

Proposal & Motion (November 2008)

- Submitted by the Conference of Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario
- Received and approved by the General Council Executive

Affirming the Participation & Ministry of Transgender People:

Whereas	God has brought forth human beings as creatures who are male, female, and sometimes dramatically or subtly a complex mix of male and female in their bodies; and
Whereas	human cultures have created a broad diversity of roles for men and women, and have sometimes created roles for people named as neither man nor woman often revered and respected roles; and
Whereas	rules of appearance in the Bible, such as in Deuteronomy 22:5 [wearing clothes of the opposite sex], are certainly among the rules criticized by Jesus as focused on outward conformity rather than inward integrity grounded in the acceptance of God's love; and
Whereas	there are numerous biblical affirmations of the goodness of creation and the love of God for all people, including Genesis 1, Psalm 139, John 1: 1-5, and Acts 10: 34-43; and
Whereas	Galatians 3: 26-29 calls on those who are baptized to put on Christ like a garment and to look past human divisions to become one person in Christ; and
Whereas	transgender people are currently offering valuable ministry within The United Church of Canada, both as lay people and as clergy; and
Whereas	The United Church of Canada in numerous program activities in all expressions of the church has affirmed the positive virtues carried by men within traditional cultures, by women within traditional cultures, while also calling for the transformation of gender roles that are oppressive of men or women, or otherwise not fully reflective of Christian values; and
Whereas	Christian transgender people have sometimes experienced rejection and non-acceptance within some expressions of the United Church of Canada and in other expressions of Christ's Church, and are in need of a welcoming Christian community where they are valued as Christian people, and
Whereas	many settings of The United Church of Canada have little understanding of transgender people; of how to meet their needs and make them feel welcome, of how to integrate their gifts and capacities for ministry into the life of the church and of how to integrate them into liturgy and expressions of worship.

MOTION

The Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario request General Council Executive to instruct the appropriate units and committees to develop appropriate resources, in consultation with a representative group of transgender people within Affirm United and The United Church of Canada, that will encourage the participation and ministry of transgender people in the life of the church and to prepare individuals and churches to receive such participation and ministry; and

that a representative group of transgender people within The United Church of Canada shall be invited to report on progress made in regard to participation within The United Church of Canada and the development of education and advocacy concerning civil and human rights by The United Church of Canada, and to make additional suggestions, to the 41st General Council.

CARRIED