

Nov. 17, 2017

As the National Transgender Day of Remembrance, Nov. 20, approaches, our congregation of Unitarian Church of Norfolk (UCN)/Coastal Virginia Unitarian Universalists (CVUU) stands united in our denouncement of President Trump's unconscionable ban on transgender individuals serving in the U.S. military.

On Oct. 8th, at a special congregational meeting at UCN/CVUU, we adopted the following resolution:

“The Unitarian Church of Norfolk/ Coastal Virginia Unitarian Universalists condemns any policy that restricts, in any way, the ability of any person to serve in any capacity in the United States military because of sexual orientation or gender identity.”

We at UCN/CVUU give our unwavering support, not only for the thousands of brave transgender individuals proudly and openly serving with valor in the military right now, but those who would choose to serve. We believe no citizen of our great country should have to sacrifice their integrity or hide their identity to be a patriot. Transgender service members must not be disregarded nor deprived of the necessary health care they need while serving.

We at UCN/CVUU honor the thousands of transgender service members who have risked their lives around the world in service to our country, as well as the more than 134,000 transgender veterans alive today.

Each of us has worth and dignity, and that worth includes our gender and our sexuality. As Unitarian Universalists (UUs), we not only open our doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, we value diversity of sexuality and gender and see it as a spiritual gift. We create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQ justice and equity as a core part of who we are.

On October 30, 2017 Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly of the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia found the administration's justification for the ban, which was set to take effect in March 2018, to be suspect and likely unconstitutional. She ruled that the military's current policy should remain in place.

We are grateful for the Court's temporary stay and urge President Trump to reverse his ban on transgender persons rights to serve in in the military, which goes against our nation's values of equality. We seek this change, not only for transgender service members, but on behalf of the children, spouses, and family members of military personnel and veterans, whom this ban will surely affect.

This letter is a testament to our ongoing commitment to stand up for and stand by our transgender friends and oppose any governmental body or individual who would strip them of fair and equal protections.

Sincerely,

Allen Perry
President Unitarian Church of Norfolk