



October 11, 2008

The Conference Council of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ strongly opposes Proposition 8.

We are committed to strengthening families and acting in righteousness. We received with joy the word of the California State Supreme Court ruling that “our state now recognizes that an individual’s capacity to establish a loving and long-term committed relationship with another person and responsibly to care for and raise children does not depend upon the individual’s sexual orientation, and, more generally, that an individual’s sexual orientation - like a person’s race or gender - does not constitute a legitimate basis upon which to deny or withhold legal rights.”

In 1972 the Golden Gate Association of our Conference was the first body of a mainline denomination to ordain an openly gay man. We see the Court’s decision as an affirmation of the Biblical truth we hold so dear—that ALL people are created in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:27)

Two Annual Meetings of the Conference have supported marriage equality. In 2005, the Conference was one of the sponsors of the resolution to General Synod *In Support of Equal Marriage Rights for All*. The resolution “urges the congregations and individuals of the United Church of Christ to prayerfully consider and support local, state, and national legislation to grant equal marriage rights to couples regardless of gender.”

This year the Annual Meeting voted to affirm the May 15th, 2008 action of the California Supreme Court recognizing the right of all Californians to marry.

We believe that the Bible affirms and celebrates human expressions of love and partnership, calling us to live out fully that gift of God in responsible, faithful, committed relationships that recognize and respect the image of God in all people. We recognize in the life and example of Jesus of Nazareth a model of radically inclusive love and abundant welcome for all. We proclaim ourselves to be listening to the voice of a Still Speaking God and believe that at all times in human history there is always yet more light and truth to break forth from God’s holy word.

We celebrate that many UCC pastors and congregations have held commitment services for gay and lesbian couples for some time, consistent with the call to loving, long-term committed relationships and to nurture family life.

We join with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirming equal marriage rights for couples regardless of gender and in declaring that the government should not interfere with couples regardless of gender who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities and commitment of legally recognized marriage.

We encourage all Californians to vote against Proposition 8.