

*Full statement by Rev. Rev. Amy Beltaine, President of CUUPS*



I am a Unitarian Universalist minister and I applaud the action of the UCC and UU Ministers in North Carolina. My religious tradition teaches me to confront powers and structures of injustice with compassion and the transforming power of love, and to love all of my neighbors. My faith tells me that all acts of love are sacred. Denying loving committed couples the opportunity to marry the person they love and form a family is harmful. On a personal note, during my recent cancer treatment it made all the difference that my (same sex) spouse was recognized as my spouse here in Oregon. Marriage says "we are family" in a way no other word does. Marriage strengthens families. It gives the tools and security to build a life together and protect the people we love – marriage is a key building block for strong communities. As a Unitarian Universalist, I am called to affirm and promote all loving, stable families. I believe marriage is about loving couples who want to make a commitment to each other, to be committed to working together to create a shared life that will benefit and bless their families, neighborhoods, communities, and faith communities.

Faith communities should have the freedom to choose who they will marry. I am looking forward to having the freedom to marry same-sex couples. Allowing the freedom to marry for all Americans will give our congregations the freedom to live our beliefs by solemnizing marriages for all couples who love each other and want to take on the responsibilities and commitment of marriage. I was born in North Carolina and would hope that when I am there my freedom to solemnize marriages is not penalized.

Unitarian Universalists have long affirmed the freedom to marry. On June 29, 1984, the Unitarian Universalists became the first major church "to approve religious blessings on homosexual unions." Our Standing on the Side of Love campaign states: "The covenant of marriage is a sacred trust between two individuals. Any couple able to forge that bond deserves the legal benefits of marriage as well as the ability to express that sacred trust freely and equally in our society." The president of the UU Association, Rev. Peter Morales states: "As we know, marriage equality strengthens families, protects children, and ensures the basic rights of citizenship for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender couples. It remains my fervent hope that soon marriage equality is afforded to all in this country. Unitarian Universalists will continue to stand on the side of love with all families..." And our general assembly affirmed, in 1996 that: "...while the Unitarian Universalist Association has adopted numerous resolutions over the last twenty-six years supporting equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons, including support of Ceremonies of Union between members of the same sex; and WHEREAS the Unitarian Universalist Association Board of Trustees and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association have voted their support for the right to marry for same-sex couples; THEREFORE be it resolved that the 1996 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adopts a position in support of legal recognition for marriage between members of the same sex."