

Staff Covenant

Adopted January 19, 2021

Part 1: The Promises

Accountable to the Mission and Purpose of All Souls Church¹, we minister to and with the congregation on a journey toward Beloved Community. As staff, we honor one another as colleagues and we make these promises. We commit to:

- Implementing the 8th Principle in both our shared work and our individual portfolios. We will give it the time and energy it deserves. In the 8th Principle, All Souls Church commits to *“journeying towards spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”*
- Nurturing meaningful, authentic, relationships with one another across cultural, linguistic, religious, and other differences, built on honoring the inherent worth, dignity, and creativity of each of us and on the recognition that our work and success is a team effort;
- Respecting one another’s work as we acknowledge the varied effects of power, privilege, and oppression in our lives, the church, and society at large;
- Treating one another with kindness, gentleness, and honesty, particularly during times of disagreement or conflict;
- Directly and proactively engaging in generative conflict as an opportunity for creativity, strengthened relationships, and the breakthrough of new perspectives;
- Taking care of ourselves as our needs require in order to foster individual and collective well-being;
- Assuming that we each have good intentions in our speech and actions;
- Responding thoughtfully and accountably when—even with good intentions—we hurt others by our speech, action, or inaction;
- Communicating promptly and clearly regarding expectations, events, schedules, action items, or changes in practice or policy;
- Maintaining ethically appropriate boundaries among staff, congregants, and others;
- Holding ourselves accountable to these commitments with honesty, with love, and with approaches that recognize and account for the differences in position and power;
- Recommitting to this covenant, individually or as a group, when we struggle or fail to be faithful to these promises.

With hope and faith in one another, we make this covenant.

¹ From Article II, Section 1, of the church bylaws: “The purpose of this Church is captured by the mission statement adopted by the congregation in 2002: ‘to create a diverse, spirit-growing, justice-seeking community that transforms ourselves and our world into one great family of all souls.’”

Part 2: The Practices

- This is new. We need to live into it.
- We will engage each other on the small stuff so it doesn't become big.
- We will ask for feedback.
- We will be open when feedback is given (See [A Justice Centered Approach to Receiving Difficult Feedback](#)). We will be curious and ask questions before making assumptions and judgments.
- We will keep in mind that there are cultural and personal differences.
- We will seek to learn about and respect each person's individual style and preferences.
- We will use process observation (and other tools) to examine, understand, and change our own behavior. We will increase our tolerance for discomfort and messiness. [DRUUMM Resource on Process Observation](#)
- When needed, we will use the process for conflict resolution with a supervisor. We need a remediation avenue when other systems fail.

ADDENDUM

Tips to Make Giving and Receiving Feedback Easier

- Trust makes it easier! It's a condition.
- It's easier if you've asked for feedback.
- When feedback is part of a normal process.
- Better taken if it's held in confidence
- Trusting that the person giving the feedback has emotional intelligence about the feedback
- When there's shared commitment to mission
- When people respect other
- Give time for people to think about the feedback before having to respond
- Set up a one to one and ask--what's going on?
- Don't rely on written communication.
- Time of day can better
- Being able to separate self from the feedback. Self and work are different.
- One to one is preferred