



## Proposed Changes to the OUUC Covenant for Congregational Vote on June 9, 2024

Updated 4-2-24

These are proposed changes to the OUUC congregational covenant that will be presented to the congregation for a vote at the annual meeting on June 9, 2024.

This continues covenant work that we began in October 2022.

### **1. Revisions to current OUUC covenant**

The first change is a revision to the current OUUC covenant to remove ableist language and remove ministers and staff as they are accountable in different ways. Proposed changes are in **red**:

We the **congregants** (**removed members, ministers and staff**) of the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, enter into this covenant as an expression of our commitment to each other.

Because we value our congregation, we promise to...

enhance its health with our time, talent, energy, and financial resources; and honor our commitments here.

Because we seek to be a friendly and inclusive congregation, we promise to...

provide a safe and nurturing environment for all our members, young and old; assist those among us who have urgent needs for care and support; and provide opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

Because we choose to **journey** (**removed walk**) together we promise to ...

create and support an organizational structure that is responsive, responsible, identifiable, and accessible; share our gifts as we participate in the leadership of the congregation; and encourage our congregational leaders to listen and speak openly, understand deeply, work with fairness, and serve with passion.

Because we need not think alike to love alike, we promise to...

    speak and work openly, honestly, and lovingly with our leadership, providing informed, constructive feedback when we believe change is needed.

Because we recognize that conflict is normal we promise to...

    speak with each other directly and honestly from a position of respect, kindness and love, recognizing that to do so, there will be times we need to seek counsel from the community.

Because we strive to live our Unitarian Universalist principles, we promise to ...

    inform ourselves about and engage issues that concern our larger communities.

## **2. Add a behavioral covenant to the current OUUC covenant.**

The second change is the addition of a behavioral covenant to OUUC's current covenant.

### **Proposed Behavioral Covenant to be added to the OUUC Covenant (Revised November 2023)**

As congregants of OUUC, we are united in our commitment to treat one another with dignity and love. This Behavioral Covenant formalizes our commitment. It requires making promises and trusting that we will *embrace* those promises. We know we will make mistakes and disappoint one another, but when we cause harm, we promise to take the necessary steps to return to right relationship.

This Behavioral Covenant is a path for ensuring that we at OUUC will be seen, heard, cared for, and accompanied on our journey. We bring this Behavioral Covenant into all situations and interactions, as we work together toward fulfilling our *Vision, Mission, and Goals*. It will guide us in becoming our best selves, *within, among, beyond, and throughout* our congregation. As we fulfill these sacred promises to each other we become the congregation we aspire to be.

- 1. I will create and foster a safe space to allow all who come in peace to feel welcome and included.**

- 2. I will work to acknowledge and eliminate my own biases, and to dismantle systems of oppression in the congregation and in our communities.**
  
- 3. I will speak honestly about my personal experiences and will express my views in a productive manner.**
  
- 4. I will listen to others with attention and curiosity, and will stay open to alternative perspectives, recognizing that I may not fully understand.**
  
- 5. I will express my discomfort in a timely and respectful manner when I perceive behaviors toward others or myself to be harmful creating space for resolution.**
  
- 6. I will communicate directly with the person with whom I have a conflict or concern. If I need support, I will promptly seek assistance from the Healthy Congregations Team.**
  
- 7. I will consider the potential impact of my words and actions, and will work to remedy any negative impacts, recognizing that the impact of my words and actions can differ from my intent.**
  
- 8. I will respect others' gifts, experience, knowledge, and commitment, and will work cooperatively with our leaders to understand and respect the decisions that are made on behalf of the congregation.**
  
- 9. I will, to the best of my ability, contribute my time, talent, energy, and financial resources, and will honor my commitments to OUUC.**