

May 15, 2008: A Red Letter Day as State Supreme Court Affirms Freedom to Marry for Same Sex Couples

Prayers of thanksgiving and praise will be offered in houses of worship across California in gratitude for today's watershed state Supreme Court ruling allowing same-sex couples to get legally married. While no clergy person, nor faith organization, will ever be forced to marry a couple that does not fit their religious requirements, today's ruling means that no longer will faith communities who do offer the religious rites of marriage to same-sex couples be required to treat them differently.

Over 400 religious organizations, congregations and clergy from a wide range of faith traditions, signed the Interfaith Amicus Brief in support of the Marriage Case before the CA Supreme Court, voicing their deeply held commitment to end the prohibition against marriage for same sex couples. The Unitarian Universalist Association, the Union for Reform Judaism, the United Church of Christ, Soka Gakkai International-USA (Buddhist), and the Metropolitan Community Church are among the signatories that demonstrated their support for human dignity and religious freedom.

The Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, whose organization sponsored the Interfaith Brief, stated "Today's court's decision answers the prayers of people from many faiths. How beautiful that the commitment and courage of California's same-sex couples can finally be recognized and protected, and that all Californians will now be able to marry the person they love. Today the court affirmed that the religious views of some cannot be used to restrict the rights of those with differing religious beliefs."

Kerry Chaplin, Interfaith Organizing Director with CA Faith for Equality, a key collaborator in creating the interfaith brief stated "As a person of faith, I believe that today's ruling reinforces what many of us were taught as children – to love and treat our neighbors like we want to be treated."

For information about what people of faith can do to support freedom to marry, and for contacts with same-sex couples who have been married in our congregations, straight allies, and supportive clergy, please contact the UU Legislative Ministry www.uulmca.org - Vivien Hao, director of communications at UULM-CA (626) 818-2900, or California Faith for Equality www.californiafaithforequality.org.