

150 Iowa clergy: We support same-sex marriage

Posted By [Jason Clayworth](#) On February 16, 2010 @ 2:31 pm In [Iowa Politics Insider, News](#) | [No Comments](#)

More than 150 clergy from across Iowa have signed a letter of support for equal marriage rights for same-sex couples.

The letter was announced by Interfaith Alliance of Iowa Action Fund, a statewide organization that frequently advocates for civil rights. The group delivered the letter today to lawmakers during a press conference at the Capitol.

"The Supreme Court of Iowa recognized that equity and fairness is the starting point in our state's constitution," said Rev. Matt Mardis-LeCroy, Board Chairperson of Interfaith Alliance of Iowa and minister at Plymouth Congregational Church in Des Moines. "We as clergy from different faith traditions adhere to this principle and stand firmly with gay and lesbian couples to underscore the importance of marriage equality. Our traditions and practices as religious entities should never be used to exclude equal protection from anyone."

Here's a copy of the letter delivered to lawmakers:

February 16, 2010

Dear Senators and Representatives,

As clergy representing a broad spectrum of theological beliefs, we join together to state our public support of civil marriage equality for same-gender couples and our opposition to any current or future legislation diminishing the marriage rights rightfully given by Iowa's Supreme Court. We are compelled by our deepest beliefs to stand for fairness in our common civic life. We oppose the use of sacred texts and religious traditions to deny equal protection and responsibility under the law for gay and lesbian couples.

From a religious perspective, marriage is about a couple entering into a holy covenant with their God and making a long-term commitment to share life's joys and sorrows. Moreover, as many faith traditions affirm, where there is love, the sacred is in our midst. This belief is the same for couples comprised of a man and a woman, two women, or two men. As such, a marriage based in love and commitment must be honored and supported.

Civility, marriage is commonly valued in society because it creates stable, committed relationships; provides a means to protect and be responsible for each other; and nurtures the individual, the couple, and children. All families must be supported in building stable, empowering, and respectful relationships. Marriage equality is a means to strengthen families and is especially beneficial to children who are raised by gay and lesbian couples.

We affirm freedom of conscience in this matter. Marriage equality honors the religious convictions of those communities and clergy who officiate at, and bless, same-gender marriages. We recognize the state does not and should not require clergy or religious traditions who disagree with same-gender marriage to officiate at, or bless, the ceremonies of gay and lesbian couples. The state must respect the convictions of all religious groups and individuals, while also allowing the fundamental right of marriage to be granted fairly to all people.

As clergy, we stand together in support of civil marriage equality for ALL families. We ask for your support of civil marriage equality and ask that you oppose any resolution or attempt to diminish the marriage rights of Iowa's families.

Bishop Alan Scarfe; Bishop; Episcopal Diocese of Iowa

Rev. Dr. Rich Pleva; Iowa Conference Minister; United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Richard Guentert; Former Regional Minister of the Upper Midwest Region (retired); Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Rev. Charles Ager; ELCA (retired); Strawberry Point

The Rev. Alexander A. Aiton, Jr.; Rector, St. John's by the Campus Episcopal Church & Student Center; Ames

The Rev. Dr. James Altenbaumer; United Church of Christ; Cedar Falls

Rev. Nancy L. Anderson; Zion United Church of Christ; Hubbard

Rev. Michael N. Armstrong; Senior Minister; First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Davenport

Rev. Paul S. Bengtson; ELCA (retired); Storm Lake

Rev. Steve Bibb; First United Methodist Church; Fort Dodge

Rev. Anna Blaedel; United Methodist Church; Osage

Rev. Ramona S. Bouzard; St. Paul Lutheran Church; Waverly

Rev. Dr. Walter C. Bouzard; Waverly

Rev. Stephen L. Bowie; Member, Presbytery of Des Moines; Bloomfield

Pastor Brad Braley; First Presbyterian Church; Cedar Falls

Rev. Kenneth E. Briggs, Jr.; Chaplain, Lt. Col, USAF (retired); Altoona Christian Church (DOC); Altoona

