

Code of Conduct, Little River United Church of Christ

At Little River United Church of Christ, we believe that all people are beloved children of God, created in the Divine Image to reach their full potential as human beings.

We are a church of extravagant welcome. Jesus put faith and hospitality together: “Whoever receives one whom I send receives me,” and those who received Jesus embraced God (John 13:20). We choose to walk in his steps and follow his example. Within our congregation there is room for all—children (Luke 18:15–17), those who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, ill, poor, grieving, persecuted, and in prison (Matthew 25:31–46 and Luke 6:20–26). We welcome people of every race, nationality, economic status, creed, religious tradition, and persons who are seekers.

We are an Open and Affirming congregation. As a part of our radical hospitality, we welcome persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions into the full life and ministry of our church.

Because of who we are, we, the members and friends of Little River United Church of Christ, hold ourselves to the following code of conduct:

- To create a safe environment, I will uphold the dignity of each person in our congregation, including our church leaders and staff. Before I speak or act, I will consider the impact of my words and actions on others as I seek to make our church a safe place for all.
- My communication with others will be timely, direct, honest, open, and sensitive, even as I may disagree with another’s assumptions, opinions, and decisions. I will speak my own truth and avoid attributing to others who are not present without their explicit permission.
- I will accept and honor differences. While I may have strong opinions, I acknowledge that others do as well. I will embrace the diversity of our spiritual family, imagine other perspectives, and be enriched by these differences.
- I understand that our church stays strong as each person is heard and as we seek the consensus of every member of our congregation. I will exercise personal patience and encourage healthful processes to work.

- I will engage in self-reflection and prayer, seeking ways that my presence will serve as a blessing to our church and its people. I will seek God’s guidance and grace to listen attentively and remain open to visions that God holds for us. I will encourage prayer at the beginnings and endings of all church meetings and when decisions of the church and its various bodies are made.
- When I serve on a board or committee, I will refrain from making decisions that benefit only me. I will seek decisions that will benefit the entire congregation.
- I understand that conflict is a part of life, including life in the church. I will accept disagreement and conflict as inevitable and as an opportunity for personal and church growth. I will concentrate on issues and problems, rather than personalities. I will avoid gossip. I will commit not to make a conflict or difference of opinion a source of personal injury or congregational division.
- In the event of a conflict between another person or persons and me, whatever the cause, I will strive to resolve that conflict by seeking out those others and engage them in conversation. I will endeavor to understand their point of view even as I respectfully share mine. I will pray that through this conversation the conflict will be resolved.
- If we are unable to resolve a conflict, I will seek the guidance of others to help mediate our differences, including mutually agreed upon church members, pastors, deacons, and the Safe Community Committee. Together, we will follow the process developed and approved by the congregation and its leaders.

Through this Code of Conduct, we, the members and friends of Little River United Church of Christ, pledge together to embody the words of Jesus who commands us to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37–39).

Adopted 12-08-21 by the Church Council to recommend to the Congregation