**The Council for Health and Human Services Ministries**

**United Church of Christ**

**Open and Affirming Covenant**

As a ministry of the United Church of Christ, the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM) seeks to affirm the resolution approved by the 15th General Synod (1985), “Calling on UCC Congregations to Covenant as Open and Affirming.” The resolution reaches beyond the local church as well: “…the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages a policy of non-discrimination in employment, volunteer service and membership policy with regard to sexual orientation; encourages associations, conferences and all related organizations to adopt a similar policy…”

As a “related organization” of the UCC, CHHSM declares itself an Open and Affirming organization, actively expressing Jesus’ inclusive embrace of all people by adopting this covenant for those we serve, those we employ, and those who are our volunteers:

***The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries welcomes all persons no matter what their age, gender identity and expression, race, national origin, faith, marital status, family formation, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, or economic, educational or social status, to share in the programs, activities, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, blessings and joys of CHHSM.***

Jesus teaches us to welcome all of God’s children into God’s covenantal community and to service all equally. As we grow together in faith and love, we will strive to celebrate and advance the diversity reflected in our divine creation.

This covenant is applicable only to CHHSM and not to its member organizations though CHHSM encourages its members to consider adopting a similar Open and Affirming Covenant and/or to engage in educational initiatives, staff training, and Board of Director orientation implied by being ONA.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, United Church of Christ June 9, 2015.