

Behavioral Covenant

Approved by Church Council at its meeting on January 18, 2023

"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body." Colossians 3:12-15

We are a community centered in Christ and rooted in the love of God. We are of varied minds, but we are one body. We celebrate the uniqueness of each person, and we honor each individual as a beloved child of God. We endeavor in word and in deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance and to be a sanctuary where all know they are welcomed and included. We seek to embody in our life together our commitments to justice and mercy for all people and all of creation.

Seeking to be a faithful community, we covenant with one another to:

- honor each person as a sibling in Christ, treating each one as we would like to be treated, speaking and acting with kindness and expressing gratitude;
- encourage discussion and maintain an atmosphere where people feel safe to express differing perspectives and ideas; listening with respect, interest, and curiosity, seeking understanding;
- share our time, thoughts, ideas, and gifts in ways that bring positive energy to groups and projects;
- keep everyone's personal safety in mind, refraining from words or acts that belittle, threaten, harm, or endanger others;
- speak directly and honestly with those whom we have differences, bringing grievances directly to the person or persons involved, avoiding the desire to recruit allies from uninvolved parties, and refraining from "jumping aboard" someone else's complaint when not directly involved or knowing too little;
- relay knowledge of dangerous or toxic behavior to a Pastor or one of the Moderators who will treat every concern with seriousness and confidentiality, while discerning next steps to address concerns with care;
- apologize when we recognize that our words or actions have caused hurt and practice forgiveness when we are hurt by other

- honor and participate in the congregational process, and respect the hard work and faithful deliberation and decisions of our leaders, boards and committees;
- understand and trust that our leaders will strive for transparency, while understanding that they must also hold certain issues as truly private or confidential;
- be worthy of the trust and confidence of our fellow members;
- encourage one another to uphold this covenant;
- study the behavior of those we most admire. They are all around us.

In all things, and through prayer and reflection, we will strive to be a blessing to our church. With God's guidance and by the example set by Jesus Christ, we will remain open to the dreams God holds for us.