

***“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.”***

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Pastor and Theologian who wrote the book, *Life Together*. It was written in the context of Bonhoeffer living in a community with fellow pastors and scholars of the Gospel.

The above quote from that very work encapsulates what we at The Lutheran Center on behalf of The Upper Room seek to do with the creation of the below covenants.

Community and life together is not so much whimsically attained; rather, it is created in love and mutual respect of each member.

We understand that this is not always easy. To gather students from all walks of life and expect them to know fully how to love and revere one another is a romantic notion.

So we created three covenants- three agreements to the rules and field of play in this Christian community that deeply seeks to understand how to build a community from love and respect.

The first, restrictive covenants, detail expectations of each individual. Think of these as your basic outline in writing or out of bounds during gameplay. For each community member to respect and love the other, all members must understand the basic requirements.

The second, covenants of presence, outline the way in which the game might be played. The Upper Room has laid out basic guidelines that will assist in fostering love for each member, their unique gifts, and their lives outside the community. These covenants are founded on the ideas of grace, restorative justice, presence, respect, and listening.

The third, covenants of aspiration, give agency to each iteration of The Upper Room. This is the underlying idea essential to the community members that hold them together. One year a community can focus on sustainability and another can focus on loving one's neighbor. Regardless of what each year brings, the covenant of aspiration will hold the community together in shared beliefs.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to abide by the terms outlined in the following lease.

1-1 I will pay \$550 a month for rent and a tuition fee of \$150 between the 1st and the 5th of each month I reside at The Lutheran Center.

1-2 I understand that to be eligible for The Upper Room I must be a full time undergraduate student.

1-3 I understand that this \$700 a month covers the cost of the weekly community meal, all utilities, access to a full kitchen, laundry facilities, and cleaning supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, dishwasher detergent, trash bags, etc...

1-4 As a security deposit, I will pay an extra month's rent at the beginning of my lease, which will be held by The Lutheran Center, to cover any potential damages I do to the property beyond normal wear and tear during my time of residency. Of which, \$100 will not be eligible for refund and will be used as a cleaning fee.

1-5 I understand that The Upper Room will be led by an on-site Resident Advisor (RA), with a 10 to 1 student to RA ratio. I know that the housing is located near the center of campus.

1-6 I understand that my lease is only for the housing term which I applied for. I understand that I will not be required to leave the housing during breaks in the academic year.

2 I understand that there are Restrictive Covenants I am agreeing to abide by, outlined below:

2-1 I am required to attend the Community Formation Retreat at the beginning of each housing term that I am a part of.

2-2 I am required to engage in "regular" Spiritual Practice, however that looks in terms of my spiritual life. This will be further explored in personal conversations between the RA and me. This does not include a requirement to attend Lutheran Center worship services.

2-3 I am required to attend the weekly community meal with my fellow residents.

2-4 I am required to attend the weekly meeting with my fellow residents, for the purpose of reviewing the covenants we establish and our intentions as a community, and as a Spiritual Practice check in.

2-5 I understand that I am not allowed to house personal pets on the premises. Certified and documented Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals will be considered on a

case-by-case basis, in accordance with the law, and by approval of The Lutheran Center Governance Council or the Campus Pastor.

2-6 I am required to complete a Suitemate Success Guide with my suitemate in the residency.

2-7 I am not allowed to possess alcohol, drugs, or weapons anywhere on the property, nor am I allowed to smoke, vape, or consume drugs in any other form. This does not include medical prescriptions or over-the-counter medications. Personal protection items such as pepper spray, tasers, and pocket knives with a blade no longer than 4 inches are allowed.

2-8 I must inform my suitemate and other community members if I plan to have a guest stay the night.

2-9 I may not engage in sex with anyone within the community.

2-10 I understand that romantic relationships between residents are strongly discouraged. Should two residents desire to enter such a relationship, it needs to be disclosed to the RA and the community as a whole. This recognizes the serious effect that such relationships can have on the whole of the community as well as allows us to support you in your relationship.

3 I understand that there are Covenants of Presence I am agreeing to abide by to create a safe place for the community living together at the Lutheran Center, outlined below:

3-1 I acknowledge that everyone is equal, everyone is unique, and I will strive to respect each individual's humanity, as well as improve on my ability to do this.

3-2 I will seek to welcome uncomfortable conversations that are necessary to the health of the community while understanding that there is a difference between an uncomfortable conversation and a harmful conversation.

3-3 I will seek to be present (body, mind, and spirit) within the community, spending intentional time building relationships with the other members of the community.

3-4 I will seek to know myself, my strengths, and my weaknesses, and be known within the community, to further the growth of myself, each individual in the community, and the community as a whole.

3-5 I will openly and honestly communicate when my needs are not being met within the community.

3-6 I will speak my own truth using “I” statements, stating my feelings and beliefs, and avoiding accusing others.

3-7 I will avoid triangulation in conflict. When I have an issue with a fellow resident I will respectfully approach them first in an attempt to solve the problem.

3-8 I will practice the ministry of listening. Not everything needs my immediate response or opinion.

3-9 I will practice confidentiality within the community and discretion within myself.

3-10 I will practice self-care, as I know the health of the individual is vastly important to the health of the community.

3-11 I will practice Christian hospitality within the community as well as the broader Lutheran Center community.

3-12 I will do my part within the inner working of the community, however the community as a whole divides that up. Also, I will be responsible for the upkeep and cleaning of both my room and my shared bathroom. (eg. cooking for each other, taking out the trash, cleaning, etc...)

3-13 I will be respectful of both my own and other’s time. I will work to stay conscious of when I am unable to fully commit to something, and care for other’s time by being honest about this.

3-14 I will engage in a supportive community that seeks not to fix, but to listen, uplift, and empower others to seek their own solutions.

3-15 I will embrace abrasive issues, and lessen my romantic notions about what this community will look like. I understand that it is not easy to live in community with others, and will welcome the challenge with grace and growth for my fellow residents.

3-16 I will be transparent with my communication with the RA and those in charge as it pertains to fiscal responsibilities.

3-17 I will limit the number of nights that I spend away from the community, and the number of nights that a guest stays with me. Bringing an overnight guest more than 6 times or spending more than 10 nights away will warrant an open conversation with the RA on my level of engagement with the community and how that affects the community as a whole.

3-18 I understand that when major issues such as family illness, death, or personal trouble arise I will extend Grace to myself. I further understand that when my fellow community members are showing signs of struggling with upholding their community obligations due to major life issues, I will show and extend Grace to them.

3-19 I understand that when a community member discloses something highly personal, as in 3-18, I have an expectation to keep their confidentiality and listen to how I can provide support for the community member in need. However, I understand that in this community, I have an obligation to report suicidal ideation with the discussion of means to the RA who will then contact the necessary authorities.

3-20 I understand and recognize that the RA is a mandatory reporter under Title IX laws. This means that the RA will have an obligation to disclose any cases of sexual harassment, assault or rape to UNL's Title IX office. With this, I further understand that there are other resources outside of UNL's Title IX office to seek comfort and assistance.

4 I understand that there are Covenants of Aspiration, which will be determined by the community. I agree to participate in the formation of these rules during the Community Formation Retreat in joint effort with other members of the community. These covenants will be covered in another document.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_