

The First Parish in Malden, Universalist
Congregational Meeting – Adoption of New Covenant
Sunday, Jan 11 2026
Meeting Minutes

Called to order both in person and online via Zoom by Parish Moderator Alex Pratt.

Sufficient number of members present for quorum

Proposed new covenant:

As a community, we promise to: celebrate, care for, and challenge our true and imperfect selves, and show love for each other and the greater world through our words, actions, and traditions.

Kate suggests edit- 2 sentences instead of 1- easier for kids to understand

Loc suggestion- clarify if the “celebration and care” is for ourselves, community, or the world or all of the above - specify what that means for the community around us

Arthur suggestion- leave out the colon

Motion to amend with Kate’s proposal

Seconded

Carey suggestion - motion to amend with Arthur’s edits

Brian suggestion - drop greater

Loc suggestion- break this into 2 motions

1st motion to amend- grammar- passes

Further amendment- remove greater

Clem suggestion - greater world encompasses all of us and the wider world

Dave response-after board discussion, idea was that it’s an expanding circle of inclusion

Loc suggestion- keep in mind the times that we’re in, add language for commitment to mutual aid

Alexa question- where would we put it?

Loc- show love and commit to mutual aid

Gwenyth comment- in favor of locs proposal

Aisha Cruz- Make sure we stay on task - better served at the opportunities for feedback over the last year. If we are editing the covenant, vote should be tabled for further round of editing

Carey suggestion- clarify, given the grammatical correction - can we vote on accepted grammatical change?

Aisha response- if we are going to make content based edits, requires another round of feedback and tabling vote

Ellie- if we vote on amended version and it doesn't pass, it goes back to the board - motion to vote on grammatically amended covenant?

Seconded

Continue discussion?

Aisha- irrelevant- changes to content suggest need for more feedback and discussion

Arthur- is revision still possible?

Alex- yes

Aisha- if we are voting to accept, do we need significant majority?

Eric says no

Kate- can we have multiple choices? Ranked choice voting?

Eric- bylaws don't have direction so simple majority - if it's a close vote, revisit to get more consensus

Dave- board has spent a lot of time on this. Inviting significantly more conversation likely won't be fruitful

Loc- motion to vote on what we have - suggestions were based on where we're at now - it's ok if language is not perfect. Context might not be right for this kind of information

Motion to vote on grammatical changes

Motion made and seconded as grammatically amended

Arthur- question - if committee can keep working on it, then does that mean they'll keep working on it? Also we need more than simple majority- propose 3/4ths majority

Alex response- although we need a simple majority - board would like to see a large majority. Bylaws only call for simple majority. Vote would not prevent changes in the future

Motion to vote on grammatical changes

Seconded

2 nay votes in person - Motion passes by significant majority

New Covenant: *As a community, we promise to celebrate, care for, and challenge our true and imperfect selves. Together, we will show love for each other and the greater world through our words, actions, and traditions.*