

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH WEST

SAME SEX MARRIAGE STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE

INTRODUCTION We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church West affirm that civil marriage is a civil right. Same-sex couples choose partners with whom to build a life, create a home, and offer their mutual support in good times and bad in the same manner and for the same reasons as heterosexual couples. We believe that civil marriage with its multitude of legal rights, responsibilities, privileges and protections affirms and promotes a more just, equitable, healthy society and should be provided to all couples.

FOUNDATION As a congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Unitarian Universalist Church West has covenanted to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person according to the first principle of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. We are called as a congregation to engage actively in the fulfillment of this principle.

HISTORY One of the ways we do this is by working for the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) persons. Since 2002 we have been engaged in the process of becoming a Welcoming Congregation – a congregation which is open and affirming of GLBT persons. This designation is held by more than 400 Unitarian Universalist congregations, and is a way to actively support GLBT persons who are so often excluded from communities of faith. The UUA has been an advocate for GLBT rights since the 1970s.

THE ISSUE The voices of exclusion, of persecution, and of intolerance are growing louder in the United States, and in Wisconsin. The current public debate centers on whether same-sex couples should be allowed the legal rights, privileges and responsibilities of civil marriage. We believe that discrimination in marriage, in the workplace, in housing or in education, should not be tolerated or sanctioned by law. We demand legislation that ensures equal rights for GLBT persons. The question at issue is not the right of gay and lesbian couples to demand religious sanction of their union, it is whether all citizens shall have the same legal protections, financial benefits, and social status that comes with the registering of a civil marriage.

ACTION Therefore, we resolve, as the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church West of Brookfield, Wisconsin, to take action to achieve full civil rights for GLBT persons. We do this as a congregation and as individuals. We will actively oppose constitutional, legislative or other efforts to limit the legal rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. We call upon our leadership, both clergy and lay, to take action. We pledge ourselves to support these actions, and we pledge to undertake our own.