

The Manila Covenant

THE CONTEXT FOR THE MANILA COVENANT

In August, 1988 some 1,500 YWAMers gathered in Manila for an International Staff and Leadership Conference (ISLC). As the event drew to a close the participants signed the twenty affirmations made in this covenantal document. It was a fitting finale to a landmark gathering. Called by Floyd McClung, the ISLC was the first such event led by a new generation of YWAM leaders. Highlights of the conference included Kalafi Moala’s message on the release of young people, women and third-worlders into missions leadership, and our commitment to become two-thirds from the Two-Thirds World by the end of the twentieth century. Another significant milestone was the embrace of the new name of the [University of the Nations](#) (formerly Pacific and Asia Christian University)), allowing for the global inclusion of all in this missions-multiplying university.

This covenant reaffirmed our commitment to young people, stating, “We affirm the calling of the Lord upon our mission to mobilize youth for world evangelism. We express in this covenant our commitment to see young people mobilized in great numbers for world evangelism, and youthful, exuberant world changers be given every opportunity to take roles of leadership and influence in our mission.” It went on to affirm “male and female in positions of leadership” and that “our staff and leadership should be ... representative of all nations of the earth” thus furthering the deregulation of missions in innovative ways.

This document also highlighted the alls and everys of the gospel in various ways: it spoke of our commitment to “evangelism, training, and ministries of mercy ... so that by God’s grace, then the empowering of the Holy Spirit, we will do all God asks of us to help complete the Great Commission.” It goes on to challenge us to reach the unreached with the grid of the “nine frontiers of world evangelism” and give ourselves to see Jesus as Lord over “every sphere of life.” It urges us to the two-handed approach of the Gospel, that is “to love people in both word and deed in order to proclaim and demonstrate the Good News of the Gospel” through “personal evangelism and ... acts of mercy.” It concludes with a holistic call to the alls of the Christian Magna Carta.

THE MANILA COVENANT (August, 1988)

The Manila Covenant is a statement of mission prepared and prayed over by the leadership of Youth With A Mission (YWAM) and confirmed by 1,500 staff workers at the YWAM International Staff and Leadership Conference in Manila, Philippines on August 4, 1988. The covenant’s 20 affirmations declare the values, guiding principles and calling of Youth With A Mission. We invite you to join with us in the exciting challenge of reaching the world with Christ’s love.

We affirm that Youth With A Mission’s calling as a missionary fellowship is to help complete the Great Commission. We celebrate the calling of the Lord Jesus upon our mission to be involved in evangelism, training, and ministries of mercy. We renew our commitment to the Lord and to one another so that by God’s grace and the empowering of the Holy Spirit we will do all God asks of us to help complete the Great Commission.

We affirm the calling of the Lord upon our mission to mobilize youth for world evangelism. We express in this covenant our commitment to see young people mobilized in great numbers for world evangelism, and to see youthful, exuberant world changers be given every opportunity to take roles of leadership and influence in our mission.

We affirm God’s calling upon our mission to focus on reaching those who have not been reached with the Gospel. We declare our desire to see tens of thousands of workers mobilized on the following nine frontiers of world evangelism: the Muslim world, the Buddhist world, the Communist world, the Hindu world, the Small Half [children], Nominal Christians, the Cities, the Poor and Needy, and Tribal Peoples.

We affirm the Lordship of Christ over every sphere of life. We commit ourselves to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that His Lordship is proclaimed over individual lives, nations, the family and home, the church in all its expressions, education, the electronic and printed media, arts and entertainment, the sports world, commerce, science and technology, government and politics. We believe that this should be done in the same spirit in which Jesus came: as a humble servant, laying down His rights and so pleasing His Father.

We affirm that God wants Youth With A Mission to be representative of all nations of the earth, and that our staff and leadership should be comprised of races from Africa, Asia, Australasia, Latin America, Oceania, the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

We affirm our calling as a mission to love people in both word and deed in order to proclaim and demonstrate the good news of the gospel. Personal evangelism and practical concern alike give witness to Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we will, by God’s grace and mercy, proclaim the good news and perform acts of mercy so that men and women will embrace the truth of the Gospel.

