



BEHAVIORAL COVENANT

presented by The Rev. Marcia Cox

ADOPTED BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL AT NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT ON AUGUST 18, 2019

to guide our interactions during meetings and especially during our
All-Church Visioning Conversations

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. -Ephesians 4: 15-16

- Our purpose is to promote understanding for the upbuilding of the body of Christ.
- We will take time for prayer, seeking God's will.
- We will foster an environment of safety and mutual respect and treat each other with care as God's beloved children.
- We will talk one at a time.
- We will use "I" language and speak from our own experience (as opposed to saying, "people are saying X, Y and Z").
- We will express thoughts that come from direct, observable data, as opposed to hearsay.
- We will be as honest as we can and not be afraid to share an idea even though it might not seem to be a perspective held by the majority. The Holy Spirit works in surprising ways!
- We will not dominate conversations, and generally leave space for anyone who wants to speak for the first time before we speak for a second (or third) time.
- We will attempt to hear one another out, and, if necessary, in order to clarify our understanding, repeat what another has said or ask questions.
- While we affirm that passion can be energizing, we agree not to raise our voices in anger or display bullying behavior since doing so is frightening and hurtful.
- We will hold ourselves accountable if our words and actions do not exemplify the covenant behaviors set forth here, understanding that, should they not, it may be necessary for us to take a "time out" or leave a meeting entirely.
- We will forgive each other and ourselves when we break this covenant, giving each of our members the opportunity to learn, grow and try again.

(sources: The 2004 Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ; The Church of the Pilgrimage, Northford, Connecticut; Thompson Congregational Church, Thompson Connecticut; several ideas/rewordings from Marcia Cox and edits from the Council.)