

Participants in the Hungarian Unitarian Church Synod
c/o Rev. Ferenc Bálint-Benczédi, Bishop
Rev. Dávid Gyero, Deputy Bishop
Farkas Emöd and Boros János, Lay Presidents
Hungarian Unitarian Church
Kolozsvár, Transylvania

October 26, 2017

Dear Participants in the Hungarian Unitarian Church Synod,



We reach out to you across many miles and an ocean with a message of hope and courage but also concern. We are aware that when it meets this Saturday the Synod will consider a statement on “Marriage and Family.” We also understand that this statement will indicate that marriage is properly defined as a relationship only between a man and a woman. We are deeply concerned about the injury such a statement will cause to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Unitarians in Hungary and Transylvania and their allies of all faiths. We would condemn such a statement in our own religious institutions, and we are saddened to think that this pronouncement might come from the HUC.

We note that there have always been – and likely always will be - significant disagreements on many matters among global U/U groups and organizations. Given the historic nature of our relationship as a sibling and partner, we feel we would be remiss if we did not express our concern as well as our categorical support for marriage equality, a position that we believe is rooted in foundational U/U principles. Many people in North American U/U congregations will perceive the proposed statement from the HUC not only as contrary to foundational U/U principles but also as a dehumanizing attack on them and LGBTQ people generally. For these reasons, we hope that you will remember in your discussions and decisions the LGBTQ Unitarians in HUC churches and communities as well as your global relationships and partners in faith.

We recognize that the pressure being applied to the HUC from outside political forces is strong and that remaining a part of the community of Christian churches is an important priority for the HUC. In these challenging circumstances, we pray that you will be as courageous as many of our U/U forebears in standing against global authoritarianism.

We offer our support in resisting authoritarian interference in matters of faith. We will commit to consulting with HUC leaders on the development of various resources, including a Hungarian Unitarian -- or even

internationally relevant -- understanding of the [Welcoming Congregation](#) Program. We hope you will consider and accept this invitation. The UUA and many other churches and denominations around the world have learned that curricula supporting self-examination and dialogue about the freedom to marry and related LGBTQ issues are key to moving forward.

We have long looked to and learned from you, our faith partners in Hungary and Transylvania. We have been inspired by your lessons on how to persevere in faith in the face of hostility and oppression. We wish to state that we love you, our siblings in faith. And we offer this challenge to you in a spirit of commitment and abiding love.

We will be with you in the struggle towards a just and inclusive future.

In Faith and Partnership,

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, President
Unitarian Universalist Association



Co-written and Co-signed by:

- Rev. Sara Ascher, Executive Director of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU)
- Rev. Harold Babcock, UUA Ambassador to the HUC and former UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC) President
- Rev. Roger Bertschausen, Executive Director of the UUPCC
- Rev. Eric Cherry, International Office Director, UUA
- Rev. Michael Crumpler, LGBTQ and Intercultural Programs Manager, UUA
- Rev. Janice Marie Johnson, Multicultural Ministries and Leadership Director, UUA
- Rev. Morgan McLean, Chair of the UUPCC Board
- Rev. Scott Prinster, former UUPCC Board Member