

# A Dual Commitment

*Lawrence Baschak (Roman Catholic) and Ingrid Thiessen (Mennonite) belong to the Interchurch Families group in Saskatoon, Canada.*

*In the Mennonite tradition, church membership involves belonging to a local congregation and making a specific commitment to it as a member, after an initial period of getting to know it. In May 1994 Ingrid made her commitment to Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. At the same time, Lawrence was welcomed into the congregation as a friend. A special form of service marked the event, and we give part of it here.*

## ***The pastor first addresses the congregation:***

In the church, we worship, maintain Christian fellowship, help each other mature in faith and bring others into the fellowship of God's kingdom. Into our fellowship have come Ingrid and Lawrence. They have previously been instructed in the good news of Jesus Christ and received baptism, Ingrid in the Mennonite Church and Lawrence in the Catholic Church. They have been worshipping with us for some time and know who and what we are. Ingrid wishes to become a member. They also continue worshipping and participating in the life of Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church.

## ***The pastor asks Ingrid and Lawrence to share their stories:***

Ingrid, we are glad about your decision to become a member of this congregation in full covenant relationship with those who worship and serve God here. And Lawrence, we are glad that you find our congregational life meaningful as you and Ingrid nurture Katherine, your daughter. I invite you to share your stories of faith.

## ***Ingrid is asked to reaffirm her faith:***

Ingrid, do you now reaffirm your faith in, and loyalty to, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to his gospel?

*Ingrid is asked to commit herself to the congregation, with the recognition that she also has a loyalty to the Catholic Church:* Ingrid, as you voluntarily and willingly unite with this congregation, will you worship, serve and share in its programme, support it by your prayers, regular attendance, loyal service and faithful stewardship, as God gives you strength, recognising also the need to nurture your marriage by participating in the life of the Catholic Church that has nurtured Lawrence?

***Ingrid and Lawrence are welcomed:***

We have heard Ingrid's and Lawrence's witness to their Christian faith, and their wish to be our companions, Ingrid as member and Lawrence as friend and supporter. It is our privilege and delight to welcome them into our family of faith.

***The commitment of the congregation to the couple is expressed:***

Your shared stories of faith remind us to renew our own covenants. In your coming to us we are again invited to be a community of the Spirit, come among us and within us. On this Pentecost Sunday we commit ourselves to you in worship, study, service and discipline. We commit ourselves to watch over you and each other with concern and caring. We accept you, Ingrid, as member; we accept you, Lawrence, as friend, as we walk together in the power of the God of Pentecost.