How We Will Be Together

These are commitments we make to one another, so that the work we share has a place to rest. I offer them here as a beginning, and I trust we will make them our own when we gather.

We speak from our own experience. We offer what we see and believe, and we hold it firmly enough to stand on and lightly enough that another can see differently.

We are willing to speak our truth, what we see and what we think, even when it differs from the majority.

We honor the many perspectives in this circle. Each of us arrives with a different history, tradition, and way of seeing, and we treat that range as a gift to the work rather than a problem to resolve.

We listen to understand before we respond. We assume good faith in one another, and we let a thought be fully heard before we answer it.

We tend the whole circle. We make room for quieter voices, and we notice when we ourselves have spoken often. The best of what we build will come from the voices we almost missed.

We do our best to leave our egos at the door. We come to give rather than to win, offering our voice freely and holding our ideas humbly, knowing both that we have something to contribute and that what we prefer is not always what the program most needs.

We serve the program, not our own preferences. When we must choose, we let go of what is ours in favor of what serves the work.

We meet disagreement with curiosity. When we see things differently, we treat it as a place to look more closely rather than a contest to settle. We stay in the conversation, trusting that our differences, held well, often lead us somewhere better than agreement reached too quickly.

We listen for where we are being led. We hold our work as discernment, not only decision, and we stay open to the Holy moving among us, sometimes through the very voice we least expected.

We hold one another's words as we would in spiritual direction. What a person shares here is theirs, not ours to carry elsewhere, so that this remains a place where honesty is safe.

We hold the past with grace and face forward. In building something new, the work will require us to look honestly at what has come before, and we do so to learn from it rather than to dwell in it or relitigate it. We give our energy to what we are building more than to what we are leaving.