

Daily Morning Message
St Paul United Church of Christ
5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, OH 45247
Allen M Fluent, Pastor
July 1, 2021

(Continuing our Meditations of Resolutions Proposed at General Synod)

Resolution on commitment to gender safety and equity in ministry settings

Guiding Scriptures:

Of the 1426 names in the Old Testament, 1315 are male. This reflects the gender bias of the time. Of the women who are mentioned, few of their stories appear in the Church's Sunday School curricula, though some are extremely important faith leaders. In the New Testament, Jesus shared a table with women and defended them against the accusations of others. Women were the first witnesses of the resurrection, and were leaders, teachers, deacons, apostles and funding patrons in the early church.

Although the United Church of Christ has a long history in the ordination of women to ministry, beginning in 1853 with Antoinette Brown, throughout most of our history until recent years women made up a small percentage of pastors and leaders in our churches. Even now, although women comprise a much larger percentage of pastoral leadership, they often experience financial inequity as well as gender-based vulnerability in their positions. Also, although we were the first among many Christian denominations that have come to accept persons of non-binary gender and identity (LGBTQIA) into ordained ministry, such persons continue to experience discrimination within our churches and within society as a whole. This resolution, submitted by the churches of the Central Pacific Conference of the UCC, calls upon our church in all its settings to support gender equality, and to recognize ways in which we limit and inhibit leadership in the church through unequal pay, limited opportunity, gender-based expectations, unwanted comments (both compliments and insults) and inappropriate touching. It calls upon all settings of the UCC to explore ways to promote gender safety and create an atmosphere that affirms the rights of physical and sexual autonomy of women and non-binary persons in the church workplace.

Prayer: Dear God, the Scriptures affirm your defense of all who suffer exploitation and abuse, and your calling for the fellowship of the church to be a place of shared responsibility and mutual care. In Christ, the Scriptures say, we are neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, nor male and female, but that we are all one. Teach us to honor one another as fellow members of the holy body of Christ. Amen.