

Title: **A Resolution calling upon the Annual Meeting of the Fox Island United Church of Christ to adopt a policy of Open and Affirming.**

Submitted: May 20, 2012

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ teaches us to love one another (John 15:12) and calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31) without being judgmental (Matthew 7:1-2) nor disparaging of others (Luke 18:9-14); and

WHEREAS, we recognize that many persons who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender are already members of a church through baptism and confirmation and have talents and gifts to offer the church, and that the United Church of Christ has historically affirmed a rich diversity in its theological and biblical perspectives; and

WHEREAS, the XV General Synod of the United Church of Christ (1985) encouraged the congregations of the UCC to adopt a non-discrimination policy and a Covenant of Openness and Affirmation of persons of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender orientation within the community of faith; and

WHEREAS, the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ (2011) adopted a policy of Open and Affirming and encouraged its member churches to engage in study and conversation about human sexuality and to prayerfully consider adopting an Open and Affirming Statement similar to that of the Conference; and

WHEREAS, 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 in regard to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age, ethnicity, nationality, physical, mental or emotional condition, education, 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 United Church of Christ. We embrace all persons as equal partners in the Body of Christ with unlimited access to opportunity of service to God and to all sacraments of our Church.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Annual Meeting of the Fox Island United Church of Christ, in all aspects of its administrative, program and worship life, declare the Fox Island United Church of Christ to be Open and Affirming (ONA) of all persons, including, but not limited to, those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the Annual Meeting of the Fox Island United Church of Christ, encourage its members to 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 rights, human sexuality, gender identity, and gender expression.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the Annual Meeting of the Fox Island United Church of Christ, reach this decision because we "affirm the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God." (Paragraph 2, Preamble, UCC Constitution.)