

# Open and Affirming

## Our Welcome Statement

The Presque Isle Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming congregation that embraces Jesus' teaching about God's love for every person. We, therefore, welcome persons of any age, race, culture, nationality, and religious background; all sexual orientations and gender identities; persons of any marital, educational, or financial status; regardless of physical and mental health or ability. All are invited into full participation in the life of our faith community. We accept with gratitude the beautiful diversity of God's creation as we share God's love in our community and beyond.

**Open and Affirming** (ONA) is the United Church of Christ's (UCC) designation for congregations, campus ministries, and other bodies in the UCC which make a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

Over a two-year period, interrupted by the COVID pandemic, our church committed to an Open and Affirming discernment process, chaired by Jennifer Gillis-White. It was an extended period of study, deep personal and group reflection, discussion, and decision-making that culminated in a special church meeting on **October 23, 2021**, and an affirmative vote to approve an **Open and Affirming Covenant**. It was truly an experience of faith formation for the whole church.



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a just world for all