

Woodmont United Church of Christ

Behavioral Covenant

As people of God, followers of Jesus Christ, and listeners of the Holy Spirit, we are honored and delighted to be a part of Woodmont United Church of Christ, our gathered church community. We cherish our church home, the people in it, and the people who have not yet walked through our doors.

The Scriptures teach us that a covenant is a promise: a promise to live in intentional, loving relationship. In this Behavioral Covenant, we name the love we have for one another, while acknowledging that being in a healthy relationship takes work. As Jesus says in the Scriptures, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:37-39). There is a “both me *and* us” embedded in covenantal living.

The attributes of a loving Christian community that we, Woodmont United Church of Christ, both aspire to and covenant to work towards are:

- Preserving respect and honor for everyone
- Maintaining a stance of helpfulness, openness, and willingness to learn
- Engaging in active listening, honoring stories and questions that everyone has to share
- Adopting an attitude of patience, humility, and mutual good will

We acknowledge that this can be difficult, and that sometimes we may miss the mark. When this happens, we will try to hold one another in a manner of holy steadfastness and loving accountability. We will address issues directly with those who are involved, and we covenant to avoid gossiping and other unhelpful means of communication.

In terms of group decision-making: After everyone has had an opportunity to be heard, and decisions have been reached, we covenant to honor the decisions of the church as a whole, holding differences of opinion lightly so as not to thwart the forward movement that has been carefully discerned and voted upon.

We further name that there will be occasions of harm, occurrences more egregious than the occasional “slip up,” and with more painful impact. These occasions include (but are not limited to): sexually inappropriate behavior, harassment, and the use of hate speech. None of these will be tolerated. Should this happen, we will do our best to prayerfully and carefully name and address the behavior, as well as the harm that has been caused, so as to keep our space and our community as safe and as welcoming as possible. Please see our church’s Safe Conduct Policy for details on this process.

We remain hopeful and expectant that Woodmont United Church of Christ will continue to work towards Christian living within its walls, so that we can continue to share God’s deep and abiding love with the entire world.

Adopted by Council on 06/14/2023