

# UCV Reorganization 2021

## Covenant of Healthy Relations

This is a covenant to guide how we behave towards each other and to groups and individuals within the congregation. The objective is to enhance a safe climate that is courteous, friendly, supportive, respectful of others, open and honest.

Because I believe in the inherent worth and dignity of each person, I will endeavour to:

1. Be compassionate and supportive in my relationships with others, assume their best intentions and be curious rather than judgmental.
2. Communicate with active listening and consideration. Explain concerns to the person directly and share differences respectfully. Focus on the current problem - not the person.
3. Balance being open to new ideas with respect for our traditions.
4. Be attentive to our community's needs, generous with my talents and careful with the church's resources.
5. Keep the big picture in mind, be patient with myself and others and stay engaged in the process of change; participate in the decision-making and respect the decisions that are made.
6. Discuss conflicts in our church in a way that respects the privacy and dignity of those involved.
7. Recognize and praise others and myself for the work we do in the church and be forgiving when we make mistakes.
8. Support, in a constructive way, the work of the minister, staff and congregants.
9. Deepen our connections by getting to know and understand people of all ages and points of view within the congregation.
10. Nurture my own spiritual needs in this community and support others in their search for truth and meaning.

Approved on November 27, 2005 by the Annual General Meeting of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver.

Procedures:

### 1. Board responsibilities:

The board facilitates healthy relations in the congregation by:

- Sponsoring appropriate learning opportunities for congregational members;
- Creating and sustaining an on-going peace-making committee or team;
- Using professional facilitators where suitable to help resolve conflicts within the congregation;
- Encouraging the development of procedures for managing potentially disruptive behaviour at church meetings and events;
- Establishing specific procedures as required for managing potential conflict related to the work of selected committees and groups (e.g., Committee on Ministry, Human Resources).

### 2. Church member and staff responsibilities:

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Members and staff take responsibility for helping to promote healthy relations and resolve conflict in the congregation by developing and applying appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes in areas such as: compassionate communications, appreciative inquiry, group process facilitation, conduct of meetings, multi-party performance evaluation, human resource management, effective listening, assertiveness, negotiation, mediation, anger management, appropriate confrontation, and restorative practices.

When confronted with conflict, members of the congregation and staff apply the following procedures in the order indicated:

2.1. A member who experiences conflict with a Minister...

Talks to the Minister privately;

If it is not practical or if it feels unsafe to talk to the minister, the member talks to a member of the Committee on Ministry

2.2. A member who experiences conflict with a Staff Member...

o Talks to the staff member privately

o If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to the staff member's supervisor

o If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to a member of the Human Resources Committee

2.3. A member who experiences conflict with a Committee Member...

Talks to the committee member privately

If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to the committee chair If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to a member of the Coordinating Team

2.4. A member who experiences conflict with a Board Member...

Talks to the board member privately

If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to the board President

2.5. A member who experiences conflict with another member of the congregation...

Talks to the member privately

If that does not resolve the conflict the member talks to a member of the Peace-Making Committee or team, a group of church members willing to work with those in conflict to help find solutions that meet the interests of all parties

2.6. A member who believes that a church tradition is not being followed appropriately...

Talks to the appropriate committee chair

2.7. A member who believes that a Committee is not doing its job...

o Talks to the committee chair. The member may need to try more than once, remembering that all committee members are volunteers and the chair may not have the time to address the concern promptly

o May offer to work with the committee to resolve the issue

o Refrains from preempting the committee's responsibility

o If these steps do not resolve the conflict the member talks to a member of the Coordinating Team

2.8. A member who disagrees with an action taken or not taken by the Board of Trustees...

o Talks to a member of the Board to ensure understanding of the Board's position o

If that does not resolve the conflict the member outlines the concerns in writing to

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the Board

- During any election to the board, considers running for office or support others to run for office in order to help shape church practices in the directions the member believes to be appropriate.

2.9. In all the above cases...

If other steps do not resolve the conflict, the member informs a member of the Board of Trustees, or writes a letter to the Board explaining the concern.

2.10. Timeliness

Matters referred to the Committee on Ministry, Human Resources Committee and the Board are addressed in a timely and impartial manner.

Procedures approved by Board of Trustees 19 Aug 2003: Amended 18 Oct 2005 Revisions pending Board approval Nov 2005.