

# Code of Conduct

## Seaside United Methodist Code of Conduct

Approved May 2013

*Based on the Ubuntu Code of Conduct. "Ubuntu" is an African concept of 'humanity towards others'.*

This Code of Conduct covers our behavior as members of the Seaside United Methodist Church Community, in any forum, public gathering, electronic or other private correspondence. The Committees, Boards, Study Groups or other governance or educational bodies are ultimately accountable to the Seaside Church Council which will arbitrate in any dispute over the conduct of a member of the community.

- **Be considerate.** St. Paul compared the church to an interconnected and interdependent body. What we do and say has an effect on others and we in turn are affected by the words and actions of others. Any decision we take will affect members and guests of our church, and we should take those consequences into account when making decisions. The Church of Jesus Christ is present in billions of believers, United Methodism has millions worldwide and Seaside itself has hundreds of members and guests. Even if it's not obvious at the time, our behavior here will impact the lives of others.
- **Be respectful.** The Seaside UMC community and its members treat one another with respect. Everyone can make a valuable contribution to Seaside and to Christ's Church. We may not always agree, but disagreement is no excuse for poor behavior and poor manners. We might all

experience some frustration now and then, but we cannot allow that frustration to turn into a personal attack. It's important to remember that a community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a grace-filled one. We expect members of the Seaside community to be respectful when dealing with other members as well as with people outside the Seaside United Methodist Church Community.

- **Be collaborative.** Collaboration is central to our life as a community and to the larger Christian community. This collaboration involves individuals working with others in groups, groups working with each other within Seaside, and individuals and teams within Seaside working with other groups outside. This collaboration reduces redundancy, and improves the effectiveness of our mission. We should always be open to collaboration. Our work should be done transparently and we should involve as many interested parties as early as possible while retaining a focus on the mission of the church.
- **When we disagree, we consult others.** Disagreements, both social and theological, happen all the time and the Seaside United Methodist community is no exception. It is important that we resolve disagreements and differing views constructively and with the help of the community and community processes. We have a Church Council and a series of other governance bodies which help to decide the right course for Seaside United Methodist. Our Pastors and Lay Leaders help to interpret the best path to achieve our vision as a church. When our goals differ dramatically, we encourage the creation of alternative ministries or programs within the church community if the new ministry resides comfortably within the overall mission and vision of the church. Recognizing that Seaside is a large church and that we can do many things well also acknowledges that we still cannot do everything or pursue every idea with excellence. When necessary and possible, we will help identify resources

outside of Seaside United Methodist Church that may be able to help develop ideas and programs that are not consistent with our mission.

- **When we are unsure, we ask for help.** Nobody knows everything, and nobody is expected to be perfect in the Seaside United Methodist community. Asking questions avoids many problems down the road, and so questions are encouraged. Those who are asked questions should be responsive and helpful. However, when asking a question, care must be taken to do so in an appropriate forum.
- **Step down considerately.** Members of every church community come and go and Seaside is no different. When somebody leaves or disengages from the church or from a particular ministry in the church, we ask that they do so in a way that minimizes disruption to the church community. This means they should tell people they are leaving and take the proper steps to ensure that others can pick up where they left off.

We pride ourselves on building a productive, joyful, and agile community that can welcome new ideas in a complex community, and foster collaboration between groups with very different needs, interests and goals. We hold our leaders to an even higher standard, in the Leadership Code of Conduct, and arrange the governance of the community to ensure that issues can be raised with leaders who are engaged, interested and competent to help resolve them.

[See the Seaside UMC Code of Conduct for Leaders](#)