

**OPEN AND AFFIRMING RESOLUTION
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY CHURCH COUNCIL
ON APRIL 27, 1993 FOR PRESENTATION TO
MEMBERS AT SPECIAL MEETING ON MAY 16, 1993**

We are a diverse group of people. We are persons of different ages, education, races, abilities, sexual orientations, theological and political beliefs, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. We celebrate and find strength in that diversity, and view it as a way to understand the inclusiveness of God.

We believe that although we are many members, we are one body in Christ (Romans 12:4). As a part of that body, we are called to love one another, to do justice, to bring release to the oppressed, and to walk humbly with our God. Responding to that call, a goal of our ministry is to heal the brokenness we experience in ourselves and in our relationships with each other and with God.

We believe that we are made in God's image, and that we are called to accept ourselves and our sexuality. Our sexuality is a gift of God; it is one of the channels through which we experience life.

As a community of committed Christian people, we seek to end the continuing injustice of institutional discrimination, instances of violence, and setbacks in civil rights protection of gays and lesbians.

As a congregation, as individuals, we lift up the following as evidence of our openness and affirmation:

1. We celebrate the image of God in every person, we celebrate the sacred value in every life, and we affirm all relationships of support that are founded on the principles of love and justice.
2. We affirm that gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons are welcome within the Plymouth community upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other members make. We encourage the gays, the lesbians, the bisexuals, and their loved ones, who are already loyal and active members and friends of Plymouth Church and the United Church of Christ, to share their talents, gifts, and energy in the liturgy, life, employment, and leadership of the congregation.
3. We pledge ourselves to support and honor committed partnerships of lesbian or gay people, recognizing the difficulty of maintaining such partnerships in the absence of the social validation, role models, and legal frameworks that support heterosexual unions.

4. We condemn acts of discrimination and violence (physical, emotional, economic, or legal) against persons because of their sexual orientation, just as we condemn such acts against people because of race, age, gender, religion, ethnic background, or physical or mental disabilities or limitations. We encourage our members and friends to support advocacy efforts designed to assure that homosexual persons enjoy the same rights and privileges as heterosexual persons.

Therefore, we, Plymouth Church/United Church of Christ, declare ourselves to be an open and affirming church.