

**PREVENTION OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL,
AND TRANSGENDER YOUTH SUICIDE**

[Adopted by the Twenty-second General Synod on July 6, 1999]

WHEREAS, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ has declared itself supportive of youth in the United Church of Christ;

WHEREAS, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ has called upon settings of the church to declare themselves Open and Affirming of gay and lesbian persons; and

WHEREAS, ignorance of, and silence about, youth suicide in general and in particular of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth is present in the United Church of Christ and churches of all denominations and in society in general;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the Twenty-second General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, July 1-6, 1999, pledge to take actions that will increase awareness of and seriously address youth suicide and the link between youth suicide and sexual or gender identity, by encouraging open discussion of these issues in our families, churches, youth groups, associations, conferences and camps;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries (or its successor body) be requested to conduct a research study analyzing the role of religion in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth suicides and develop resources and educational materials concerning these issues and distribute them for use by local churches, associations, conferences and other settings of the United Church of Christ;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ministries and various settings of the United Church of Christ be strongly encouraged to identify and use, as soon as possible, existing

educational materials directed to youth, clergy, parents and laity, which will assist them in understanding:

- 1) youth suicide;
- 2) sexual orientation and gender identity; and
- 3) how the above two issues relate;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ministries of the United Church of Christ in all its settings raise these issues ecumenically, particularly with, but not limited to, our partner churches, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Presbyterian Church (USA), The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Reformed Church in America, and in local interfaith networks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ, in all its settings, reflect on what leads youth to a loss of hope and faith;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ministries and various settings of the United Church of Christ work to make the existence of open and affirming churches known to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youths; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ in all its settings raise these issues with civil authorities, in their community and legislative settings, and with schools and families; and that the Office for Church in Society (or its successor body) facilitate these efforts and advocate in a similar fashion, to ensure that issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth suicide are adequately addressed in society at large.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.