

HISTORY OF THE ONA MOVEMENT IN THE UCC

1972

The Rev. William R. Johnson is the first openly gay minister ordained in the UCC.

1977

The UCC's General Synod approves the resolution "Deplo-
ring the Violation
of Civil Rights of
Gay and Bisexual
Persons."

1982

The Rev. Anne
Holmes is the
first openly
lesbian mini-
ster ordained
in the UCC.

1985

The UCC General Synod urges UCC
congregations to grow in their wel-
come of all people, passing a reso-
lution asking congregations to "De-
clare Themselves Open and Affirming
(ONA)" and work for the full inclu-
sion of LGBTQ+ people.

1993

General Synod calls for an end to the prohibition of mili-
tary service by gay and lesbian citizens. General Synod
also calls on UCC churches to become multiracial and
multicultural churches, acting out its faith in God that
"binds in covenant faithful people of all races, ethnicities,
and cultures and to rejoice in these diversities as gifts."

1989

General Synod adopts
the strong resolution
"Deplo-
ring Violence
against Lesbian and
Gay People."

1987

The Coalition
certifies the
first 15 ONA
congregations.

1999

General Synod approves the reso-
lution "Prevention of Gay, Lesbian,
Bisexual, and Transgender Youth
Suicide."

2003

General Synod votes for a resolution
"Affirming the Participation and Min-
istry of Transgender People within the
UCC and Supporting Their Civil and
Human Rights."

2005

UCC affirms equal
marriage rights for
LGBTQ+ people.

2015

General Synod passes the reso-
lution "Reaffirming Our Commit-
ment to Full Equality for Persons
of Any Sexual Orientation, Gender
Identity or Gender Expression."

2012

The UCC welcomes ONA congregation
#1,000. In November, ONA churches
play a key role in victories for mar-
riage equality in Maine, Maryland,
Minnesota, and Washington state.

2011

General Synod affirms the
adoption rights of LGBTQ+
couples and urges congre-
gations to provide sanctuary
for LGBTQ+ refugees seeking
sanctuary in the U.S.

2017

General Synod affirms and supp-
orts the ministries of underrep-
resented clergy in congregations and
calls on churches to address implicit
and explicit bias and discrimination.



2020

The Iowa, Nebraska, and
South Dakota Conferences
become ONA Conferences
and invite their churches
to join the movement.

Our Future

Congregations commit to LGBTQ+
inclusive, Open and Affirming
ministry so that all may know love,
safety, belonging, and dignity.