The Rev. Jeanette Brodersen; Associate Minister, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines

Rev. Barbara Bullock; United Church of Christ (retired); Ankeny

The Rev. Dr. Sean D. Burke; Luther College; Decorah

Rev. Christopher C. Burnett; Schleswig United Church of Christ; Schleswig

Rev. Linda M. Butler; Collegiate United Methodist & Wesley Foundation; Ames

The Rev. Dr. Robert A. Butterfield; Urbandale United Church of Christ, Urbandale

Rev. Eva S. Cameron; Unitarian Universalist Society of Black Hawk County; Cedar Falls

Reverend Tom Capo; Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist; Cedar Rapids

Pastor John Chaplin; Licensed Pastor; Central Association of the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ; Des Moines

Rev. Kathleen Clark; United Methodist Church (retired); Des Moines
Priest Richard Cleaver; Saints Ephrem and Macrina Mission, Orthodox-Catholic Church of America; Grinnell
Rev. Dr. David Cline; Evangelical Church in America; Polk City
Rev. Milton Cole Duvall; Episcopalian; West Des Moines
Rev. Elizabeth Colton; United Church of Christ; Oskaloosa
Dr. Rev. Robert Cook; Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (retired); Des Moines
Rev. William Cotton; United Methodist Church (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Robert S. Crandall; Executive Director; Bidwell Riverside Center; Des Moines
Pastor Michael Dack; United Church of Christ; Newton
Rev. D. Mark Davis; Pastor, Heartland Presbyterian Church; Clive
Rev. Pamela S. Deeds; Walnut Hills United Methodist Church/ Wesley UMC's; Des Moines
Rev. Dennis Dickman; ELCA (retired); Waverly
Rev. Dr. Tim Diebel; First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Des Moines
Rev. Elizabeth Dilley; First Congregational United Church of Christ; Red Oak
Rev. Barbara Dinnen; United Methodist Church; Des Moines
The Rev. Maureen Doherty; Cedar Valley Episcopal Campus Ministry; Cedar Falls
Sondra Eddings; Minister; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Des Moines
Rabbi Steven Edelman-Blank; Tifereth Israel Synagogue; Des Moines
Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames; Ames
Rev. Peg Esperenza; Church of the Holy Spirit, MCC; Des Moines
Rev. Faith Ferre'; Minister of Discipleship, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Jeffrey E. Filkins; Trinity United Church of Christ; Hartley
The Rev. Travis M. Fisher; St. Mark Lutheran Church; Davenport
Rev. Dr. Barbara Gaddis; Collegiate Presbyterian Church; Ames
The Rev. Andrew G. Gangle; Peace Lutheran Church; Adel
Rev. Fred R. Gee; retired, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Des Moines
Reverend Tom Gehlsen; Episcopal Diocese of Iowa; Des Moines
Rev. Randall E. Gehring; Bethesda Lutheran Church, ELCA; Ames
Rev. Jaymee Glenn-Burns; Field Outreach Minister, United Methodist Church; Cedar Falls
Rev. David Glenn-Burns; Wesley Foundation at UNI; Cedar Falls
Rabbi Guy Greene; Congregation Beth Shalom; Sioux City
The Rev. John H. Greve; New Song Episcopal Church; Coralville
Rev. Chet Guinn; Methodist Federation for Social Action; Des Moines
Rev. Elizabeth Gull; Universal Life Church; Nevada
Rev. Susan Guy; United Methodist; Urbandale
Pastor John Hagberg; St. Mark Lutheran Church; Sioux City
The Rev. Jennifer L. Hall; Chaplain, Iowa Health; Metropolitan Community Churches; Des Moines
Rev. Dawn Halstead; Chaplain, Hospice of Central Iowa; Des Moines
Rev. Bob Hamilton; United Church of Christ (retired); Davenport
Rev. George Hanusa; ELCA (retired); Windsor Heights
Rev. Richard W. Harbart; United Church of Christ; Clive
The Rev. John Harper; New Song Episcopal Church; Coralville
Rev. Stephanie Haskins; Associate Minister, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Nicole Havelka; Iowa Conference United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Mark Haverland; United Methodist Church; Ankeny
Rev. Dave Heinze; Campus Minister; Graceland University; Lamoni
Rev. Rich Hendricks; Metropolitan Community Church of the Quad Cities; Davenport
Rev. Dan Herndon; United Methodist Church (retired); Waterloo
Dr. Susan E. Hill; Associate Professor of Religion, UNI; Unitarian Universalist Society of Black Hawk County; Waterloo
The Rev. Holly Horn, PhD; Tiffin
Rev. Margaret Hutchens; First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Charles City

