

Open and Affirming Statement

**First Congregational-Christian Church,
United Church of Christ, of New Gloucester, Maine**

(Prepared by the Open and Affirming Task Group commissioned by the congregation at its Annual Meeting in January, 2008, with input from church members, boards and committees of the church and the Church Council, in consultation with some of the Maine UCC churches which have already declared themselves to be Open and Affirming, the statement below was approved by the congregation at its Annual Meeting, January 31, 2010).

Inspired by the example and teachings of Jesus Christ and encouraged by the witness of our brothers and sisters in the United Church of Christ, we, the First Congregational-Christian Church, United Church of Christ, of New Gloucester, declare publicly that we are an Open and Affirming Church, a community of faith which seeks justice, honors love, and builds understanding among all people.

This congregation, when gathered in 1765, covenanted to be “a people whom ye Lord hath bound up together in a bundle of Life.” In this same spirit, we welcome into the full life and ministry of this community of faith, its membership and leadership, all who seek to walk together as one body in Christ, including people of every race, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, ethnicity and differing physical, mental and emotional abilities.

We intend, in all our life together, to respect one another and to affirm relationships based on mutual love, responsibility, loyalty and trust. To this end, we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to open our minds, our hearts and our community.