



*When a stranger resides with you in your land,  
you shall not oppress the stranger.  
The stranger who resides with you shall be  
to you as the citizen among you;  
you shall love the stranger as yourself,  
for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:  
I am the Lord your God.  
(Leviticus 19:33-34 RSV)*

*And the King will answer them,  
“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these  
who are members of my family, you did it to me.”  
(Matthew 25:40 NSRV)*

*Then he will answer them,  
“Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it  
to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”  
(Matthew 25:45 NSRV)*

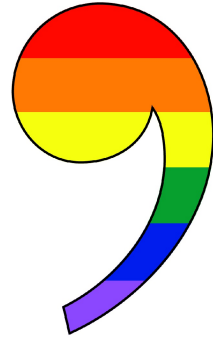
***Open to God’s Spirit, we reach out in love to the world,  
and invite all to journey with us.***  
(Mission Statement of Lockport United Church of Christ)

We, the members of Lockport United Church of Christ, believe that hospitality stands at the heart of what it means to be disciples of Christ. The scripture texts cited above provide compelling evidence for this belief. Leviticus commands us to love the stranger in our midst as we would love ourselves. Likewise, Christ commands us to receive the stranger in our midst, and to do so with all the compassion that would afford that stranger a full life.

Therefore, embracing the scriptural mandate of hospitality, we strive to be open to God’s Spirit. This Spirit moves us to reach out in love to a world that all too often has been bereft of love. Those living on the margins of life know only too well the pain of exclusion. In particular, we reach out to individuals who have been excluded from Christian community because they are gay, lesbian, transgender, or bisexual. We do this so that these sojourners may know that they can find a home among us where they will be welcomed and cherished. We also reach out to the lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual community in a public way so that others may see our witness and choose to join us on this journey of hospitality and faith.

*Lockport United Church of Christ*

*Open and Affirming Covenant*



***Open to God's Spirit, we reach out in Love to the World  
and invite All to journey with us.***

Lockport United Church of Christ Mission Statement

Organized in 2002 through the consolidation of two local United Church of Christ congregations, Lockport United Church of Christ has had a continuing history of involvement in social issues dating to the abolition of slavery in the first half of the nineteenth century. We honor our ancestors' legacy, and seek to carry on their work with the work we do today.

We strive to be a fully hospitable church that welcomes people of every race, gender, age, ethnicity, social status, family structure, mental or physical health status, and most importantly, those who have often been excluded from faith communities. In declaring ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Church, we particularly welcome people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions into the full life and fellowship of the church, including membership, sacraments, leadership and employment by the congregation.

We do so in response to the declaration of our Savior Jesus Christ who, when asked which was the greatest commandment of all, answered "The first is ... 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

(Mark 12:30-31 NRSV)

We embrace our denomination's promise: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here" at Lockport United Church of Christ.

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COALITION



OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

**Lockport**

**United Church of Christ**

of Lockport, NY

having entered into a covenant welcoming people  
of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions into Christian community is  
hereby recognized as an

Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ.



Andrew G. Lang, Executive Director  
Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ  
June 18, 2017

