

## **OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA)**

In 1985 the General Synod of the United Church of Christ approved a resolution calling on all settings of the church to declare themselves "open and affirming" by adopting "a non-discrimination policy and a Covenant of Openness and Affirmation of persons of lesbian, gay and bisexual orientation within the community of faith."

After a year of study and discussion, Lyonsville Church adopted the following statement at a Congregational meeting:

Open and Affirming Statement  
For Lyonsville Congregational U.C.C.  
(Adopted at a Congregational Meeting on Oct. 27, 2005)

As an expression of our vision to be "A home for the spiritual journey," and in an effort to live out our historic mission that includes living the Gospel of Jesus Christ, sheltering travelers and refugees, and being a place of healing, Lyonsville Congregational United Church of Christ declares itself to be a congregation that welcomes into membership, ministry and leadership persons of every race, age, mental and physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status. We believe that ALL persons are included in God's extravagant welcome made known through the grace of Jesus Christ, and all are called to repentance, conforming their lives more fully to the will of God made known in Christ. We invite ALL persons to join us in worship, celebrating the Sacraments, accompanying one another on the spiritual journey, sharing our gifts, and working together to fulfill the mission of Lyonsville church. We pray for the leading and encouragement of God's Holy Spirit in faithfully living out this welcome in our congregational life.

We are reminded in Galatians 3:26, "for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith..." and in John 15:12 we read, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

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Lyonsville has been officially recognized as an ONA congregation of the United Church of Christ. As of November, 2008, about 14% of U.C.C. congregations have declared themselves to be open and affirming.

To learn more about the ONA program, visit the web site of the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns at <http://www.ucccoalition.org/programs/ona/>