



## Middle's Marriage Equality Resolution

**Whereas**, we believe in the inclusiveness that acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth; and

**Whereas**, all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, age disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, or economic condition are welcome to attend our worship celebrations and participate in our programs; and

**Whereas**, over the years our congregation has participated in equal-rights movements for women, people of color, immigrants, and people with disabilities even when these equal rights were controversial and viewed as divisive within some elements of the Church; and

**Whereas**, the Collegiate Church of New York City, as the oldest Protestant church in North America, has a long history of extending membership to African Americans and Native Americans when other churches refused to do so; and

**Whereas**, our Christian faith teaches us to welcome one another just as each of us has been welcomed by Christ; we believe that as authentic disciples of Christ, individually or in community, we are called to proclaim and celebrate God's universal love, passion, and grace towards all people and to participate in its manifesting within our world, and

**Whereas**, our faith further moves us to recognize and celebrate many human expressions of life, love, and relationship based on covenants of commitment and wholeness; and

**Whereas**, our members have a history of supporting equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people; and

**Whereas**, we have the responsibility to advocate for justice and equality for all people, and we respond to the spiritual, economic and legal needs of married and unmarried families, including LGBTI members; and

**Whereas**, we recognize that the lack of access to legal marriage deprives LGBTI families of rights and benefits afforded to all other families, such as Social Security and pension benefits; medical decision-making authority, health insurance; workers compensation, death benefits; immigration rights; and many other federal, state and local protections; and

**Whereas**, we believe that this denial of marriage equality hurts not just these families, but all the family members, neighbors, and people who care about the well-being of these couples and their children; and

**Whereas**, while civil union and domestic partnership laws provide limited protection to these families, these laws create a separate and unequal legal status for same-sex couples and are no substitute for marriage; and

**Whereas**, state law prohibiting the solemnization of marriages of same-sex couples deprives us of our religious liberty to worship as we see fit by limiting our ability to sanctify the love between persons of the same sex as we want to do for all loving couples who so choose in our congregation, namely through marriage;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved that:** We The Middle Collegiate Church, affirm our commitment to equal rights for all people, including LGBTI persons; and

We will support the right of same-sex couples to access legal marriage and oppose laws and constitutional amendments that deny or restrict those rights; and

We call on the New York State Legislature and the Governor to enact a law providing equal access to marriage for all people and we will work actively to achieve that goal.

