

Resolution Reaffirming Our Commitment to Inclusion
The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor
December 11, 2016
(Approved at a Special Congregational Meeting on December 11, 2016)

WHEREAS recently our community has been buffeted by ethnic and religious bigotry in the forms of violent physical and verbal assaults on individuals and groups.

WHEREAS The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor was founded in 1847 as a protest by its members against the institution and practice of slavery. As noted in our Church's earliest written history: "The founders were men and women...devoted to the principle of human brotherhood, believing that all [people] are of equal worth in the sight of God and that each one is entitled to the full and free expression of their thoughts and feelings."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the current members of the First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor, reaffirm this commitment to the value and dignity of each human being and to the protection of the civil rights and liberties of all persons regardless of religion, race or ethnicity, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, or economic condition. We welcome all people to our sanctuary. We believe God loves and embraces all people.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we speak out against hate-speech, physical attacks, and threats aimed at individuals or groups. We work to make our communities free of hatred and intimidation. We welcome everyone of good will to join us in that effort and to embrace the task of reconciliation among all people.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the First Congregational Church embrace the values expounded by our current minister, Dr. Robert Livingston: "The central message of the New Testament of the Bible, I believe, is a message of acceptance and abundance and love and inclusion. I am convinced more than ever before that the Church, and in particular this church, is called to be such a radical and accepting community in our nation and world today. We are called to be a body of believers who take very seriously God's call upon our lives to live out and incarnate the good news of God's limitless love and welcome for all people – no matter what one's race, creed, sexual orientation, age, gender, marital status, economic circumstance, or political point of view."

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we affirm our Church's historic commitment to basic human rights and to the freedom and value of all persons which remains this Church's guiding principle. It is the backbone of our congregation. "Whatever your story, you're welcome here."