Rev. Gerald Iverson; Associate in Ministry; ELCA (retired); Sioux City
Pastor Steven M. Jacobsen; First Lutheran Church; Decorah
Rev. Carlos Jayne; United Methodist Church (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Eric Johnson; Reformed Church in America; Des Moines
Reverend Patricia Johnson; Episcopal Deacon; Sioux City
Rev. Paul A. Johnson; United Church of Christ – Congregational; Ames
The Rev. Scott A. Johnson; Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State University (ELCA); Ames
Rev. R. Paul Johnston; Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA); Sioux City
The Rev. Dr. Judith Jones; St. Andrew's Episcopal Church; Waverly
Rabbi Henry Jay Karp; Temple Emanuel; Davenport
Rabbi David Kaufman; Temple B'Nai Jeshurun; Des Moines
The Rev. Robert Keefer, PhD; Presbyterian; Clarinda
Rev. Naomi Kirstein; Wellspring Community Church; Des Moines
Rev. Bruce Kittle; Faith United Church of Christ; Iowa City
The Rev. Dr. Kathryn A. Kleinhans; Wartburg College; Waverly
Pastor Jim Klosterboer; Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church; Elkader
Rev. C. Eugene Koth; United Methodist Church (retired); Clive
Rev. Mark W. Kukkonen; Intentional Interim Pastor; St. Stephen's Lutheran Church; Cedar Rapids
Rev. Carmen Lampe-Zeitler; United Methodist Church; Des Moines
Rev. Martha E. Lang; Deacon; Trinity Episcopal Church; Muscatine
The Rev. Torey Lightcap; Rector, St. Thomas Episcopal Church; Sioux City
Rev. Kathleen Love, D.D.; Interfaith Minister; The Wedding Chapel; Des Moines
Rev. James Love, D.D.; Interfaith Minister; The Wedding Chapel; Des Moines
The Rev. William H. Lovin; Congregational United Church of Christ; Iowa City
Rev. Ted Lyddon Hatten; Wesley Foundation, Drake University; Indianola
Rev. Whit Malone; Collegiate Presbyterian Church; Ames
Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-LeCroy; Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Matthew J. Mardis-LeCroy; Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Pastor Sam Massey; First Presbyterian Church; Iowa City
Rev. Gene Matthews; United Methodist Church (retired missionary)
The Reverend Benjamin Maucere; Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City; Iowa City
The Rev. Jean McCarthy; Rector; Episcopalian; Des Moines
Rev. Diane McClanahan; Trinity United Methodist Church; Des Moines
Rev. James I. Meadows, Jr.; First Congregational United Church of Christ; Fort Dodge
The Rev. Russell Melby; Iowa Director, Church World Service/CROP; ELCA clergy;
Rev. Fritz Mellberg; United Church of Christ; Hiawatha
John Miller; Commissioned Lay Minister; Unitarian Universalist Society of Black Hawk County; Cedar Falls
Reverend Roger Mohr; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship; Burlington
Rev. Mary Moore; Unitarian Church of Davenport; Davenport
Rev. Allen Mothershed; United Church of Christ; Davenport
Rev. Katherine Mulhern; Edwards Congregational United Church of Christ; Davenport
Rev. Amy E. E. Murray, BCC; Urbandale United Church of Christ; Urbandale
Pastor Vernon H. Naffier; Faculty, GrandView University; ELCA; Ankeny
Rev. Peter T. Nash, PhD; Professor of Religion & Liberal Studies; Wartburg College; Waverly
Rev. Gus Nelson; Presbyterian (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Barbara Nish; Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.; Des Moines
Rev. Patricia Adams Oberbillig; Minister of Pastoral Care (retired), Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Delwyn L. Olivier; Augustana Lutheran Church; Sioux City
Rev. Ronald Osborne; Des Moines
Rev. James R. Pemble; United Methodist Church (retired); Des Moines
The Rev. Doug Peters; Senior Minister, Walnut Hills United Methodist Church; Urbandale

