

—Slug:.....COMM-0870.opin.letter.010\_ucc  
—Contributor.....  
—Contributor email.....  
—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers  
—Format.....LETTERS - Opinions - Letters to the Editor  
—Dateline.....Randolph  
—Article Number:.....43747



**Notes from editor (not for publication):**



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 A call for understanding and empathy

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2

####END SUBHED####

3 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

4 The Board of Directors of the Vermont Conference of the  
5 United Church of Christ was deeply saddened and concerned  
6 over recent, widely publicized remarks about gender identity  
7 made during a Vermont Senate discussion. These remarks  
8 represented anachronistic, misinformed, and hateful views  
9 toward transgender persons, denying their dignity and humanity.

10 As gains have been made over the years for the lesbian,  
11 gay, and bisexual community, it seems that transgender

12 individuals have become the new recipients of persecution and  
13 ignorance. Trans people are singled out as special targets of the  
14 fear and lack of understanding that lead to bias and  
15 discrimination in words, actions, and legislation.

16 Statements were made on the floor of the Vermont Senate  
17 insinuating that relationships involving transgender persons are  
18 akin to human beings entering into relationships with animals.  
19 These misinformed tropes used to be applied to all same-sex  
20 relationships, arguing against civil unions and later same-sex  
21 marriage.

22 Such remarks demonstrate a fundamental lack of  
23 understanding of and empathy for those who experience gender  
24 dysphoria and who seek to find their authentic selves through  
25 processes which medical science supports. As people of faith  
26 who believe in a loving God who has created all persons in the  
27 divine image and likeness and accords dignity, respect, and love  
28 toward all, we find these outdated, hateful insinuations appalling.

29 We call on our legislators to demonstrate their own  
30 humanity by seeking to understand and to empathize with those  
31 who experience their gender identity and sexuality differently  
32 from them, so that they can treat all Vermonters with the dignity  
33 and compassion these persons deserve.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

35

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LINKS:

36

####BEGIN LINKS####

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VIDEO:

37

####BEGIN VIDEO####

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

38

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

####END LOGLINE####