

**Respectful Communications Covenant**  
**College Avenue Congregational Church, UCC**

*“...make a sanctuary for me so that I may dwell among them.”*  
*God to Moses in Exodus 25:8*

As a community of faith we know the importance of creating true sanctuary in our midst and understand that true sanctuary requires transparency, openness and compassion in our communication with one another. We believe that conflict is normal and something that will occur. Conflict presents opportunities for ministry. We understand that we are always affected by conflict even if we are not personally and directly involved, and we therefore always have an interest in open, fair and honest communication.

We also believe it is our Christian obligation to search for God’s will especially in times of disagreement and to find solutions which promote a communal rather than solely a personal sense of satisfaction and well-being. Therefore in order to communicate openly, lovingly, and clearly with each other, and to try to help create authentic community with our church family I will strive to put ego aside and let God guide me by promising to:

- Value each person
- Practice respectful confrontation by using the language, “I feel \_\_\_\_\_, when you \_\_\_\_\_ I need \_\_\_\_\_”
- Refrain from encouraging or facilitating behind-the-scenes efforts to undermine the ministry of our staff or members.
- Allow each person the opportunity to express his or her opinion and concerns
- Listen with engaged respect, more to understand than to debate
- Speak only for myself, not for others
- Take responsibility and be accountable for my own feelings, views, and behavior
- Explore differences without personalizing or becoming judgmental
- Seek clarification of others’ perceptions or ideas, but not of their motives
- Avoid making personal attacks
- Share information openly with those who have a need and right to know it while refraining from spreading rumors (unsubstantiated stories) or gossip
- Approach the person or team when questions or disagreements arise rather than complaining or telling tales around the edges
- Ask for help facilitating communication if it is needed, for more effective conversation and resolution

I make the promises above because I understand that abiding by these promises is crucial to the integrity of community life at College Avenue Congregational Church, UCC.

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Signed

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Date