

RESOLUTION TO BE AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONFERENCE

Adopted by 2002 Annual Meeting
of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ

WHEREAS Jesus Christ teaches us to love one another (John 15:7), and;
WHEREAS the Apostle Paul teaches us to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), and;
WHEREAS Christians can and do legitimately disagree about what constitutes truth and
how best to express love, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, declare that the Conference setting is open, welcoming and affirming of all persons in all aspects of its administrative, program and worship life. We covenant with God and one another to extend welcome and Christian fellowship to all followers and seekers of Christ without fear, prejudice or discrimination due to race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, physical, mental or emotional condition, educational, financial situation, biblical or theological interpretation, or any other circumstance that has historically been a barrier to full life, participation, membership, mission, work and ministry in the Vermont Conference setting of the United Church of Christ. We embrace them as sisters and brothers and equal partners in the Body of Christ with unlimited access to every opportunity of service to God, and;

BE IT RESOLVED that we of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ will continue a committed, prayerful and respectful dialogue with one another as we seek God's guidance for greater biblical and theological understanding of important issues, including those relating to human sexuality, and;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ encourages its member churches to begin or continue study and conversation about human sexuality (including perspectives on all sides of this matter) and other aspects that concern us, and in light of that study, to prayerfully consider adopting a statement of openness, welcome and affirmation similar to that of the Conference, and finally;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ reaches this decision not because of what its members individually and separately are, but rather because of what its members in covenant, Conference and community with one another struggle to be: a Body of Christ "in which there is no dissention, but where members may have the same care for one another, so that if one member suffers, all suffer together with it, and if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)