We affirm the importance of doing God’s work, God’s way. We declare our total dependence on God for wisdom, and ask Him to reveal to us any trace of paternalism, prejudice, or triumphalism. We choose to follow the example of the Lord Jesus who gave up His rights, defending the rights of the poor, and serving those He came to minister to in righteous humility.

We affirm that God wants both young and old, male and female, in positions of leadership and responsibility in our mission.

We affirm servant leadership and the importance of being accountable and submissive in our leadership styles and attitudes. We confirm the importance of all new staff going through a period of culturally appropriate training and orientation to help prepare them for service in God’s Kingdom. We express our desire for God to continually revive and invigorate our discipleship training programs to make them a source of encouragement, equipping, and empowering for Christian service.

We affirm the importance of a spirit of humility, brokenness, and godly transparency in our relationships with one another. We commit ourselves afresh to the principles of unity as described by the apostle Paul in Ephesians chapters four and five. We accept the responsibility to deal with any character weakness or cultural barrier in a manner that would be pleasing to the Lord Jesus and that would promote unity within our mission and with the whole Body of Christ.

We affirm the importance of living a biblical and balanced life. We believe that we need Christians of all theological persuasions and backgrounds in the body of Christ. We need their godly counsel, wisdom, teaching, and help to be all that God has intended us to be.

We affirm the importance of the local church. We humbly ask God for His grace and help to enable us to multiply and build up local churches and to work as partners with them for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We affirm the ministry of prayer and intercession. We declare our total and utter dependence upon God and ask Him to continually revive our hearts so that we will always be a mission that intercedes for the nations and seeks God for His direction and guidance. We believe God has called our mission to build everything it does on the foundation of prayer, knowing that apart from God’s leading, our best efforts will be dead works. We further declare our need for others to pray for us.

We affirm the importance of accountability between Youth With A Mission as a whole and its various bases, ministries, teams and schools. We confirm our need to be in submission to those we serve, those who are over us in the Lord, and those we work with as co-laborers. We believe that this spirit of accountability welcomes correction, encouragement, and openness in our corporate and personal lives.

We affirm the value of the individual. We commit ourselves to pursue the equipping, upbuilding, and empowering of all those God sends to us for the fulfillment of His ministry and purpose in their lives.

We affirm the ministry of hospitality, and commit ourselves to open our bases, homes, and hearts to all those God sends to us. We recognize this to be a biblical responsibility and we joyfully embrace the privilege of serving and honoring guests, teachers, fellow YWAMers, and the poor and the needy through this ministry.

We affirm the importance of financial accountability. We declare that we as Youth With A Mission will live by the highest legal, spiritual, and ethical standards in our handling of finances.

We affirm YWAM’s Statement of Purpose that Youth With A Mission is an international movement of Christians from many denominations dedicated to presenting Jesus Christ personally to this generation, to mobilizing as many as possible to help in this task, and to the training and equipping of believers for their part in fulfilling the Great Commission. As citizens of God’s Kingdom, we are called to love, worship and obey our Lord, to love and serve His body, the Church, and to present the whole Gospel for the whole person throughout the world. We affirm that the Bible is God’s inspired and authoritative Word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God’s Son. We believe that man is created in God’s image and that He created us to have eternal life through Christ. Although all men have sinned and come short of God’s glory and are eternally lost without Christ, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that repentance, faith, love and obedience are necessary and fitting responses to God’s initiative of grace towards us and that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. We believe that the Holy Spirit’s power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ’s last commandment: “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). [This was the wording of YWAM’s Statement of Purpose in 1988. The updated version can be found here: [The Statement of Purpose, Core Beliefs and Foundational Values of YWAM.](#)]

We affirm the Christian Magna Carta, which states that the following basic rights are implicit in the Gospel. Everyone on earth has the right to:

1. Hear and understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Have a Bible available in their own language.
3. Have a Christian fellowship available nearby, to be able to meet for fellowship regularly each week, and to have biblical teaching and worship with others in the Body of Christ.
4. Have a Biblical Christian education available for their children.
5. Have the basic necessities of life: food, water, clothing, shelter, and health care.
6. Lead a productive life of fulfillment spiritually, mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically.

With the help of God, I, the undersigned, commit myself, by God’s grace, to fulfill this covenant and to live for His glory.

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