

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**ACTIVELY AFFIRMING THE HUMAN DIGNITY
OF TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY PERSONS**

A Resolution of Witness

1 **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

2
3 **WHEREAS** the United Church of Christ has staked its claim to be an open and affirming
4 denomination¹ and has worked hard to maintain a radical welcome to the LGBTQ+ community
5 in many of our churches²; and

6
7 **WHEREAS** the human dignity and human rights of transgender and non-binary people are
8 being threatened in at least 30 states through legislation that denies access to life-saving health
9 care, participation in sports, and utilization of gender appropriate bathrooms³; and

10
11 **WHEREAS** gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition that, if left untreated, can result in
12 severe anxiety and depression, self-harm, and suicidality⁴; and

13
14 **WHEREAS** when appropriately treated, gender dysphoria is easily managed by following
15 appropriate treatment protocols to affirm their gender identity and alleviate distress⁵; and

16
17 **WHEREAS** compassionate parents and medical teams are, in some states, being legally
18 punished for offering, providing, and extending life-saving healthcare to trans and nonbinary
19 youth and adults⁶; and

20
21 **WHEREAS** decisions about gender-affirming medical care must be made between a provider,
22 patient, and the patient's parents or guardians⁷; and

23
24 **WHEREAS** trans and nonbinary youth and adults face a higher rate of death by suicide than
25 their peers and are more vulnerable to violence and death, specifically and disproportionately
26 transgender women of color⁸; and

27
28 **WHEREAS** a Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) survey shows that more
29 than 80% of "gender expansive" students have been harassed and a third feel unsafe in
30 classrooms⁹; and

31
32 **WHEREAS** research shows that it can be extremely harmful for a transgender person to be
33 excluded from a sports team consistent with their gender identity;¹⁰ and

34
35 **WHEREAS** in a country where transgender people have no federal protections while they face
36 massive discrimination and attacks, civil rights must be spelled out and protected¹¹; and

37

38 **WHEREAS** public discourse perpetuating the myth of the gender binary causes great harm
39 when used as the rationale for discrimination and punitive legislation;¹² and
40

41 **WHEREAS** efforts of allies sometimes fail to provide the support intended for our transgender
42 and non-binary siblings, including UCC Open and Affirming congregations¹³;
43

44 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church
45 of Christ reaffirms the historic commitment of this church to recognize and affirm that every
46 human being is created in the image of God and is due respect for their inherent human dignity
47 and rights so that they may not only survive but thrive; and
48

49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of
50 Christ reaffirms and proclaims people of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse experiences
51 are beloved by God, with unique gifts and graces from the Divine for the life of the church and
52 society, and are among the neighbors Jesus commands us to love and treat with worth and
53 dignity; and
54

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of
56 Christ encourages all settings of the church, working with local partners, to advocate for the full
57 legal equality of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons; and
58

59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of
60 Christ encourages all settings of the church to amplify the affirming voices of our sacred texts to
61 stand in solidarity with transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse persons against harm done,
62 often through the use of religious language; and
63

64 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of
65 Christ encourages all settings of the church to organize to provide aid, comfort, and sanctuary to
66 all who have been made refugees by hostile legislation; and
67

68 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of
69 Christ calls on the leadership and other appropriate ministries of the United Church of Christ to
70 create and share resources to help congregations, communities, policy-makers and activists to
71 develop gender-affirming practices in all aspects of the United Church of Christ and its
72 communities of context.
73

74 **FUNDING:** The funding the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with
75 the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.
76

77 **IMPLEMENTATION:** The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries
78 or other entities with the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

¹ United Church of Christ. *Resolution: Calling on United Church of Christ Congregations to Declare themselves Open and Affirming*, adopted by the Fifteenth General Synod, United Church of Christ, Ames, Iowa, June 28-July 2, 1985.

² United Church of Christ. *Resolution: Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People Within the United Church of Christ and Supporting Their Civil and Human Rights*, adopted by the Twenty-Fourth General Synod, United Church of Christ, Minneapolis, MN, July 11-15, 2003.

³United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>.

⁴ ACLU. *Hecox V Little – Adkins Declaration*, p. 5 <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/hecox-v-little-adkins-declaration>.

⁵ ACLU. *Hecox V Little – Adkins Declaration*, p. 6, <https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/hecox-v-little-adkins-declaration>.

⁶ American College of Physicians. *Attacks on Gender-Affirming and Transgender Health Care*, November 11, 2022, <https://www.acponline.org/advocacy/state-health-policy/attacks-on-gender-affirming-and-transgender-health-care>, and:

ACLU. *Four Myths About Trans Athletes, Debunked*, <https://www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked>.

⁷ United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>.

⁸ HRC. *Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community in 2021*, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in-2021>, and

HRC. *Human Rights Campaign Foundation Marks Ten Years of Tracking Violence Against Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People, Recording 32 Fatalities in 2022*, <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/human-rights-campaign-foundation-marks-ten-years-of-tracking-violence-against-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-people-recording-32-fatalities-in-2022>, and;

The Trevor Project, *Facts About LGBTQ Youth Suicide*, <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/article/facts-about-lgbtq-youth-suicide/>.

⁹ Movement Advancement Project and GLSEN. *Separation and Stigma: Transgender Youth & School Facilities*, April 2017. <http://lgbtmap.org/transgender-youth-school>.

¹⁰ ACLU. *Four Myths About Trans Athletes, Debunked*, <https://www.aclu.org/news/lgbtq-rights/four-myths-about-trans-athletes-debunked>

¹¹ United Church of Christ Transgender/Nonbinary Strategy Team. *Transgender and Nonbinary Dignity and Rights Under Attack: Talking Points for Faith Leaders*, p. 3. <https://www.ucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Transgender-Talking-Points-for-Faith-Leaders.pdf>

¹² Intomore. *Anti-LGBTQ Activist Admits Bathroom Predator Myth Was ‘Concocted’ As Cover for Transphobic Hate*, Dawn Ennis, Intomore.com, Dec. 4, 2018

¹³ PFLAG. *Guide to Being a Trans Ally*, <https://openandaffirming.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/PFLAG-Guide-to-Being-a-Trans-Ally.pdf>, and;

HRC. *What Does the Bible Say About Transgender People*, Austen Hartke, Myles Markham, produced by the HRC Foundation, <https://www.hrc.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-transgender-people>