required by the law of the jurisdiction Local Church is governed by, and it shall also maintain any other separate powers and authorities stated in Local Church's Bylaws as it pertains to Local Church's operations except to the extent said Local Church Bylaws are inconsistent with or conflict with ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws, policies, procedures, or governance, in which case ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws shall prevail; that is, so long as this Covenant remains in place.

Notwithstanding applying ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Bylaws, policies and procedures, Local Church understands that it is the responsibility of Local Church to maintain its corporate status and to comply with all state and federal laws applicable to it as a corporation of the state wherein it is incorporated, such as following standard corporate formalities.

Part V: Local Church Real Estate³

Scripture has many stories and examples of the importance of "land" and God's people. Throughout most of the history of Foursquare, real estate within Foursquare has been stewarded with joint responsibility and shared authority between the local congregation and the Foursquare denomination as a whole, according to ICFG Bylaws

² This amendment is part of the new "Part V" below.

³ This new section is to reflect the desire of the board to have all churches (Charter and Covenant) be treated the same, consistent with historical practices of Foursquare to steward real estate together, collectively, at a denomination. Consistent with the original intent under "Reimagine", Covenant Churches will continue to be able to make most decisions about real estate and real estate transactions without ICFG board approval.

and protocols; however, ultimate authority and stewardship rests with the ICFG board of directors. Real estate is a vital resource in disseminating the Foursquare gospel and carrying out the mission of The Foursquare Church.

This Covenant serves to recognize Foursquare's longstanding history and posture towards real estate, and to acknowledge that even though much responsibility, stewardship, and authority exists at the local congregation level, the ultimate stewardship and authority over real estate within Foursquare churches rests with the ICFG board of directors.

By entering into and/or remaining in this Covenant, the Local Church's pastor and directors, for themselves and the entirety of the Local Church congregation (past, present, and future), acknowledge and agree that as of the effective date of this Covenant, all real estate held in the name of Local Church, present or future, while this Covenant is in effect between Local Church and ICFG, is committed to furthering the Foursquare gospel; and should this Covenant terminate for any reason, or the Local Church corporation dissolves while this Covenant is in effect, all real estate of Local Church shall belong to ICFG; and in such event, the authorized representatives of Local Church agree to do all things and sign all documents necessary, as directed by ICFG, to effectuate a transfer of Local Church real estate to ICFG. Local Church understands that by signing this Covenant it is giving up certain legal rights to real estate ownership, and does so willingly and freely, recognizing the benefits (both spiritual and tangible) of being in this Covenant relationship with ICFG/Foursquare.

Part VI: Amendment of this Covenant Agreement

It is understood that this Covenant is used by ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ for all Foursquare churches that are separately incorporated. It is understood that as the parties work together in ministry, and as the Foursquare movement evolves over time the need for ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ to make additions, deletions, or other changes to this Covenant may occur. When these needs arise and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ believes the change is significant enough to modify this Covenant, then the changes will be discussed, prayed over and, if and as appropriate, voted on by the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board of directors and/or the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ Convention body for implementation into all existing covenant agreements. Local Church agrees to formally adopt any such changes per the process defined by ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~, or in the alternative may go through the termination process set forth below.

Part VII: Disputes

Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ commit to the provision and use of Biblically consistent relational problem solving, and both parties agree that no court or arbitrator shall have jurisdiction to hear disputes between Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ as the matters between them are ecclesiastical. This entails the open and respectful sharing of concerns and areas of disagreement immediately and directly with the responsible parties, and the following is a communication pathway for sharing such concerns and resolving any matters of disagreement.

Step One: Recognizing the role of the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ District Supervisor places the District Supervisor in a position of close relationship and communication with both the Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~, it is the responsibility of each party to share their concerns directly with the District Supervisor overseeing Local Church so that the District Supervisor can share the concerns with the other party and facilitate discussion and resolution.

Step Two: In the event that the parties are not able to resolve the area of disagreement with the involvement of the District Supervisor, or if the disagreement concerns the District Supervisor, then the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ General Supervisor will be engaged in the discussion seeking resolution.

Step Three: If the conflict remains despite the involvement of the General Supervisor, at the request of either party the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board may be brought into the conflict resolution discussions.

The ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board of directors is the final authority on all matters involving Local Church's relationship with ~~ICFG/Foursquare~~, including without limitation the application and interpretation of this Covenant; provided, however, that in no way shall ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ or its board of directors have any authority to stop Local Church from terminating this Covenant and leaving ~~ICFG/Foursquare~~ so long as termination is done in compliance with the process outlined below.

In the event either party involves the judicial system/courts in a dispute, it is the desire of both parties that the judge/court jurisdiction be limited to enforcing the clear provisions of this Covenant in a manner that is consistent with the discretion afforded to and exercised by ICFG's board of directors. To avoid any doubt, this means that Local Church understands it is waiving all of its rights to bring any dispute in the judicial system/courts, and Local

Church is also consenting to ICFG using the judicial system/courts to legally enforce ICFG's rights if Local Church does not submit to ICFG's authority and decision making.⁴

Either party may take action to terminate this Covenant voluntarily, with or without the other party's consent. If termination is desired, the parties commit to discerning together the terms and conditions that may be required by severing this Covenant.

Part VIII: Termination of this Covenant Agreement

Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ agree that in the event either party desires to terminate this Covenant, the steps outlined in this Covenant (or as the parties may otherwise agree) shall be followed to terminate this Covenant. Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ commit to the provision and use of Biblically consistent relational problem solving, and both parties agree that no court or arbitrator shall have jurisdiction to hear disputes between Local Church and ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ as the matters between them are ecclesiastical.

