



Covenant of the WCCM USA

Approved March 4, 2012

A. Purpose of the Covenant

To establish an operating framework and governance structure to ensure that the living tradition of Christian meditation continues to be shared as broadly as possible in all the states and territories of the USA.

B. Community's Mission Statement

To communicate and nurture meditation as passed on through the teaching of John Main in the Christian tradition in the spirit of serving the unity of all.

C. WCCM USA (or simply the Community)

The WCCM USA is composed of a number of elements as follows:

1. Member is a person who practices Christian meditation particularly as taught by John Main and is recognized by the Community as following the faithful expression of this teaching.
2. Group is a number of persons who meet on a regular basis to practice Christian meditation together, within a defined geographical area usually at the local or regional levels.
3. Regional Coordinator is a member (usually but not necessarily a group leader) who agrees to serve as a resource person, communicator and facilitator to a number of groups and meditators in a particular geographical area.

For the current geographic composition of the 14 USA regions, please refer to the attached Appendix A.

4. National Council (or simply the Council) is the group of Christian meditation leaders composed in accordance with Section D.3 and charged by the Community with the responsibility of articulating a vision to sustain and share the development of Christian meditation throughout the USA and to oversee the Community's life and growth.

5. Executive Committee (the Committee) is the body appointed by the national Council from among its membership charged with the responsibility of providing the necessary leadership to direct and manage the affairs of the Community in between the meetings of the Council. The Committee will also advise the National Coordinator in the discharge of her/his responsibilities.

6. National Coordinator is the Chair of the National Council and thus will ensure its proper functioning and will see to the wellbeing of the USA Community as whole. The Council shall also appoint a Vice-chair to assist with this work and to provide continuity and facilitate succession planning.

7. School is the specific structure within the Community that focuses on the transmission of the teaching to future generations. This 'school' will assist meditators to better accept and appreciate the spiritual gift they have received by coming to a fuller understanding of the tradition and a deepening of their spiritual life. As a result the 'school' will help meditators to personally share the teaching with others in the circumstances of their life. The 'school' will serve the Community through the National Council under the guidance of the International Coordinator of the School, the Director and Guiding Board of The World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM).

8. WCCM-USA is the non-profit corporation (a 501 c 3) whose Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for the fiscal and corporate life of WCCM USA but looks for guidance, assistance and support to the National Council. While the Board, as a board, doesn't have a role on the National Council—all the board members are also members of the National Council.

9. The National Information Center is staffed by paid or volunteer persons actually located in various parts of the country, who are responsible for carrying out the ongoing affairs of the Community, e.g. maintenance of data bases, communications, liaison, public relations, newsletter production, website management, accounting, administration of giving programs and fund raising initiatives and strategies. All parts of the Center receive direction from, and are accountable to, the National Council and the WCCM-USA Board of Directors.

10. The WCCM USA Bookstore, also known as Contemplative Life Bookstore, provides for the warehousing, distribution and sale of products via the website, mail orders, and events. It cooperates with Medio Media International, the publishing arm of the World Community, by distributing its products. It also supplies materials for School of Meditation activities.

D. National Council (or simply the Council)

1. Mandate

To articulate a vision to sustain and promote the awareness of and the practice of Christian meditation in the USA.

To oversee the implementation of this vision through the coordination of national activities such as - the financing of the production and distribution of the quarterly Newsletter and US Update; the work of the WCCM USA Information Centre and Bookstore; the organization of Schools in the USA and of national tours by Fr. Laurence Freeman and other teachers of Christian meditation; the provision of scholarships to allow wider attendance at important national and international Christian meditation events by persons who could not otherwise attend; the organization from time to time of a National Conference or event and General Meeting; and, the support of compassionate action as a fruit of meditation.

To increase communication and dialogue between our Christian meditation leaders in the USA, in order to foster development of a group large enough, and with sufficient expertise, to serve the needs of meditators throughout the country and in due course if called upon in other regions of our worldwide Community.

To develop a sense of community among Christian meditators by encouraging the formation of meditation groups at the local level and of regional groupings as appropriate. In this regard the link with the monastic tradition, particularly the Benedictine, is highly valued. New forms of community life, such as the oblate community, will also be encouraged and supported.

To foster and guide dialogue and meditation among Christians of all denominations as well as with representatives of the contemplative communities of other religions and sacred traditions.

To undertake in a sustained way fund-raising activities for the above-mentioned national needs and for the support of the International Office of the WCCM.

2. Responsibilities

First and foremost the Council, in the spirit of the Gospel, exists to serve the individual meditator in his/her personal spiritual journey and to support and encourage group leaders, regional coordinators and other leaders who share in the work of the Community.

In the conduct of its affairs the Council will be inclusive, democratic, broadly consultative and transparently accountable in its finances and otherwise to the USA and World communities and should report thereon on a regular basis.

The Council will make an effort to ensure that Christian meditation activities are well coordinated in all areas of the country and should maintain close links with The World Community, its Guiding Board and International Office.

The Council may appoint, from outside its membership proper, committees or individuals to undertake specific activities on behalf on the Community, e.g., school resource group, public relations coordination, fund-raising coordination, organization and management of National Conferences, Retreats and General Meetings, etc.

A General Meeting will be scheduled as part of the program of any National Conference or similar event.

3. Composition

The Council will be composed of the National Coordinator, the members of the WCCM-USA Board of Directors, one Regional Coordinator from each of the 14 USA regions and at the invitation of the National Coordinator other meditators who play a national leadership role.

Each of the 14 regions will have one vote.

Efforts will be made to maintain an appropriate gender balance in the membership of Council and to rotate the position of National Coordinator among the regions.

4. Appointment

Members, including the National Coordinator and ipso facto the Chair and the Vice-chair, will be appointed by the Council in broad consultation with the leadership of the USA community. Members attending a National Conference or event (and General Meeting) will be asked to express their support of the then incumbents.

A Search Committee if necessary will be established to nominate and propose candidates for the positions of National Coordinator and Vice-chair if and/or when it becomes vacant or is about to be so.

5. Term

The National Coordinator will be appointed for a two (2) year term renewable once.

Other members (including members nominated by the National Coordinator per clause D.3) will be appointed for a two (2) year term renewable twice, unless the Council decides that their contribution is needed and their time is available. Efforts will be made to encourage as widely as possible the involvement of 'newer' members with leadership potential.

6. Meetings and Quorum

The Council will meet at least once a year, preferably in person. Continuity between meetings will be provided by the Council's Executive Committee.

If the Chair and Vice-chair are absent, the members of the Council will appoint an acting chair for the meeting.

The quorum for a meeting of the Council will be 50% plus one of its members.

E. Amending Formula

This Covenant can be amended by a majority vote of the members, as defined in Section C.1, attending a National Council Meeting.

F. Proclamation

This Covenant was approved by a majority of the voting-members attending the Community's National Council Meeting held in Houston, Texas, March 4, 2012 and is in effect as of that date..

Drafted by C. Sauvé