

West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Covenant

Our commitment as an Open and Affirming Church

We, the congregation of the West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, believe that every person is beloved of God, a special and unique creation made in God's own image. Therefore, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. With God's grace, we commit ourselves to embrace diversity and encourage and support the participation of persons of every gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic and socio-economic background.

We welcome all persons, members and friends, to share in the full life and ministry of this church both lay and ordained, including fellowship, worship, sacraments and ceremonies and celebrations; in the shared responsibilities of stewardship and living in a covenantal relationship; in the shared blessings of the right to marry or celebrate a commitment to a person of one's choosing, in the right to celebrate a loved one's life in a memorial service; and to receive pastoral care.

At the WGTCC we believe in God's inclusive love for all which means that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here. Recognizing that we are called together by God to follow in the ways of Christ, and recognizing the words of Holy Scripture (Colossians 3: 12-17 and 1 Thessalonians 5: 12-24) we covenant with one another to live together in loving relationships. With God's help, we will hold ourselves and one another to the following values and guidelines as we seek to live in community together.

- We seek to build each other up and not tear down.
- We respect and honor our pastor and lay leaders.
- We seek to communicate clearly, listening to one another and honoring what the other is saying.
- We offer our opinions with charity and humility.
- We make positive investments in each other's lives by recognizing one another's spiritual gifts and seeking to nurture them.
- We seek to discover not what may be best for the individual or the small group but what is best for God's church as a whole.
- We accept disagreement, conflict and evolution as normal and natural and we will deal with them in a kind, open and loving way.
- We commit to being inconvenienced for the sake of the Gospel.
- We seek to respect people's lives, affirming that it is acceptable to come to church and just be.
- We seek and extend grace and forgiveness in relationship with each other.

Adopted by vote of the congregation: March 19, 2017