

How to work for justice for gay, lesbian, transgender, bi-sexual and same gender loving people in your church! Rev. Dr. Fran Bogle

Become an Open and Affirming (ONA) church! Make a public statement saying that you welcome lesbian, gay, and bi-sexual and transgender (GLBT) people into the full life and leadership of your church. The process takes most churches between one between three years. A resource manual is available by contacting the ONA Task Force at the Massachusetts Conference. If you belong are not UCC look similar programs for your denomination.

Display your ONA statement prominently. Put ONA your sign and in your advertising. People need to know they will be safe before they come into your church.

All of these may be used by both ONA churches those who are not but wish to be supportive.

1. Invite LGBT friends to worship and a special event at your church.
2. Make sure your churches boards and committees reflect your commitments to justice and include LGBT members.
3. Write a regular article for your newsletter discussing the activities of the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Bi-sexual Concerns. Include events happening around the Mass. Conference
4. Advertise your church on the web. List it with the wider UCC as an ONA or especially welcoming congregation.
5. Get involved! Attend LGBT events and bring some of that energy back to your church! March in the Gay Pride Parade with a banner from your church. (Many cities and towns sponsor these events)
6. Welcome gay marriage and commitment ceremonies. Advertise your churches availability in local papers and papers with a special outreach to the LGBT community.
7. Celebrate Pride Sunday with special activities in worship on the Sunday nearest to your town's Pride Parade.
8. Start a Pride Parade if town doesn't have one.
9. Mention LGBT joys and concerns in church services and fly a rainbow flag on special occasions.
10. Create a telephone and letter action tree and encourage members to contact local and national legislators to advocate for LGBT rights.

11. Send supportive “Letters to the editor” about LGBT issues to your local paper, and always respond to anti-gay statements in the paper.
12. Invite folks to your home for a game night, special dinner, bible study or time to reflect together on a wide range of spiritual concerns, especially those facing the LGBT community.
13. Sponsor a panel of biblical scholars to talk about the Bible and homosexuality.
14. Hold a yearly lecture on LGBT themes and invite the community.
15. Maintain literature rack with positive information about LGBT people and families in an easily seen and accessible place in your church. Use UCC and PFLAG resources.
16. Start a hotline or drop-in center LGBT youth in your church.
17. Volunteer opportunities abound in all our denominations for people who want to be advocates and allies. Join the Conference MACUCC ONA Task Force and call the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns for more ideas.
18. Ask the Conference to sponsor more events supporting LGBT rights and host meetings at your church.
19. Hire openly LGBT pastoral staff and field education students
20. Talk about LGBT concerns in your Sunday school and youth group activities. Make sure LGBT youth feel safe and supported at your church.
21. Donate money to UCC and community agencies that support LGBT folks and their families.
22. Invite members of neighboring religious communities to attend a forum or discussion about LGBT issues in their traditions.
23. Support or start a Gay and Straight Alliance in your school system.
24. Offer to send speaker to schools or religious communities in your area to talk about your churches commitments to supporting LGBT people.
25. Create a scholarship fund to support a LGBT seminarian.

Send us ideas and stories about successful programs in your church! We would love to include them on our web site.

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