

**Emanuel Church, Hales Corners**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**OPEN n AFFIRMING STATEMENT**

**Scripture**

God's promise was spoken through the Prophet Hosea, "I will show love to those I called 'Not loved.' And to those I called 'Not my people,' I will say; 'Now you are my people.' And they will reply, 'You are our God!'" (New Living Translation)

The Apostle Paul writes to the early Christians in Rome (Romans 15:7), "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (New Revised Standard Version)

**Introduction**

Emanuel Church understands we are to become the family of God. We work and pray for each other's success. We are here to help each other through sorrow, disappointment and hardship. We share God's love with the world around us through worship, mission, program, education and fellowship. We trust in God's message of love and inclusion.

Like any family we are not all like-minded. We share differences of opinion and try to understand each other and grow closer together. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012, after several years seeking to discern God's call to us; we agree our family of God in Hales Corners would commit publicly to include all God's people.

**Statement**

Therefore, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Congregation. As a diverse body of believers seeking to live in the light and image of Christ:

-We believe every person has worth as a special and unique creation made in God's image;

-We believe every committed relationship founded on mutual trust, respect, responsibility, nurture and love is beautiful in the eyes of God;

-We believe every family and every configuration of family is deserving of respect and support;

-We believe the Spirit of love, openness, and inclusiveness calls us to welcome all persons regardless of sexual orientation, race, nationality, ability, age, marital status, economic status, gender, or gender identity and expression, to participate fully in all aspects of our Church's life and ministry;

-We believe we need to be agents of reconciliation and wholeness who embrace justice and seek to support all who suffer discrimination or who are disenfranchised from the religious community.

We, the people of Emanuel, covenant to look to the gospel as we continue to comprehend and appreciate more fully our differences and gifts.

