



## **OUUC Behavioral Covenant**

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.**



## **Examples of Behavior Indicated by the Behavioral Covenant**

The OUUC behavioral covenant writing team also developed these examples of the behavioral covenant in action, offered to help provide clarity about behaviors. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

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

#### Examples:

- Make services and gatherings open, and accessible to those with differently-abled bodies, special needs, dietary restrictions, or limited transportation. Include online programs whenever feasible.
- Respect people's boundaries, whether expressed verbally or non-verbally.
- Honor and respect the pronoun preferences of others.
- Follow all health and safety protocols.

### **2. I will work to acknowledge and eliminate my own biases, and to dismantle systems of oppression in the congregation and in our communities.**

#### Examples:

- Avoid bias based on race, sex, gender identity, class, ability, age, and beliefs.
- Actively inform myself about systems of oppression, and reflect upon my own biases.

- 3. I will speak honestly about my personal experiences and will express my views in a productive manner. ~~that is respectful of others.~~**

Examples:

- Engage with openness and humility.
- *Bridge* to build connections.

- 4. I will listen to others with attention and curiosity, and will stay open to alternative perspectives, recognizing that I may not fully understand.**

Examples:

- Seek first to understand through deep listening and respectful questioning.
- Trust that other people's stories, comments, experiences, points of view, and spiritual journeys are valid and deserve to be heard.
- Assume we are all attempting to be productive as we collaboratively work toward our shared goals.
- *Embrace* different learning styles and different methods of accomplishing a task.

- 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.**

Examples:

- Uphold this covenant by speaking up for myself and on behalf of others, especially when my privilege affords me more opportunity to do so.
- Express and honor my personal boundaries.
- Avoid the use of profanity when addressing others.

- 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.**

Examples:

- Avoid speaking about a person, or conflict, with others who are not directly involved.
- Act promptly in an attempt to resolve any conflict.
- Respect confidentiality as I work to resolve conflicts, issues, or concerns with others.
- Respond to a person's concerning words or actions by addressing their impact.

**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.**

Examples:

- **Say only what is** true, helpful, and kind.
- Consider the audience and communicate with sensitivity to each unique circumstance.
- Acknowledge that my impact is my responsibility to make right.

**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.**

Examples:

- Support the decisions made by the volunteers and staff to whom that responsibility has been delegated.
- Respect others' schedules, boundaries, limitations, and their efforts overall.

**9. I will, to the best of my ability, contribute my time, talent, energy, and financial resources, and will honor my commitments to OUUC.**

Examples:

- Make and fulfill a supportive annual pledge toward congregational stewardship or request a waiver as necessary.
- Contribute to the Capital Campaign Fund, and/or volunteer to help maintain our building and grounds.
- Volunteer to lead, or participate in, spiritual, social justice, educational, and social activities