

Contact: Linda Sonnonstine
Public Relations Consultant
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry California (UULM-CA)
(562) 435-5727 or linda@sonnpr.com (Long Beach)

John Hurley
Director of Information and Public Witness
Unitarian Universalist Association
(617) 948-6131 or Jhurley@uua.org (Boston)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 2005

CALIFORNIA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS TO LAUNCH "STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE" YEAR-LONG CAMPAIGN IN 2005 IN SUPPORT OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN THE GOLDEN STATE

SACRAMENTO--Unitarian Universalist congregations throughout California are uniting in 2005 to show statewide support for marriage equality as the issue takes center stage in the Golden State.

The campaign, "Standing on the Side of Love," will kick off on Valentine's Day weekend with special worship services in honor of all couples, including same-sex partners. The events will take place on Sunday, February 13 in many of California's Unitarian Universalist congregations. The special services throughout the state will feature a newly commissioned hymn, "Standing on the Side of Love" by Nashville composer and Unitarian Universalist minister Jason Shelton.

The year-long "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign is being organized by the Sacramento-based UU Legislative Ministry of California (UULM-CA) and the Boston-based Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

According to UULM-CA's Executive Director, Rev. Lindi Ramsden, UULM-CA (www.uulmca.org) is a statewide justice ministry that serves to empower the moral voice of Unitarian Universalist values in the public arena. Unitarian Universalism is a liberal, creedless religion with Judeo-Christian roots; it traces its history in North America to the first Pilgrim and Puritan settlers and has numbered among its members five U.S. presidents. More than 1,000 congregations in North America belong to the Unitarian Universalist Association (www.uua.org).

Unitarian Universalists have been active from coast to coast in support of marriage equality. In October 2004, two California ministers participated in the National Marriage Equality Express, an interfaith cross-country bus caravan that started in California and ended in Washington, D.C. with stops in 10 cities along the way. Unitarian Universalist congregants and clergy were also at the forefront of the public discussion of marriage equality in Massachusetts. Four of the seven plaintiff couples in the historic Massachusetts court decision were legally married in ceremonies officiated by Unitarian Universalist ministers on May 17, 2004.

UUA president, the Rev. William G. Sinkford, is a recognized nationwide leader among clergy in advocacy of marriage equality.

-more-

"Unitarian Universalists will continue to do all we can to work for marriage equality. Standing on the side of love, our ministers will preach for equality, our congregations will mobilize for equality, and our Association will voice support for marriage equality in the public arena. For Unitarian Universalists, this is a matter of justice. And in the long run, I know justice will prevail," Rev. Sinkford said.

For more information about the California Unitarian Universalists' "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign and events, interested persons can contact Rev. Ramsden at lramsdn@uulmca.org or (916) 441-0018 or log onto www.uulmca.org. For more information about the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Association's support of marriage equality nationwide, go to www.uua.org or contact John Hurley at Jhurley@uua.org or (617) 948-6131.

###