

Covenant / Contract



This is an agreement between Interfaith Sponsoring Committee, better known publicly as BISCO (Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing) and the Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ to work together on the BISCO Mission to build a powerful interfaith, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-issue organization that serves as a voice for all persons of South Louisiana.

**Congregations' Pledge of Support**

Our congregation shares the vision of BISCO and commits itself to cooperating with BISCO in pursuing the shared mission. Therefore we commit to BISCO membership.

Congregation Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastors Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastors email: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

BISCO Board member delegate: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegates Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation membership #'s: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues pledge: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dues will be paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ Annually

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Congregation Rep. Signature      Date      BISCO Signature      Date**

# **BISCO**

## **(Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing)**

### **Responsibilities:**

#### **1.) Consultation:**

- ❖ Meet with the Pastor initially to obtain the names of Leaders that the Pastor wishes the Organizer/Director to visit.
- ❖ Report to the Pastor the relevant findings from the visits with Leaders.
- ❖ Visit with the Pastor regularly to ascertain how he/she thinks the organizing is proceeding.

#### **2.) Leadership Training:**

- ❖ Do 1-to-1 visits with the congregation's leaders to establish a relationship with each of them, to find out their concerns, and to share with them information about organizing.
- ❖ Work with leaders called together by the Pastor for two or three Exploratory Meetings, clarifying how the organizing process manifests their congregation's values.
- ❖ After discussions and trainings, work with the congregation members to form the Local Organizing Ministry (LOM), counseling them in the conduct of LOM meetings, organizing skills and developing their leadership capacity.
- ❖ Develop leaders who are a part of the LOM by bringing them together with leaders of the other BISCO congregations, in a federated network, thereby affording them further opportunities for camaraderie and growth and opportunities for relationship building.
- ❖ Assist leaders in developing skills in 1-to1 visits, conducting meetings, selecting issues, doing research, and participating in meetings with public officials.

#### **3) Other Opportunities:**

- ❖ Call attention to the opportunities available for training on a statewide and national level through the association with PICO LIFT (La Interfaiths Together) and PICO National Network. National Trainings will be made available by PICO three times a year to members of the BISCO Network.
- ❖ Create networks of relationships with community leaders and organizations to help open doors for research and actions.
- ❖ Keep financial and other organizational records up to date.
- ❖ Keep LOM aware of the work of other LOM's in the local network as well as statewide and nationally to advance opportunities for partnership.

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## **Congregation's Responsibility:**

### **1.) Organization:**

- ❖ Select dutiful lay representatives to spearhead LOM start-up meetings, monthly LOM and other meetings.
- ❖ Maximize attendance at start up meetings, monthly LOM's and other meetings.
- ❖ Regularly build up the LOM by exhorting the congregation to join in making justice real.
- ❖ Do 1 – 1's with congregation members on an ongoing basis, to learn issues important to their communities.
- ❖ Pastor will select a representative from the congregation who will serve with them and participate on the Board of Directors of BISCO.

### **2.) Actions:**

- ❖ Select and focus on issues that can be successfully addressed by your LOM members.
- ❖ Participate in meetings, research and public actions.
- ❖ Participate in planning and implementation of BISCO federated /citywide ACTIONS.
- ❖ Be responsible! BISCO member behavior and statements are noted in the media and the public. It is also important that BISCO and your LOM get public credit for our work.

### **3.) Training:**

- ❖ Participate regularly in the training provided by BISCO and PICO National Network.

### **4) Financial:**

- ❖ Invest in BISCO'S work to develop leadership of the congregation by contributing dues as required by the bylaws of the organization.
- ❖ Invest in the cost of Statewide and National Training of members of the congregation, by supporting the members who are selected to attend, as funds are available.
- ❖ Support fundraising activities through committee service, ticket sales, and volunteers
- ❖ Invest in the work of BISCO by attending fundraising events & encouraging others to do so.
- ❖ Be cognizant of and notify the director of BISCO of any congregation member, business, corporation, foundation, or other funding source that could benefit the organization.

## ***Welcome!***

*We extend a welcome to you as a member of Interfaith Sponsoring Committee,  
BISCO (Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing).*

**BISCO** is a project of the Interfaith Sponsoring Committee, Inc. a non-profit tax-exempt (501-c-3) organization, an affiliate of the PICO National Network of faith-based community organizing in more than one hundred and fifty cities across the United States. BISCO is also a member of LIFT (Louisiana Interfaiths Together). BISCO is supported by membership dues from participating churches, foundation grants, and personal contributions.

### **Mission statement**

**The mission of BISCO is to build a powerful interfaith, multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-issue organization that serves as a voice for all persons in south Louisiana.**

#### **Goals of BISCO:**

- ❖ *To train people in the skills needed to build an organization able to respond to the needs of their community*
- ❖ *To provide the citizens of south Louisiana with a real say in the political, economic, and social decisions that affect their lives*
- ❖ *To hold public officials of south Louisiana accountable and to work with them to create solutions to community problems*

#### **Each congregation may have an LOM (Local Organizing Ministry) which:**

- ❖ *Chooses the issues on which it wishes to work*
- ❖ *Decides on strategies*
- ❖ *Creates forums in the community for discussion of common problems*
- ❖ *Researches viable alternatives for the community based on their expressed desires*
- ❖ *Conducts its own meetings with officials and sets the list of requests it will make*
- ❖ *Has the opportunity to become a part of the Federated / Citywide / Parish-wide group.*

#### **Members learn the following skills:**

- ❖ *To listen to citizens' concerns*
- ❖ *To plan and conduct meetings*
- ❖ *To interact with public officials*
- ❖ *To facilitate public meetings*

BISCO realizes that lack of civic involvement affects not just the individual but all of society. Empowerment of the individual by helping people help themselves makes the whole community stronger.

*BISCO makes an effort to eliminate prejudice and discrimination and fosters the establishment of sound and constructive relationships between all racial, ethnic and social groups.*

We are united in faith that demands that we reach out especially to the underprivileged and powerless, to ease their suffering by empowering and strengthening them and us through solidarity. By agreeing to join BISCO your congregation agrees to practice attentive, caring, positive and professional behaviors with other BISCO members in public. To contribute expertise, talent and follow through on responsibilities accepted. To help assure now and in the future BISCO members success at correcting social injustices, especially those that most oppress our most powerless children, elderly, disabled and other brothers and sisters.

*You are also agreeing to safeguard the BISCO Board and other confidential BISCO proceedings by avoiding inappropriate disclosure; to study and understand our funding requirements, paying dues on time and otherwise helping to assure BISCO's financial viability.*