



For Immediate Release
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Standing on the Side of Love Campaign

Thousands of Faithful Nationwide Gather for Valentine’s Day to Promote LGBT Rights, Immigration Reform and Religious Freedom

*More Than 100 Unitarian Universalist Congregations Hold Events As Part of
“National Standing on the Side of Love Day”*

Boston, MA – Thousands of people across the country will re-imagine Valentine’s Day as *National Standing on the Side of Love Day* – a holiday of love and acceptance for all people, and an opportunity to seek justice for those who are marginalized and oppressed in our communities. *National Standing on the Side of Love Day* is inspired by [Standing on the Side of Love](#), an interfaith public advocacy campaign sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) that promotes respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. More than 100 events are planned, including justice-oriented worship services and film screenings, gatherings in public parks, rallies at state capitals, educational forums, and letter writing campaigns. The campaign focuses primarily on advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights; safety and acceptance for LGBT youth; comprehensive, humane immigration reform; and an end to the demonization of American Muslims.

“Love is about embracing all people in our communities,” says Dan Furmansky, campaign manager for Standing on the Side of Love. “Re-imagining Valentine’s Day as *Standing on the Side of Love Day* shows that love knows no border, no gender, no race, and no religion. Through our activism, people of faith across the nation are countering fear and oppression with justice, compassion, inclusion, and bridges across communities.”

National Standing on the Side of Love Day will focus on current events and issues. Several congregations across the country will address the recent string of **suicides by LGBT-identified young people** by holding screenings of “the Laramie Project,” holding proms for same-sex couples, and filming videos for the “It Gets Better” YouTube channel. In Long Island, members of a congregation will sign and send Valentine’s Day cards to Congressman Pete King, expressing concern that his **hearings on the “radicalization” of American Muslims** are creating unfounded fear in communities. In Arizona, congregations will set up phone banks to contact the Obama Administration, asking for an end to programs that instill fear in our communities by **enlisting local police to enforce federal immigration law**. In Maryland, Rhode Island, Minnesota, New Mexico, and elsewhere, people will convene at state capitals to **rally for anti-discrimination measures on gender identity and sexual orientation and for an end to marriage discrimination**.

In public debates over immigration, LGBT rights, and religious freedom, Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith are choosing to stand on the side of love and call for respect and compassion.

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About the Standing on the Side of Love campaign:

Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association, this public advocacy campaign elevates compassionate religious voices to influence public attitudes and public policy. The campaign was inspired by Unitarian Universalist work for marriage equality in Massachusetts and California. It was formed as a national movement following the 2008 shooting at Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, which was targeted because they are welcoming to LGBT people and have a liberal stance on many issues. The Knoxville Community responded with an outpouring of love that inspired the leadership at the Unitarian Universalist Association to launch a campaign that would harness love's power to challenging exclusion, oppression and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, race, religion, or any other identity.

For more information on the Standing on the Side of Love campaign and to learn more about regional events please visit www.standingonthesideoflove.org.