



St. John United Church of Christ
520 Fairfield Ave
Bellevue, KY 41073
(859) 261-2066

August 9, 2006

The Honorable Richard L. Roeding
2534 Kearney Court
Lakeside Park, KY 41017

Dear Senator Roeding:

It is with concern and prayer that this letter is addressed to you. As a Christian congregation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky we serve a broad and diverse community of people. As the Church we are many members, but one body of Christ. With Christ we affirm that we are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that we are called to act as agents of reconciliation and wholeness within the world and within the church itself. After many years of experience and study we have pledged to welcome people of all races, ages, abilities, ethnicities, socio-economic levels, sexual orientations and gender identities into the full life and ministry of the church. In other words, the sign in front of our Church that says, "Everyone is welcome here," means everyone. As a congregation in what has been called a conservative and traditional region such a welcome has not always been easy when the institutional and social mode of operation has often been to oppress and exclude. However, as Christians who take the Bible seriously we cannot help but love others as God has loved us.

We are disturbed and disappointed by your statements made regarding Gay and Lesbian persons in response to the University of Louisville's bold decision to include straight and same-sex domestic partners for medical coverage. In spite of your personal convictions such comments are not becoming of a person of faith much less a public servant. Under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky you are an elected official who is called upon to serve *all the people*. As followers of Jesus we raise our voice in opposition to such words as well as attitudes. For too many years there have been untruths and prejudices proclaimed about Gay and Lesbian people.

As I said earlier, our congregation strives to welcome all people. That includes you. We invite you to join us for worship and learn with us more about God's love as well as about God's Gay and Lesbian children. Worship begins at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. I write this letter for myself as well as on behalf of our congregation at the direction and approval of our Church Council.

Blessings!

The Reverend Keith M. Haithcock
Pastor & Teacher