

Holy Manners* **Our Commitment to the Creation of Safe Space****

We come to this space knowing that God loves us as we are and yearns for us to be in closer relationship with all of God's beloved.

In our behavior, our words, and our attitudes we promise to relate to one another with:

- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Open mindedness
- ❖ Courage
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ And we promise to treat ourselves with kindness.

Keeping God at the centre, we will:

- ❖ Listen empathetically to others with our whole selves: our physical senses, intuition, imagination, and intellect
- ❖ Speak for ourselves in the spirit of truth and gentleness, avoiding unhelpful judgments, generalizations, and stereotypes
- ❖ Allow others to speak without interruption
- ❖ Pause before speaking to ponder what others are saying and what we feel
- ❖ Affirm the deep wisdom of silence
- ❖ Be sensitive to differences in the way we each communicate and learn
- ❖ Keep confidentiality
- ❖ Keep the discussion at the table
- ❖ Commit to holding one another to account when we do not keep our Holy Manners
- ❖ Honour the decisions made by the body
- ❖ Lean into God's transformative love.

*The phrase "holy manners" comes from *Behavioural Covenants in Congregations* by Gil Rendle. Former United Church Moderator Marion Parry made extensive use of the term during her time as moderator. There are a number of versions of "holy manners".

**Adapted from *Our Commitment as God's Diverse Church*, by the Rev. Michael Blair and the Rev. Steve Willey, Toronto, 2008.