

Newman Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Statement of Openness and Affirmation *

We, the members of Newman Congregational Church, first gathered in 1643, welcome all who seek to worship with us. We declare that our congregation is open to all who wish to share God's light and we embrace all who proclaim God's love, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, status, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity. We welcome all people, in families, or as partners, couples or single persons, and pray that together we will work toward justice and peace throughout our community, our country and our world.

We especially declare our openness to and affirmation of all who have been diminished by prejudice, bigotry and oppression. We marvel at the many children of God and their varied talents. Yet we acknowledge that the world's views have often prevailed and that these same brothers and sisters in Christ have at times been neglected or met with silence. We resolve that this Church shall continue to seek ways to affirm and include all people as equal brothers and sisters.

Our mission work is an important part of our worship; we deeply care for those in our community and for all God's children worldwide. Blessed by the bountiful care of God and by the support and love of one another, this Church seeks to affirm all members of our fellowship and all who live in the greater community.

We invite all to worship with us in a caring and open environment. We are an open and affirming congregation. Resting in the guidance and inspiration of Scripture and believing that there are many interpretations of the Word, we acknowledge that God encompasses, yet surpasses, the written word, and we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our continuing quest to be open and appreciative of all of our many differences. We appreciate deeply the opportunity to affirm God's love with every person who desires to be a part of our congregation.

Voted September 28, 2008

** Many thanks to our friends at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Plymouth, New Hampshire, from whom we have borrowed ideas and phrases.*