

Atkinson Memorial Church

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Oregon City, Oregon

Summary of our Covenant of Right Relations

A covenant is a mutual promise of agreement between parties. The Covenant expresses the membership's relationship with the church. Seven basic areas represent the church: board, self, community, member to member, minister, Religious Education, and staff.

On March 6th 2006, the following summarized version was approved.

Atkinson Memorial Church Covenant of Right Relations

Summary of Key Principles

As the community of Atkinson Memorial Church, we do covenant together to:

- Honor the fact that the work of the church involves a significant investment of time and energy.
- Pledge time, wealth and talent to the best of our ability.
- Be respectful, friendly and welcoming to all members, visitors, and staff.
- Avoid gossip and speak directly with church members regarding issues or concerns.
- Resolve conflicts in a positive way.

“Life is not so short; there is always time for courtesy.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Covenant of Right Relations

May 19th editing meeting. It also includes input from our membership by using a drop box in the Dome Room to provide feedback on draft copies. The membership was made aware of the drop On May 13, 2001, about 40 members attended a meeting at the church to discuss the Covenant of a church member with the church. Tim Haley was present at the beginning of the May 13th meeting but did not attend the working session, as this was supposed to be from church members without ministerial input. The first draft of the Covenant of Right Relations was created at that meeting.

This document is the final copy of the Covenant of Right Relations. It reflects the input of the people who attended the May 13th meeting and the work of the Covenant committee at the May 19th editing meeting. It also includes input from our membership by using a drop box in the Dome Room to provide feedback on draft copies. The membership was made aware of the drop

box through Sunday morning announcements and by the publication of the Covenant in the News and Views. Members provided feedback by marking up copies of the News and Views and placing them in the drop box.

The Covenant was then presented and adopted at the annual congregational meeting on May 20th, 2001. It is not a rule book to be used to reprimand each other with, but rather is between only ourselves and the church. It is to be an ideal that each individual member aspires to; it is how we want to be together in community.

Board

- I will appreciate that the work of the board involves a significant investment of time and energy.
- I will take the effort to become aware of board responsibilities and activities.
- I will speak directly with board members about my concerns involving board business.
- I will present problems with ideas for solutions and a willingness to help.
- I will look for opportunities to give my time to the Board.
- I will respect board requests for my time, knowing the board will respect my right to say no.
- I will serve on the board at some point in my life, if I can.

Self

- I will commit to addressing and resolving conflicts in a positive way, without withdrawing, by using available church resources, including mediation.
- I will not take for granted others talents.
- I will welcome others talents.
- I will pledge time and money to the best of my ability, in consideration of the needs of the church.
- I will be friendly and welcoming to all members and visitors.
- I will honor the voices and opinions and decisions of members of all ages.
- I will make a genuine effort to get to know and understand people outside of my age group.
- I will participate in church activities.
- I will encourage youth to participate in church activities.
- I will take responsibilities for my own opinions.
- I will follow through when I commit to do something.

Community

- I will help others outside the church.
- I will encourage and mentor youth to learn social responsibility.

- I will not represent the church without authorization.
- I will be respectful of the church in my communications with others.
- I will continuously educate myself on social issues outside my church, for example, education, ecology, and the local community.
- I will be aware that the facilities are available for use by the local community.
- I will work to overcome my prejudices, for example, race, religion, and sexual preferences.
- I will speak out against injustice.
- I will honor and embrace the mission statement.

Member to Member

- I will be respectful.
- I will be caring for members.
- I will be accepting of differences.
- I will honor the members who have come before me.
- I will respect the past accomplishments.
- I am aware that this church is affiliated with Congregational Christianity and Unitarian Universalists.
- I will honor the many beliefs within our church.
- I will listen to others.
- I will make an effort to include others.
- I will encourage others to share their concerns.
- I will let the trivial stuff go.
- I will avoid saying things that undermine relationships at church.
- I will be straightforward in a caring manner.
- I will make an effort to include new members.
- I will commit myself to taking care of the church as I take care of other things I value.
- I will not expect others to do all the work.
- I will use the mediation committee to resolve differences with other members.
- I will abide by the RE guidelines.
- I will honor the boundaries and expressed wishes of others.

Minister

- I will not expect the minister to "do it all".
- I will be realistic about the amount of time the minister can spend with me.
- I will respect the minister's private and family time.
- If I have concerns with the minister, I will talk directly with him or her.
- If I have unresolved issues with the minister, I will take them to the committee on ministry, or the mediation committee.
- I will respect the freedom of the pulpit.

- I will express my appreciation to the minister.
- I will encourage appropriate remuneration for the minister.
- I will keep my personal relationship with the minister ethically and morally appropriate.
- I will not use the minister's partner as a conduit to the minister and will treat the partner as we would any other member of the congregation.
- I will respect the need for adequate time for the minister to research, prepare, and renew.

Staff

- I will respect the time and effort a staff member contributes to our community and address issues to a staff member in an encouraging and positive manner.
- I will respect the personal time of each staff member.
- I will respect the boundaries of the staff member's job responsibilities.
- I will communicate my need to a staff member directly, and understand that my personal needs may or may not be met.
- I will discuss concerns about the church that is the responsibilities of a staff member, with that staff member.
- I will not make any commitments on behalf of a staff member without their consent.
- I will give the staff member adequate time to respond to my requests.
- I will seek out opportunities to provide positive feedback to each staff member.
- I will use "I" statements when speaking to staff members.
- I understand that as a member of this church, responsibilities will come my way from time to time, and therefore will consider requests that come from staff members.
- Because the staff supports the church community, I will support the staff.
- I will consider mediation as a means to address conflicts with a staff member.

Director of Religious Education (DRE)

- I will not expect the DRE to "do it all".
- I will respect the DRE's private and family time.
- If I have concerns with the DRE, I will talk directly with him or her.
- I will consider mediation as a means to address conflicts with the DRE.
- I will respect the DRE as a professional.
- I will express my appreciation for the DRE.
- I will encourage appropriate remuneration for the DRE.
- I will respect the boundaries of the DRE's job responsibilities.