Inclusiveness

STATEMENT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF UNDERHILL

Church Council Approved August 21, 2017 Membership approved January 28, 2018

The people of the United Church of Underhill have long been guided by this mission statement:

**The mission of the United Church of Underhill is to be a Christian community offering spiritual growth to all and responding to the needs of people according to the teachings of Christ.**

Our country, the state of Vermont and the towns of Jericho and Underhill have been experiencing broken relationships, division, fear, an increase in the rhetoric of exclusion and an increase of bullying and expressions of hate. Right now, right here, there are some who are especially vulnerable to this increase in rhetoric, including but not limited to people of color, people with disabilities, people struggling against the ravages of poverty, immigrants, Muslims and Jews, and people with various sexual identities. Oppression hurts us all.

a. We speak to express our sorrow about the divisions of fear, exclusion, and hate.

b. We speak to acknowledge our own failure to always live by Christ’s wishes to love and protect

those in need.

c. We speak to articulate our support for all of God’s people, regardless of where they come from,

what they look like, what gender they identify with, what religion they profess or who they love.

d. We speak to call all people to stand with those at risk, especially when they are feeling most

threatened, to assure them we are a community of caring and support and to share the burden with them.

e. We speak to teach our children how to demonstrate respect for all and reject expressions of hate and exclusion.

f. We speak to seek understanding of those who would threaten others and to bring them back into

the community of caring.

g. We speak to attract partners who we might join together in this work.

h. We speak from our own diversity but united in our mission as a Christian community to offer

spiritual growth to all and respond to the needs of people according to the teachings of Jesus

Christ.

i. We speak the truth in love for the transformation of the world.

These are difficult times in our country and in our local communities. As difficult as they are, though, we move forward together, as the United Church of Underhill, and with the good people of Jericho, Underhill and beyond, believing that darkness will give way to light, and that love will win. This is our faith. This is our hope. These principles guide our actions to bring about the transformation of the world.