



**CHRIST  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH**

**UNITED CHURCH OF  
CHRIST**

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## Christ Congregational Church Adopts Resolution Supporting Marriage Equality for Same-Gender Couples

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SILVER SPRING, Md.— Christ Congregational Church, a United Church of Christ congregation, voted unanimously today in favor of a resolution that calls for equal marriage rights for same-gender couples on the state and federal levels. (Resolution wording attached.) The congregational vote comes less than two weeks after bills to bring marriage equality to Maryland were introduced in the state Senate and House of Delegates. The congregational vote was unanimous, though one congregant who could not be present sent a letter of objection.

“This is a great day for a church with a history of progressive activism. We look forward to being in Annapolis and helping move marriage equality forward,” said Rev. Richard Thayer, sustaining interim minister.

Christ Congregational Church, the largest United Church of Christ congregation in Maryland, has been thoughtfully and prayerfully considering the issue of marriage equality for the past six months. Since 1995, CCC has been an “open and affirming” congregation, meaning the church welcomes lesbian, gay and bisexual people into the full life of the church, including ministry. In 2003, CCC added support for transgendered individuals to its open-and-affirming covenant.

Said Kathleen Boucher, co-chair of the Open and Affirming (LGBT) work group: “To me, it is so meaningful to have a faith community recognize that marriage equality is a social justice issue and to take a stand, publicly, to support marriage equality and to speak publicly about their belief, this faith community’s belief that there’s no difference between the loving commitment of same-gender couples and the love and commitment of straight couples. It’s so important for faith communities to speak up, and I’m so grateful for the support from CCC and its vote today on this resolution and its willingness to stand up and be counted on this issue.”

CCC’s engagement in marriage equality efforts will not end with adoption of the resolution. Members of CCC are working with Equality Maryland and other people of faith to encourage Maryland legislators to act on this important justice issue.

Said Chuck Mason, a member of CCC since 1968: “For me, this is a deeply spiritual issue, and I’m proud to be a part of a church that has responded to the spirit of Christ in the way it has. And my hope is that other churches that haven’t looked at this will do so and will follow the leading of the spirit.”

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CCC has a long history of engagement with social issues. Founded in 1944, CCC became Montgomery County's first racially integrated church in 1957. The congregation has been involved in efforts to increase affordable housing, create opportunities for disadvantaged youth and families, help the homeless and assist refugees.

"In 2011, Christ Congregational Church has again lived into our vision as a church... that values, takes action and speaks out for the rights of all people," said Cyndy Wright-Johnson, church moderator. "After an intentional six months of exploring the issues, educating one another ... together we determined and voted for a resolution to support marriage equality in our church, in our state and in our nation. ... The excitement and the celebration of this public statement could be felt throughout the congregation."

*At Christ Congregational Church, we honor and celebrate people of all races, cultures, ages, abilities, sexual orientations and gender identity.*

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