

# love & Equality Statement

## Rights and Protections Denied Same-Sex Partners

Because same-sex couples are denied the right to marry, same-sex couples and their families are denied access to the more than 1,138 federal rights, protections and responsibilities automatically granted to married heterosexual couples. Among those are:

- The right to make decisions on a partner's behalf in a medical emergency. Specifically, the states generally provide that spouses automatically assume this right in an emergency. If an individual is unmarried, the legal "next of kin" automatically assumes this right. This means, for example, that a gay man with a life partner of many years may be forced to accept the financial and medical decisions of a sibling or parent with whom he may have a distant or even hostile relationship.
- The right to take up to 12 weeks of leave from work to care for a seriously ill partner or parent of a partner. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 permits individuals to take such leave to care for ill spouses, children and parents but not a partner or a partner's parents.
- The right to petition for same-sex partners to immigrate.
- The right to assume parenting rights and responsibilities when children are brought into a family through birth, adoption, surrogacy or other means. For example, in most states, there is no law providing a noncustodial, nonbiological or nonadoptive parent's right to visit a child—or responsibility to provide financial support for that child—in the event of a breakup.
- The right to share equitably all jointly held property and debt in the event of a breakup, since there are no laws that cover the dissolution of domestic partnerships.
- Family-related Social security benefits, income and estate tax benefits, disability benefits, family-related military and veterans benefits and other important benefits.
- The right to inherit property from a partner in the absence of a will.
  - The right to purchase continued health coverage for a domestic partner after the loss of a job.

Such inequities impose added costs on these families, such as increased health insurance premiums, higher tax burdens and the absence of pension benefits or Social Security benefits in the event of a partner's death.

Some same-sex and transgender families consult attorneys to draw up legal documents such as powers of attorney, co-parenting agreements and wills, that will at least permit them to declare who they wish to make health care and financial decisions for them if they become incapacitated; how they wish to share parenting responsibilities or, in the event of a breakup, custody of a child; and what they want to happen to their property when they die. However, these are not a substitute for legal protection under law and cannot provide the broad range of benefits and protections provided by law.

## **M** North Carolina Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality Declaration of Religious Leaders • 19 April 2004

**A** The most fundamental human right, after the necessities of food, clothing and shelter, is the right to affection and the supportive love of other human beings. We become most fully human when we love another person. We can grow in our capacity to be human—to be loving—in a family unit. This right to love and form a family is so fundamental that our United States Constitution takes it for granted in its dedication to "secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." The North Carolina Constitution likewise affirms the "inalienable rights" of human beings to "life, liberty, the enjoyment of the fruits of their own labor, and the pursuit of happiness."

**R** Throughout history, tyrants have known that by denying the right of oppressed peoples to form and nurture families, they can kill the spirit of those peoples. From the shameful history of slavery in America, the injustice of forbidding people to marry is evident as a denial of a basic human right. The American laws forbidding interracial marriage, now struck down, were clearly discriminatory. Denial of the status of marriage to those who would freely accept its responsibilities creates legal and economic inequities and social injustice. We feel called to protest and oppose this injustice.

**R** As religious people, clergy and lay leaders, we are mandated by faith to stand for justice in our common civic life. We oppose the use of sacred texts and religious traditions to deny legal equity to same-gender couples. As concerned citizens we affirm the liberty of adults of the same gender to love and marry. We insist that no one, especially the state, is allowed to coerce people into marriage or bar two consenting adults, whether of the same or differing genders, from forming the family unit that lets them be more fully loving, thus more fully human. We respect the fact that debate and discussion continue in many of our religious communities as to the scriptural, theological and liturgical issues involved. However, we draw on our many faith traditions to arrive at a common conviction. We are resolved that the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitments of civil marriage.

**A** We affirm freedom of conscience in this matter. We recognize that the state may not require religious groups to officiate at, or bless, same-gender marriages. Likewise, a denial of state civil recognition dishonors the religious convictions of those communities and clergy who officiate at, and bless, same-gender marriages. The state may not favor the convictions of one religious group over another by denying individuals their fundamental right to marry and to have those marriages recognized by civil law.

**E** As faith leaders, we commit ourselves to public action, visibility, education, and mutual support in the service of the right and freedom to marry.

## COMMON WOMAN CHORUS • 4 June 2005



# Love

## ACT 1 • The Love

**These Boots are Made for Walking** by Lee Hazlewood (performed by small group)

**Don't Get Around Much Anymore** by Bob Russell and Duke Ellington, arranged by Mark Brymer (Betty Prioux, guest director)

**Pretty Woman** by Roy Orbison and Bill Dees (solo by Bonnie Burroughs)

**Fever** by John Davenport and Eddie Cooley, arranged by Kirby Shaw (Erin O'Hara, guest director)

**Nearness of You** by Ned Washington and Hoagy Carmichael, arranged by Mac Huff (Kristen Stinnett, guest director)

**My Girl** by William "Smokey" Robinson and Ronald White

**Head over Feet** by Alanis Morissette and Glen Ballard (solo by Kristen Stinnett)

**Best Friend's Wedding (Medley)** by Hal David, Burt Bacharach, Dorothy Fields and Jerome Kern, arranged by Roger Emerson (Kristen Stinnett, guest director)

