

**First United Church of Christ – Carlisle
30 North Pitt Street Carlisle PA 17073**

**Behavioral Covenant within the Life of the Church
(with scripture passages)**

Because we are a church of Jesus Christ, we are called to love one another just as we are loved by God. As a congregation, we share with each other our joys, our sorrows, our gifts, and our time. We pledge to support each other on our faith journeys with honesty, kindness, and respect. The following guidelines are meant to enable us to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15) and to keep strong the bond of our church community. This is true for our face to face conversations, our written correspondence, and any interchanges on the internet or social media.

1.. Listen with an open, nonjudgmental mind to the words, concerns, and ideas of others.

‘Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven’ Luke 6:37

2. Express your opinions but acknowledge that not all will agree with them. Be compassionate and respectful of all people even in the midst of disagreement.

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 1
Thessalonians 5:12

3. Personal attacks, gossip, and words and actions that do not honor God or other people can damage relationships and should be avoided.

the LORD declares: “Far be it from me; for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be treated with contempt.” 1
Samuel 3:20 b

4. In the spirit of congregational government, we work towards consensus rather than majority. We accept that at times what we want as individuals may not be what is best for the church overall.

Make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Philippians 2:2

5. During the life of the church, conflict is expected and healthy when it is discussed, debated, and disagreements are open and honest. Express yourself as clearly as possible so that the ministry team and/or congregation understand your point of view.

Do all things without murmuring and arguing Philippians 2:1

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ Ephesians 4:15

6. Use “I” messages to communicate personal feelings.

7. Avoid using “they, them, their” language because we are all in this together.

All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor’s work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads. Galatians 6:4-5

8. Take an “ask” rather than “tell” approach to dialog.

A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing personal opinion. Proverbs 18:2

9. Be aware of the sensitive nature of some discussions and that individuals have different comfort levels for discussing some topics.

The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.
Psalm 34:18

10. All forms of electronic media (including text messages, e-mail messages, website blogs, and social networking websites) should be treated with the same degree of respect as a face-to-face conversation.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.
Romans 12:1

11. I will use social media for good. I realize with new learning and understanding comes great responsibility. I will model appropriate behavior and treat others as they deserve to be treated. I will use technology in a positive way. Technology will be used to empower, to compliment, to better, to reform. I understand I can make a difference. I can help others. I WILL!

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28