

FY 2023-24 Covenant of the First UU Board

Approved July 19, 2023

Framing Statement: This is a covenant for the Board to guide our interactions with each other.

We covenant to join in a fulfilling, safe, Beloved community with each other while facing outward to do the work of our Church while adhering to our adopted Principles of Governance and our Mission and Vision of Ministry.

1. We agree to treat ourselves with the patience and respect we all deserve, remembering that we are human. We will remind ourselves that we are worthy and competent individuals, but also that we can't do it all. We will communicate when we need help or when something feels like it is beyond our abilities or if we disagree with the group decision or consensus.
2. We agree to treat each other with empathy, integrity, and open heartedness, remembering that we all come from different religious and cultural backgrounds and experiences. Respect for each other's humanity is the foundation upon which we will act. We will be civil and cordial and take time to welcome each other, check in with each other, and say goodbye to each other in our meetings. We work as a team, and so we will care for each other, recognizing our interdependence.
3. We agree to make room for community building and spiritual care in this virtual space. This is holy ground, where we do the work of our faith. Recognizing that we have much work to do, we will show up prepared and focused to do our work together to the best of our ability. We will take the time for breaks when we need them.
4. We agree to respect each other's boundaries, including our time and confidentiality. We value transparency among ourselves and others. We will make documents available prior to the meetings they will be used in, stick to our set meeting times to the best of our ability, make clear distinguishments between business time and relationship building time, and maintain confidentiality, but not secrecy. We recognize that there are boundaries not included in this list, and we will make our personal boundaries clear to each other.
5. We want our space to be a space for growth. To facilitate that, we agree to check for understanding and encourage questions and open, candid discussions without any intimidation or fear of reprisal.
6. We recognize that we will mess up sometimes. When this happens, we agree to take the time to debrief, clarify what happened, apologize, learn from mistakes, and make changes to our processes. We will use positive and non-fault-finding language to discuss our mistakes (ex. "I need to give constructive feedback"). We will return to this covenant and to our principles as Unitarian Universalists and use mistakes to improve our communications.
7. Comply with the obligations found in section 1.6.1 of the Principles of Governance.

Short Version We light this chalice to remind ourselves that we are human, and we are both lifted and limited by our humanity. May we be kind, compassionate, and make room for growth, both within ourselves and within this group. Here, we practice governance rooted in love.