



## First Unitarian Church of Hamilton

*A Voice of Liberal Faith in Hamilton Since 1889*

170 Dundurn Street South Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 4K3

Martin Dooley, President

Rev. Victoria Ingram, Minister

March 6, 2017

I am Rev. Victoria Ingram and I serve the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, a voice for liberal faith in Hamilton since 1889. I appreciate this chance to speak today about our congregation's support of the Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression. These individuals (those standing as I share this letter) are among the over 300 members of my congregation, here to show their support for this initiative, as well.

The Principles of our faith call us to honour the inherent worth and dignity of every person. That call to inclusivity and welcome means that Unitarians have been supporters of the LGBTQ+ community for many years. We have consistently opened our hearts and congregations in radical hospitality to those who are gender non-conforming. We create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQ+ justice and equity as a core part of who we are as people of faith.

The members and friends of the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, many of whom are LGBTQ+, affirm this inclusivity and urge you to endorse this protocol and implement its provisions to extend dignity and safety to our multi-faceted community. We believe that we are all a part of an interconnected web of life that is diverse, worthy, and beautiful in its complexity. Unitarians value that diversity, including the diversity of sexuality and gender, and see it as a spiritual gift. We affirm that all of who we are is sacred. We believe that all people deserve to live lives where they are respected, affirmed, and safe. Every one of us deserves to enjoy certain human rights, and Trans rights are human rights.

We live in and serve the greater Hamilton area. Because of our faith, and our basic sense of what's right in the world, we want to create and live in communities that honour all of their residents, hold all lives sacred and valuable, and respect everyone's right to live in peace, safety, and equity. For these reasons, we support the Protocol because we believe this action would help make Hamilton a more vibrant, healthy, and prosperous community.

Thank you for listening to the various viewpoints of your constituents and allowing us this time to share our faith perspectives with you today.

Respectfully,

Rev. Victoria Ingram, Minister