



**JOIN THE MOVEMENT**  
*toward racial justice*

# Courageous Conversations

A Lenten Antiracism Journey

## CONVERSATION COVENANTS

In order for conversations to be courageous, it is important to create a container that can hold them. In the UCC, we are a people of covenants, meaning we seek to make and hold promises with one another, guided and held by the Holy One, that help us grow, change and flourish as God's beloved ones. So, before you delve into the provided conversation prompts, take some time to discuss why you are engaging in this practice and how you want to be in conversation with each other. Give each person a chance to give voice to their hopes for this time and their personal goals for how they want to show up. Then make some collective agreements to help you foster a brave space for your conversations. Below, you'll find some that we recommend. Once you've discussed these covenants, offer a sign to each other that you will hold them, with the help of God. Then use the covenants to help get conversations back on track or address moments of slippage. Don't forget to check in with each other periodically throughout the season to see how you are doing at keeping your covenants.

We agree/covenant to:

- Use “I” statements  
*locate your reflections within your own experience and avoid speaking for others*
- Speak our truths  
*be as forthcoming as you can with your own understandings, thoughts and feelings*
- Embrace differences and complexities  
*recognize that the person/people you are in conversation with are bringing their own perspective, shaped by their own experiences; work toward understanding rather than agreement*
- Lean in with curiosity  
*stay openhearted, ask questions to deepen understanding, resist withdrawing or shaming*
- Expect discomfort  
*build in moments for deep breathing, pauses to reflect and recenter, and moments to be aware of your mindbodyspirit*
- Address impacts  
*no matter what the intent, harm happens; hold space to understand impacts and repair harm; be accountable for harmful impacts*
- Respect confidentiality  
*decide between conversation partners if and how anything that is said may be shared with others*
- Foster reciprocity  
*listen actively when you are not speaking, work toward equity of voices, be aware of the space you are taking or if you’re withdrawing to or staying comfortable in silence*
- Practice self-care  
*only you know how you are able to engage in conversations like these in any give moment; share what you are able, sustain your heart, go as deep as you can but no deeper, nurture your own well-being*