

UNIVERSITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BOARD COVENANT

Introduction

We, the Policy Governance Board (Board) of the University United Methodist Church (UUMC) of East Lansing, Michigan, enter into this covenant to honor our common intention to serve the mission of this congregation for the benefit of our members and the wider world. We believe that a strong working relationship with one another helps sustain each other's well-being as well as our own. Through this covenant and our service, we intend to create genuine community and encourage lives of faith, integrity, joy and service. As a group, we make the following specific covenants with one another to ensure that we work together successfully for the common good, putting aside our personal interests and potential conflicts of interests.

Section 1: Demonstrating Grace, Faith and Loyalty to Further the Common Good

The Governance Board serves as a foundation for the church in fulfilling its vision and mission. Therefore, individual member actions must ensure that the church mission prevails over individual and personal interests.

- As a Board, we promise to each other to:
 - Be servant-leaders: serving the mission of UUMC in our lives and ministry as members of the Board;
 - Nurture mutual trust by sharing information honestly and responsibly;
 - Encourage and support the participation of everyone in the life of our congregation;
 - Reach out to others with warmth and kindness;
 - Express gratitude and appreciation for the contributions of others; and
 - Respect the roles and responsibilities of congregational leaders,

- To honor our faith, we will:
 - Be intentional about our own spiritual faith and growth;
 - Take time periodically to engage in shared spiritual study and reflection;
 - Always remember that as leaders we hold a special commission to live out UUMC principles and bring them to bear on our work and decisions;
 - Act with personal honesty and integrity, including avoiding personal gain and conflicts of interest, and in all matters, acting with the highest ethical standard; and
 - Honor the contributions and needs of those who have been historically marginalized in the larger world, and strive to be welcoming.

Section 2 – The Policy Governance Board as Intentional Christian Community

The actions of the Board must demonstrate obedience to mission above all, commitment to respecting the whole of the church as a community as well as the larger world, speaking with one voice, and engaging in positive interactions with one another.

- As a Board, we will:
 - Be mindful in our work of the guiding statements (mission, vision, values and guiding principles) as the touchstones for decisions;
 - Engage in strategic planning and goal setting;
 - Provide fiscal oversight so that resources are used effectively toward UUMC Vision and mission;
 - Engage in regular evaluation of policies, programs and performance including Board actions; and
 - Follow UUMC's governing documents and traditions (Book of Discipline).

- In working together as a Board in open, honest kind, and respectful manner, we will:
 - Listen deeply to understand and appreciate the perspectives and opinions of others;
 - Consider ideas not our own;
 - Describe our own opinions and experiences using the word "I," mindful that our views may not be shared by others;
 - Be tolerant of other ideas so we all feel free to contribute;
 - Be respectful and kind in our words and tone in person and in written and electronic communications, focusing on issues and behaviors, not on people;
 - Be forgiving and loving when we or others make mistakes; admit our mistakes, apologize, when warranted, and seek to make amends;
 - Grant ourselves permission to state the obvious and ask questions whose answers might be apparent to others;
 - Seek peaceful and constructive resolutions directly to the people involved when conflicts arise so that we can maintain a healthy working environment:
 - Avoid speaking negatively about others in the wider community. repeating rumors and hearsay about other individuals and groups;
 - Acknowledge that we each bring unique skills and styles to the work of the Board; and
 - Be willing to disagree with respect.

- In working together as a Board, we speak with one voice by doing the following:
 - Remembering that only the Board as a whole, and not its individual members as such, has any power or authority;
 - Representing and supporting the decisions of the Board regardless of our personal opinions or the individual votes cast on the decision;
 - Stand by our group decisions and speak with one voice; and
 - Hold matters that require confidentiality as sacred.

- In working together as a Board to develop and promote genuine relationships, we will:
 - Get to know each other well enough to build trust; and
 - Take time to have fun, relax and laugh with one another.

Section 3 – Personal Commitment – Gifts, Stewardship – Duty of Care

Each member of the Board commits to devoting adequate time, energy and attention to knowing and fulfilling the mission and all governing documents and responsibilities. Each member commits to individual accountability and commitment to mission and self-reflection, and faith development. As an individual member of the Board, I agree to make the following covenants to UUMC and the Church by living out my faith, and supporting the mission, vision and values of UUMC.

- Consistent with God’s call to commitment and community, I will:
 - Affirm the mission, vision and values of UUMC and pledge my cooperation to the leadership of the church;
 - Regularly participate in worship gatherings;
 - Deepen my walk with Christ through prayer and Bible study;
 - Use my spiritual gifts in the service of UUMC; and
 - Use my material wealth in support of UUMCs mission.
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- To show consideration towards my fellow Board members, I will:
 - Attend and be on time for meetings;
 - Arrive prepared for meetings by having thoughtfully read materials in advance;
 - Be fully present for each meeting; and
 - Stay on schedule during the meetings so that they end on time.
- To serve in my role to the best of my ability. I will:
 - Follow through on my individual tasks;
 - Ask for help when I need it;
 - Remember that we are working to fulfill the mission, not my or anyone else’s personal desires;
 - Maintain focus on the priorities and goals of the Board;
 - Work only on issues that fall within the responsibilities of the Board;
 - Push the bounds of creativity; and
 - Become familiar with the governing documents, doctrinal standards, finances, and traditions of the church.

Signature

Name

Date