

A Moral Manifesto

offered by the Religious and Spiritual Leaders Group of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Service Center of Cleveland to the wider community.

June 18, 2005

We, Religious and Spiritual Leaders, believe that the conversation about moral values is important for progressive and conservative clergy and laity alike. We believe that moral values have the power to shape the future of our country. Below are the moral values to which we ascribe:

Human Sexuality

We believe human sexuality is a gift from God. We uphold a sexual ethic of fidelity in committed relationships and integrity in all human relations. We believe that sexual exploitation and sexual violence degrade this precious gift and are to be avoided and/or actively denied.

We believe it is immoral to live in a society that is more obsessed with sex than it is with abolishing hunger, poverty, and homelessness.

We believe that it is immoral to use sex or violence for commercial gain.

We believe that committed relationships should be honored, valued and supported.

Materialism

We believe it is immoral when greed becomes our highest value.

We believe it is immoral to abandon the poor.

We believe it is immoral not to provide adequate funds for public education of all children, regardless of what neighborhood they live in.

We believe it is immoral not to provide adequate health care for all.

We believe it is immoral to exploit the rural or suburban areas of our country, while ignoring the collapse of the inner city.

Violence & War

We believe that dehumanizing others is wrong.

We believe it is immoral to enter into a pre-emptive war.

We believe it is immoral to glorify violence for sport or entertainment.

We believe it is immoral to disregard the Geneva Convention, and to ignore the Code of Conduct during wartime.

We believe it is immoral to use torture.

We value reasoned and respectful dialogue and conversation with others. We affirm the ideal of the American dream—not as a self-centered obsession with materialism, but rather, a country that cares for the least of its members as much as for one's own well being. We believe that a truly moral position would focus on building the beloved community among all its members.

Signers:

The Rev. Wayne B. Arnason, West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church
The Rev. David Bahr, Pastor, Archwood United Church of Christ.
The Rev. Daniel Budd, Parish Minister, First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, Shaker Heights
The Rev. David Burkit, Pastor, Trinity United Church of Christ, Cleveland
The Rev. Paula Maeder Connor, Lutheran
The Rev. Peggy C. Clason, Minister, The Unitarian Universalist Society of Cleveland
The Rev. Dr. Laurinda Hafner, Pilgrim United Church of Christ
The Rev. Allen V. Harris, Franklin Circle Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Rabbi David M. Horowitz, Rabbi Emeritus, Temple Israel, Akron, Ohio
The Rev. Kathryn Matthews Huey, Pilgrim United Church of Christ
The Rev. Richard Israel, Lutheran Chaplaincy Service
The Rev. Donald King, Hope Lutheran
The Rev. Linda Krasienko, Liberation United Church of Christ
Denise Leslie, Facilitator, Lutherans Concerned/ Cleveland
The Very Rev. Tracey Lind, Dean of the Cathedral, Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland
The Rev. Karen Lipinczyk, Cleveland Program Director, Ohio Religious Coalition for
Reproductive Choice
The Rev. Cora Lee Meier, Our Savior/Nuestro Salvador Lutheran Church, Lorain
Deaconess Deborah Nebel, Hope Lutheran
The Rev. Chris Nielson, Southwest Unitarian Universalist
The Rev. William Pierce, Jr., Retired Pastor, United Methodist Church, Fairview Park
Earl Pike, Member of Cleveland Jewish Community
Rabbi David E. Powers, Phd.
Rabbi Sidney and Regina Rackoff, Cleveland Heights
Deborah Rivera, Deacon, House of Prayer, S Euclid
The Rev. Kathleen C. Rolenz, West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church
The Rev. Michael Schuenemeyer, United Church of Christ - Wider Church Ministries
The Rev. Robert and Mrs. Joyce Strommen, Retired Association Minister, United Church of
Christ.
The Rev. Melanie Sunderland, Episcopal Chaplain, Lutheran Chaplaincy Service
Nancy C Thrams, Lay Leader, Liberation United Church of Christ
The Rev. Patti Verde, Liberation United Church of Christ
The Rev. Robert Weaver and Gert Bauer, Retired Episcopal Priest
Rabbi Lauren Werber and Rabbi David Lipper, Temple Israel, Akron, OH
The Rev. H. Kurt Wieser, Liberation United Church of Christ
The Rev. Ogden White, Presbyterian