

1989

RESOLUTION: TO DECLARE OURSELVES OPEN AND AFFIRMING

WHEREAS, The Apostle Paul said that, as Christians, though we are many members, we are one body in Christ (Romans 12:5), and Jesus calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39) without being judgmental (Matthew 7:1-2) or disparaging of others (Luke 18:9-14); and

WHEREAS, Recognizing that many persons of lesbian, gay, and bisexual orientation are already members of the church through baptism and confirmation, and that these people have talents and gifts to offer the United Church of Christ, and that we have historically affirmed a rich diversity in our theological and Biblical perspectives;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 122nd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, adopt the statement from General Synod XIII, entitled "Covenant of Openness and Affirmation" (printed below); and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors be called upon to adopt the non-discrimination policy, as adapted from General Synod XIII's statement, entitled, "Inclusive Non-Discrimination Policy" (printed below); and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 122nd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ declare itself open and affirming, and direct all Conference departments to initiate appropriate programs and to develop resources to enable the spirit of openness and affirmation to flourish; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that churches and clergy be sent the materials entitled, "Open and Affirming," published by the United Church of Christ Lesbian and Gay Coalition, available through the Connecticut Conference; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon our member congregations to adopt a non-discrimination policy and a covenant of openness to and affirmation of persons of lesbian, gay, or bisexual orientation within the community of faith.

COVENANT OF OPENNESS AND AFFIRMATION

We know, with Paul, that as Christians, we are many members, but are one body in Christ - members of one another, and that we all have different gifts. With Jesus, we affirm that we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, that we are called to act as agents of reconciliation and wholeness within the world and within the church itself. We know that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are often scorned by the church, and devalued and discriminated against both in the church and in society. We commit ourselves to caring and concern for lesbian, gay, and bisexual sisters and brothers by affirming that:

- we believe that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people share with all others the worth that comes from being unique individuals;
- we welcome lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to join our congregation in the same spirit and manner used in the acceptance of any new members;
- we recognize the presence of ignorance, fear, and hatred in the church and in our culture, and covenant to not-discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, nor any other irrelevant factor, and we seek to include and support those who, because of this fear and prejudice, find themselves in exile from a spiritual community;
- we seek to address the needs and advocate the concerns of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in our church and in society by actively encouraging church instrumentalities and secular governmental bodies to adopt and implement policies of non-discrimination; and
- we join together as a covenantal community, to celebrate and share our common communion and the reassurance that we are indeed created by God, reconciled by Christ and empowered by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

INCLUSIVE NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

We do not discriminate against any qualified person, group or organization in hiring, promotion, membership, appointment, use of facility, provision of services or funding on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, or physical disability, including blindness, mental retardation, or present or past history of mental disorder.