

WE ARE
STANDING
ON THE
SIDE OF
LOVE

A Statement on Pittsburgh's 2015 Pride

As 11 congregations that comprise over 1100 Unitarian Universalists, the public controversy surrounding Pittsburgh's 2015 Pride events has prompted considerable reflection and discussion. While that conversation has been challenging it has also been healthy and enriching and made us grateful that our faith tradition encourages us to stay connected, evolve mutually, and move forward together.

Unitarian Universalism affirms the worth and dignity of every person. Our churches are welcoming to all and we work to build a society where justice, equity, and compassion exist for everyone, and where all people are treated equally. We are committed to creating an environment that is inclusive, safe, and supportive of the entire LGBTQ community and where all people can be proud of who they are.

We recognize that under the sponsorship of the Delta Foundation the visibility and impact of Pride has grown dramatically. However we call on Delta to acknowledge the failure of its current approach to be inclusive of all LGBTQ people. We ask Delta to examine its vision and leadership and live up to its mission and role as the leading Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender organization in Western Pennsylvania.

We call on all LGBTQ and allied organizations to be part of a community discussion to re-imagine how the Pittsburgh region recognizes and celebrates Pride each June. Let's create events that are inclusive with regard to age, gender identity, ability, class, and race. Let's build a bigger tent together. We commit to being part of this effort and to enter it with open minds and loving hearts.

The substitution of another artist for Iggy Azalea as a response to community concerns is a positive step. We believe that more can still be done immediately to begin rebuilding trust and relationships. There is more we can do to improve this year's Pride before we step back and focus on 2016.

Unitarian Universalists have become too comfortable just showing up for the Pride March. This is no longer enough. We can have more impact by embracing more events, being in solidarity with more communities, finding more ways to advocate and more ways to show love. We must especially seek out and support those who are most marginalized and in need of representation. We applaud the organizations that have brought new energies to Pride and raised our collective mindshare around how diverse Pittsburgh is and how far we still need to go.

We encourage all Unitarian Universalists to listen to their own conscience and participate in Pride events as they are so moved. Be there for the Pride March for Equality, the Roots Pride Healing Circle and Riverwalk, the Dyke Trans March, Latin Pride, or Pittsburgh Black Pride. These and other events will each offer opportunities to "Stand on the Side of Love" and support the LGBTQ community. There will be powerful experiences and unique audiences at each. We never know who along the road is in need and whose life we can change by our presence and witness. So get out in the streets!

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Unitarian Universalists of Greater Pittsburgh

We are: the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Smithton, First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Morgantown, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Indiana, Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills, Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills, East Suburban Unitarian Universalist Church, Ohio Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ligonier Valley, and Ginger Hill Unitarian Universalist Congregation.