

RESOLUTION: IN SUPPORT OF THE CIVIL RIGHT OF MARRIAGE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

WHEREAS Jesus, throughout his short ministry, emphasized God's compassion for and inclusion of all humanity (Matt. 20:30-34, Luke 17:11-19 and Gal. 3: 28); and

WHEREAS Jesus overturned purity laws which maintained cultural walls between Jews and others around them (Matt. 22:34-40 and 12:9-14); and

WHEREAS one purity law in Leviticus is often cited in opposition to same-sex relationships (Lev. 20:13) while other acts equally condemned are ignored, such as eating creatures of the water that do not have fins and scales or wearing clothes made of two blended fabrics (Lev. 11:9-12; 19:19); and

WHEREAS we understand many of Jesus' teachings require the church and society to welcome people whom others shun; and

WHEREAS legal marriage, which strengthens the union of committed couples by adding to their economic, emotional and social stability, is a civil right currently denied to same-sex couples; and

WHEREAS a partial precedent has been set by individual congregations within many religious communities (American Baptists, Buddhists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Reform Jews, the Society of Friends, Unitarian Universalists, and the United Church of Christ) which already allow "holy unions" or "commitment services" of same-sex couples even though Connecticut law has yet to recognize such unions; and

WHEREAS the principle of separation of church and state assures that no law passed by the Legislature would require a particular religion or a particular congregation to perform marriages for same-sex couples;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to this 137th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, declare that the denial of the civil right of marriage of same-sex couples is an unwarranted act of exclusion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we ask our Conference staff and church leaders to urge our congregations to prayerfully study or continue their study and discussion of this issue and to act upon their conclusions as each congregation and/or member feels led by the Spirit so to do; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our Connecticut Conference Staff and Public Policy Advocate be instructed to communicate to members of the State legislature that the delegates of the 137th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference declare that the denial of the civil right of marriage of same-sex couples is an unwarranted act of exclusion.