

## **First Plymouth Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged (FPWISE) Mission Statement and Covenant**

### **Mission Statement**

The First Plymouth W.I.S.E. ministry pledges to listen, share, educate, and enhance understanding concerning mental illness, brain disorders, and suicide for those affected, and their friends and families. In doing so, it strives to reduce stigma, promote inclusion, build acceptance, encourage communication, and provide support and resources for the congregation and wider community concerning issues of mental health.

### **Covenant**

In keeping with the life and teachings of Christ Jesus, we, the people of First Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Englewood, unconditionally welcome all people, including those with mental health challenges, such as brain disorders, mental illnesses, addictions, and trauma. First Plymouth Congregational Church is graced by the gifts, stories, and experiences of all our members, including those living with mental health challenges. We know these challenges can profoundly disturb our feelings, thoughts, and behavior. We care about the whole person: body, heart, mind, and soul. We affirm the deep and constant movement of God's Holy Spirit, seeking to bring us to the fullness of life.

We believe that all people are beloved by God, and if a person has a mental health challenge, that person has a right to be seen as a person first. Jesus said the greatest commandment is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus made no distinction between various members of society; he did not show any partiality. He included all people in this commandment.

We recognize that approximately 1 in 4 adults in the United States experiences mental illness in a given year. The number of family members, friends, co-workers, and neighbors touched by those facing emotional challenges is considerably higher. First Plymouth Congregational Church seeks to lift the stigma by offering welcome, inclusiveness, support, and engagement to our members and to people in the broader community who have or are impacted by emotional challenges, mental illnesses, and brain disorders.

We pledge to listen, share, educate, and enhance understanding concerning mental illnesses of all kinds, for those affected, and their friends and families. With this pledge we strive to reduce stigma, promote inclusion, build acceptance, encourage communication, and provide support and resources for the congregation and wider community concerning issues of mental health.

We, the people of First Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Englewood, Colorado, vote to be a welcoming, inclusive, supportive and engaged (WISE) congregation for mental health.