



INTERFAITH
ALLIANCE
PROTECTING FAITH AND FREEDOM

LGBTQ Equality

Talking Points and Principles

At Interfaith Alliance, we believe in protecting both faith and freedom. We believe the use of religion to discriminate in the public arena is directly contrary to our First Amendment freedoms. Religion should be a force to bring people together, never a weapon to divide. No one should have to worry about whether they will face discrimination or hostility as they go about their daily lives, be it because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other reason. No one's faith (or lack thereof) should be valued over another's personal liberty.

WHAT IS INTERFAITH ALLIANCE'S STANCE ON LGBTQ EQUALITY?

We are in the midst of a major cultural shift in how we think about, understand, and explore gender and sexual diversity. Many faith traditions continue to grapple with these issues, including same-sex marriage and the rights of transgender individuals, often through a scriptural lens. Interfaith Alliance aims to shift the conversation about LGBTQ equality from a scriptural issue to a constitutional one, ensuring that personal freedom is protected as well as (although separate from) religious freedom. Houses of worship may practice their faith as they see fit within their own space, but everyone should be treated equally under the law. Within the public sphere marriage, housing, employment, and public accommodations must be open to all.

We affirm the view of religious freedom envisioned by our founders, where every person's faith is protected and no one's faith is used to harm others. At Interfaith Alliance, we aim to hold the government accountable to protect all citizens and to promote tolerance.

HOW DO WE PROMOTE LGBTQ EQUALITY?

The FBI notes that hate crimes committed on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity are on the rise.¹ At the same time, rollbacks of LGBTQ rights are happening at the national, state, and local levels. From combatting discrimination by government-funded adoption agencies to organizing against anti-trans bathroom bills, Interfaith Alliance and its affiliates work hard to address these issues at all levels of government. We also galvanize support across faith traditions in affected areas to challenge hateful rhetoric and actions.

- This summer on [State of Belief](#), Rev. Welton Gaddy speaks with leaders and organizers from across the country as part of the semimonthly series "Whosoever You Love" to affirm the worth and full value of LGBTQ people within and beyond organized religion.
- A recent Supreme Court case examined whether religious freedom can be used as a cover for discrimination against gay customers. We joined two amicus briefs in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, one written by [Muslim Advocates and Columbia Law School's Public Rights/Private Conscience Project](#) and one by the [Anti-Defamation League](#).
- In June 2017, our president Jack Moline joined LGBTQ rights groups at the Department of Justice's Hate Crimes Summit, where he condemned the current administration's promotion of discriminatory speech and actions.

HOW CAN I HELP?

The time is now to support Interfaith Alliance as we protect the dignity and safety of LGBTQ Americans, included many beloved members of our faith communities. By joining us, you will place yourself firmly on the side of religious freedom and LGBTQ equality. With your support, Interfaith Alliance will continue to monitor and fight against laws allowing for discrimination as well as speaking out against hate crimes and reaching out to affected communities to help in any way they need. You can find out more about our commitment to LGBTQ rights by signing up for our email list at interfaithalliance.org.

¹ Mark Berman, "Hate Crimes in the United States Increased Last Year, the FBI Says," Washington Post (Nov. 13, 2017.)