

Sanctuary Covenant

- A safe-space covenant for use at any church gathering, small group, committee meeting, program ministry, etc.

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We covenant to:

- Create a safe and kind space—a fellowship of warmth—in which all people may discern, discuss, and follow our callings from God, to be disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, with open minds, open hearts, and open doors.
- Prepare prayerfully and carefully for our time together.
- Speak with respect.
 - o When a talking piece is being used, speak only when holding the talking piece.
 - o Be honest—saying what you think, not what you think you should say.
 - o Speak only for yourself.
 - o Speak in a way that encourages dialogue.
 - o Be brief and to the point.
- Listen with respect.
 - o Listen for understanding the text and one another.
 - o Try to understand perspectives that differ from yours. In study groups, respect the fact that the goal is not consensus on the meaning of a text, but learning and sharing. In planning/work groups, the goal is not winning an outcome or to control, but *consensus*. Consensus-building conversation, in which all voices are heard and respected, is preferable to voting, which creates winners and losers.
 - o Carefully hold all the differences together.
 - o Be open to new viewpoints, new ideas—to being transformed.
- “Step Up, Step Back” – People who are often quiet or reserved are encouraged and invited to “step up” into the conversation more than usual, and people who are often eager to speak first and lengthily are encouraged to “step back” from dominating the conversation, making room for all.
- Keep confidential those personal stories shared in the Circle.
- Stay in the Circle throughout the discussion and come to all of the sessions/meetings, if at all possible.
- Enjoy one another’s company. God is here, in this moment, to be enjoyed in our time together.