



## THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LEXINGTON

February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

To the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council --

I am writing to you on behalf of the staff, ministry, affiliate ministers, and members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington. The Unitarian Universalist faith has long affirmed and defended the rights of the LGBTQ+ community. It is fundamental to our tradition to affirm and promote, "...the inherent worth and dignity of all persons." From ordaining openly LGBTQ+ ministers to the fight for marriage equality to ensuring Trans+ lives are protected to ensuring our congregation is a welcoming place for all LGBTQ+ persons – it is something we care passionately about both within our congregations and in the community around us.

It is in this spirit I encourage the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council to, without reservation, adopt the LGBT Youth Mental Health Protection Ordinance. Conversion therapy, in any form, is long discredited by the mental health and medical communities. Every year, LGBTQ+ youth seek out our congregation for a place of acceptance and welcome. Furthermore, the stories of our LGBTQ+ adults shed light on the damage conversion therapy has on one's mental health. I am not referring to abstract notions, but instead human beings that suffer continually or, sadly, take their lives because of the evils of anti-LGBTQ+ practices such as conversion therapy.

The great hope is that the Commonwealth of Kentucky will adopt such a ban statewide. However, whether or not that indeed happens, the Council will send a strong message of inclusion and affirmation with this ordinance. It might not seem like much, but such an ordinance will save lives in our city and county. Times have indeed changed, but threats to our youth who identify as LGBTQ+ remain.

Adopt the LGBT Youth Mental Health Protection Ordinance. Save lives. Protect our youth.

In Faith,

Rev. Brian Chenowith

cc: UUCL Board of Directors;  
UUCL Staff & Affiliate Ministers;  
UUCL Members & Friends