Should Local Church desire to terminate this Covenant, it shall follow the following process:⁵

1. The Senior Pastor and board of directors of Local Church shall send a written notice to their District Supervisor stating their intent to terminate this Covenant. The notice of intent to terminate must be signed by the Senior Pastor and at least three-fourths (3/4ths) of the board of Local Church. An early congregational vote, prior to the Local Church transmitting its notice of intent to terminate, is ~~not recommended~~prohibited. No termination by Local Church of this Covenant shall be effective until completion of the procedures set forth herein.
2. The District Supervisor or some other authorized ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ representative will meet with Local Church to discuss the termination of this Covenant so that ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ understands Local Church's desire and intent.
3. Local Church may only terminate this Covenant upon a three-fourths (3/4ths) supermajority vote of the congregation of Local Church at a duly noticed and called congregational business meeting, which meeting may not take place until at least ~~six-three~~ (63)⁶ months after the date a valid notice of intent to terminate is received by the District Supervisor. Local Church shall hold a duly called congregational business meeting of the congregation of Local Church for the purpose of voting on whether to terminate this Covenant. Notice of the date, time, and location of this congregational business meeting must be delivered to the District Supervisor not less than two (2) weeks before the time of the meeting. If proper notice is not delivered to the District Supervisor, ICFG shall have the right to require a new congregational business meeting and vote. Foursquare-ICFG shall have the right, but not the obligation, to have a representative attend the congregational business meeting.
4. After said business meeting and vote, Local Church shall send a letter to the District Supervisor, signed by the Senior Pastor and at least three-fourths (3/4ths) of the board, certifying the following information:
 - a. The manner/methods and date(s) that notice was provided to the congregation regarding the business meeting, and certifying that the meeting notice(s) stated that the reason of the meeting was to vote on whether or not to leave Foursquare by terminating this Covenant;
 - b. The date of the business meeting; and
 - c. The total number of votes in favor of terminating this Covenant and the total number of votes against terminating this Covenant.
5. This Covenant Agreement shall terminate thirty (30) days after the date the District Supervisor receives the letter in step 4 above with all the required information. If these steps are not followed, ICFG shall have the right (but not the obligation) to consider the Covenant Agreement still in place. Or, ICFG may exercise its discernment to accept substantial compliance with the provisions of this section and accept the termination desires of Local Church.

Should ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ desire to terminate this Covenant, it shall follow the following process:

⁴ This addition is to further bolster the understanding and importance of our polity and authority structures, and ensure that if the secular courts ever were involved (which hopefully that does not happen), they would respect the authority and decisions of the convention body and the board of directors.

⁵ This proposal in this section on "church initiated termination" is to make the church termination process clearer and address instances where churches have not followed through on their commitments.

⁶ Experience has taught us that three months to discuss issues is enough, and six months can put strain on the process.

1. The District Supervisor or some other authorized ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ representative shall send a written notice to the Senior Pastor stating ~~Foursquare's-ICFG's~~ intent to terminate this Covenant. No termination of this Covenant shall be effective until completion of the procedures set forth herein.
2. The District Supervisor or some other authorized ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ representative will meet with Local Church to discuss the termination of this Covenant.
3. ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ may only terminate this Covenant upon a majority vote of the ~~ICFG~~ board of directors at a regularly called board meeting, which meeting may not take place until at least ~~six-three~~ (63)⁷ months after the date a valid notice of intent to terminate is received by the Senior Pastor.
4. Once the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board of directors has voted to terminate this Covenant, the District Supervisor or some other authorized ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ representative shall send a written notice to the Senior Pastor certifying the date of the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board meeting and the decision made by the ~~Foursquare-ICFG~~ board of directors.
5. This Covenant Agreement shall terminate thirty (30) days after the date the Senior Pastor receives the letter in step 4 above with all the required information.

Should both Local Church and ICFG agree that termination of the Covenant Agreement is appropriate, the parties may modify (through written documentation) these termination steps to suit the needs of the situation.⁸

Part IX: Covenant Agreement Updated⁹

The original version of the Covenant Agreement was approved by the Foursquare convention body at a business meeting during the 2016 annual convention.

The Covenant Agreement was amended by the Foursquare convention body at a business meeting during the 2025 annual convention.

All Covenant Agreements signed before the amendments adopted at the 2025 convention are deemed to be automatically updated with the language herein, without the need to acquire updated signatures from the local church or Foursquare. Provided, however, that Part V. "Local Church Real Estate" shall not apply to Covenant Agreements with an effective date prior to February 9, 2023.

⁷ Same comment as footnote #6.

⁸ This provision will give added flexibility to handle terminations more efficiently, when appropriate.

⁹ This new section will provide some historical context and address that the new property provisions apply on a go-forward basis from the dates of the board resolution to treat Charter and Covenant Churches the same, regarding property, in the event a church withdraws.

This Covenant Agreement is made effective as of _____, 20_____.

The signatures of the Senior Pastor and the board members below, who constitute at least a majority of the board of directors of Local Church, attest that Local Church, by a three-fourths (3/4ths) supermajority vote of its members and regular attendees at a duly called congregational business meeting, agrees to and affirms its agreement with this Covenant Agreement and the ICFG bylaws.

_____, a _____ corporation
[insert corporation's full legal name] *[insert state of incorporation]*

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Senior Pastor

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Church Board Member

The Board of Directors of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, as attested by the signatures of the authorized officers below, agrees to and affirms its agreement with this Covenant Agreement.

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, a California nonprofit religious corporation

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Title: _____

By: _____
Print Name: _____
Title: _____