

PRESBYTERIAN-NEW ENGLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.

*Covenant for Inclusiveness*

We believe that God's love for humanity is all inclusive and by our common baptism we are brought into union with Christ without distinction. Christ's commandment to love one another is the foundation for our Christian faith.

We believe that our value as human beings is given to us by God, and that God calls us to relate to each other as whole persons, with love, accountability, responsibility, trust, and mutual nurture. Discrimination against any group of people should not exist within the family of God.

In accordance with this faith, membership in this church is open to all who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Election and ordination to church office is open to all members according to their commitment to the Christian faith and their individual qualifications. Those we call as ministers shall be evaluated in the same spirit.

Since homosexuality has become the focus of policies of exclusion in many churches, we are obliged to declare specifically that we will not prejudice individuals by that category. In this regard, we embrace the policy of non-discrimination recommended to congregations by the 15th General Synod of the United Church of Christ (1985) and we strongly urge the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA to adopt a similar policy. We faithfully join in the fellowship of UCC "Open and Affirming" congregations and Presbyterian "More Light" churches.

Having long regarded our congregation as "open" to all, we shall continue efforts to become more truly welcoming and affirming through programs that promote understanding of our human diversity and appreciation of our similarity. May the message of God's inclusive love thus be heard and felt within and outside this church.

ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BOARD (SESSION) JUNE 5, 1995