

AFFIRMATION: EQUAL CIVIL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAME-SEX
COUPLES

WHEREAS, over the last three decades delegates to annual meetings of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ have established a biblical/theological rationale to address justice issues related to all people, regardless of sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970's we resolved to work for legislation at state and federal levels to guarantee civil liberties for all persons, calling on churches and associations to initiate discussion and study of issues pertaining to homosexuals; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980's we resolved to encourage legislation ensuring equal standing before the law for lesbian, gay and bisexual persons and declared our Conference to be Open and Affirming; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990's we resolved to urge churches in the conference to support legislation which affirms gay, lesbian, bisexual persons; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2002 we resolved that discrimination against any persons based on sexual orientation is contrary to our understanding of the teachings of Christ; and

WHEREAS, all of the aforementioned resolutions originated in our denomination's historic commitment to empower the marginalized and liberate the oppressed; and

WHEREAS, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons still do not enjoy equal civil rights and have a long way to go to gain full equality;

THEREFORE BE IT AFFIRMED that we, the delegates to the 136th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, are called to step forward in this new decade to reaffirm our support of equal civil rights and responsibilities for same-sex couples in fully committed, faithful relationships;

BE IT FURTHER AFFIRMED that we commit ourselves to work toward expanding the rights and responsibilities of same-sex couples by actively encouraging churches and governmental agencies to ensure equal liberty and justice for all;

BE IT FURTHER AFFIRMED that we the delegates to the 136th annual meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ recommit ourselves to address the inequalities that still exist and to further the cause of justice for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals and couples in our generation.

BE IT FURTHER AFFIRMED, that this affirmation is an affirmation of delegates attending the 2003 Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, that the vote represents the position of the Connecticut Conference, that the vote at the Annual meeting is not binding on churches within the Connecticut Conference, and that churches within the Connecticut Conference are free to follow the affirmation, reject the affirmation, or to take no position on the affirmation.