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## U.C.C. Leader Declares Support for Same-Sex Marriage

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With a big vote looming in just days, the Rev. John Thomas, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ [UCC] endorsed same-sex marriage in a June 28 address to the UCC's Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns.

From his address: *Here is what I believe: I believe that the General Synod should affirm the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons to have their covenanted relationships recognized by the state as marriages equal in name, privileges, and responsibilities to married heterosexual couples. I believe our local churches, as they are able, should move toward the development of marriage equality policies so that the same liturgical and pastoral blessing and discipline may be offered all entering into covenanted relationships.*

Another passage: *All across this country marriage amendments have been proposed and passed which, while purporting to merely affirm traditional views of marriage, in most cases have been used to demean gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, to vilify their relationships, and in some cases to deny or restrict their full civil rights. All across this country Christians have joined this crusade adding their own voice to words and deeds that wound many of our neighbors. A word of hope, affirmation, and grace from the church is, I believe, urgently needed in our day. If that word cannot come from the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, where else will it come from?* The UCC also faces a vote on a resolution affirming the lordship and divinity of Jesus Christ as it meets in Atlanta, July 1-5 [see my weblog article posted June 18, 2005]. The marriage issue is expected to be up for a vote on Monday, July 4. The full text of Thomas' speech is available online. Anyone looking for proof that liberal denominations are capitulating to the logic and demands of the homosexual movement needs only to look at developments in the UCC.

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