Rev. Oren Peterson; Unitarian Universalist (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Ronald D. Petrak; United Methodist Church (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Julie M. Poore; United Methodist Church; Granger
Rev. Charles M. Pope; Rector; St. Paul's Episcopal Church; Grinnell
Rabbi Jeff Portman; Agudas Achim Congregation; Iowa City
Rev. Robert Price; retired; Newton
The Rev. Catherine Quehl-Engel; Episcopalian; Mt. Vernon
The Rev. Julia Rendon; Crossroads United Church of Christ; Indianola
The Rev. Charity Rowley; Unitarian Universalist (retired); Iowa City
Rev. Nancy Ruby; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clinton; Clinton
The Reverend Dr. David R. Ruhe; Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Janette Scott; Presbyterian; Des Moines
Rev. Michael J. Schmidt; Christ Lutheran/St. Peter; LeMars
Pastor Victoria Shepherd; Denver
Rev. Charlotte Shivvers; Unitarian Universalist (retired); Knoxville
Rev. Deanna Shorb; College Chaplain; Grinnell
Rev. Diana Jacobs Sickles; ELCA (retired); Des Moines
Rev. Gary Sneller; First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Ottumwa
Rev. Dr. Larry W. Sonner, D.Min.; United Methodist Church (retired); Urbandale
Rev. Ron Spears; Retired clergy; Waterloo
Pastor Sarah Stadler-Ammon; Denver
Rev. Jerry Stevenson; Welsh Congregational Church UCC; Iowa City
Rev. William Steward; Grace United Methodist Church; Des Moines
Rev. Jane Stewart; New Song Episcopal Church; Coralville
Rev. Gayle V. Strickler, Jr.; Adjunct Minister for Community Concerns, Urbandale United Church of Christ; Urbandale
Rev. Mark Stringer; First Unitarian Church; Des Moines
Rev. Cheryl R. Thomas; Calvary Baptist Church; Des Moines
The Rev. Rachel Thorson Mithelman; St. John's Lutheran Church; Des Moines
Rev. Dr. James L. Wallace; Central Presbyterian Church; Des Moines
Pastor Barbara Weier; Zion United Church of Christ; Hartley
Rev. Dr. Susan K. Weier; United Church of Christ; Grinnell
Pastor Kenneth C. Wells; Licensed Lay Pastor; First Congregational UCC Church; Onawa
Pastor Mary A. Wells; Licensed Lay Pastor; First Congregational UCC Church; Onawa
Rev. Jane A. Willan; Zion United Church of Christ; Burlington
Rev. Dr. Dana Wimmer; Waterloo First United Methodist Church; Waterloo
Rev. Angie Witmer; Minister to Young Adults & Youth, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ; Des Moines
Rev. Beverly J. Wolff; St. John Lutheran Church; Cushing
The Rev. Jean Wollenberg; Executive Director/Chaplain, Hospice of Washington County; Washington
Rev. Bob Wollenberg; United Presbyterian Church; Washington
Rev. Mark A. Young; Wesley United Methodist Church; Ottumwa

Article printed from Des Moines Register Staff Blogs: <http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr>

URL to article: <http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2010/02/16/150-iowa-clergy-we-support-same-sex-marriage/>