## ACT 2 • The Marriage

**Night and Day** by Cole Porter, arranged by Pete King (Betty Prioux, guest director)

**Chapel of Love** by Phil Spector, Ellie Greenwich and Jeff Barry, arranged by Roger Emerson

**I Got You Babe** by Sonny Bono (duet by Sandi Sullivan and Eli Warren)

**Embraceable You** by George and Ira Gershwin, arranged by Kirby Shaw (Erin O'Hara, guest director)

**Honey, I'm Home** by Shania Twain and R.J. Lange (solo by Lisa Schupp)

**When I'm 64** by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, arranged by John Leavitt

## ACT 3 • The Equality

**Secret Marriage** by Hans Eisler and Sting, arranged Cindy Bizzell, Erin O'Hara, and Jude Casseday (Jude Casseday, guest conductor)

**Reading of The North Carolina Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality Declaration of Religious Leaders and People of Faith** (Readers: Rev. Wanda Floyd of Imani Metropolitan Community Church, Rabbi Lucy Dinner of Temple Beth Or, Rev. Jack McKinney of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, and Rev. Mary Grigolia of Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship)

**Everything Possible** by Fred Small

**Let Us Love in Peace** by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Ben Elton (Kristen Stinnett, guest conductor)



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# MARRIAGE

## THE MUSIC

**Director**  
Cindy Bizzell

**First Sopranos**  
Linda Carmichael  
Caroline Herbert  
Sarah Karalatsos  
Anne Kilpatrick  
Barrett Mardre  
Erin O'Hara  
Jolene Robinson

**Second Sopranos**  
Karen Dold  
Joan McAllister  
Betty Prioux  
Michelle Reader  
Jenny Womack

**Alto Ones**  
Melinda Campbell  
Lynn Karatz  
Jane MacNeela  
Lisa Shupp  
Kristen Stinnett  
Julia Storm

**Alto Twos**  
Bonnie Burroughs  
Jude Caseday  
Bernise Lynch  
Marty McClelland  
Pam Parkinson  
Mary Plyler  
Betty Rider  
Elizabeth Williams

**Musicians**  
Amy Germuth (guitar)  
Kay "Jinx" Jenkins (drums)  
Abbie Modjeska (piano)  
Terri Phoenix (guitar)  
Michelle Van Note (bass)

**Concert Cochairs**  
Jules Ingram  
Kristen Stinnett

## THE PLAY

**Cast**  
Delma Armstrong  
Kelly Eppley  
Rachelle Fong  
Jane MacNeela  
Jennifer Schake  
Susanne Schmal  
Sandi Sullivan  
Eli Warren

**Dancers**  
Holly Ferguson  
Jen McKay

**Playwright**  
Jules Ingram

**Stage Director**  
Kristen Stinnett

**Set Design**  
Val Glaser  
Kristen Stinnett

**Set Construction**  
Jennifer Schake  
Kristen Stinnett  
Erin O'Hara  
Angela Williams

**Set Painting**  
Kyrie Eimicke  
Kelly Eppley  
Erin O'Hara  
Jennifer Schake  
Lisa Shupp  
Kristen Stinnett  
Angela Williams

**Artistic Design**  
Angela Williams/  
Villanelle Productions

**Programs**  
Angela Williams/  
Villanelle Productions

## THE THANKS

**Sound**  
Roberta Melton

**Multimedia Presentation**  
Heather Monbureau-Barnes

**Video**  
Carolyn Crump  
Elaine Monbureau-Barnes

**Photography**  
Maggie McGlynn

**Risers**  
Meredith College Music Department

**House Volunteers**  
Molly Cook (spotlights)  
Laurie Degernes  
Melissa Juniper (spotlights)  
Deb Reilly (spotlights)  
Josiah Sage (dimmers)  
Julia Schelly  
Susan Taylor  
Sallie Wintz

**Paint Donations**  
Denise Dunn  
Kelly Eppley  
SWOOP

**MAD Reception**  
Kim Clayton  
Equal Hearts\*  
Ruth Heruska  
Julia Storm (MAD Reception)

**Sponsors**  
The Independent Weekly  
Balloons and Things

\*Equal Hearts Ministry ([www.equalhearts.org](http://www.equalhearts.org)) is an interfaith project that gives religious communities an opportunity to show visible support for marriage equality. Marriage equality is the right of all couples, regardless of gender, to enjoy the same privileges, rights and responsibilities in civil marriage.

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## About The Post-Concert MAD\* (Make A Difference) Reception

CONTINUE THE CELEBRATION • SHARE THE LOVE

The Common Woman Chorus, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, sponsors annual MAD (Make A Difference) receptions to benefit organizations whose missions align closely with our own. Reception admission is \$5 and wedding cake, light hors d'oeuvres, and beverages will be served. Tonight's reception proceeds benefit Equality NC and the ACLU and Legal Foundation of NC.

The mission of the **American Civil Liberties Union and Legal Foundation of NC** is

- to improve the quality of life for all North Carolinians
- to secure, protect and defend the freedoms and civil liberties of all North Carolinians through litigation, legislation and public education
- to educate the people of North Carolina about their legal and civil rights, and freedoms through empowerment and outreach and open forums

The mission of **Equality NC** is to secure equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through

- educating and empowering citizens and legislators about laws, legislation and relevant issues
- providing information about the General Assembly and the courts
- encouraging participation in the electoral process

Equality NC Project was founded in 1979 as the North Carolina Human Rights Fund, an educational and charitable organization established to promote and defend the human rights and civil liberties of lesbians and gay men in North Carolina. In the early years, NCHRF worked to document antigay violence, to fight for repeal of the Crime Against Nature law, and to provide legal aid to gays and lesbians targeted for prosecution. The group also worked to foster local organizations across the state, and help fund the first NC Pride marches. In the late eighties, the focus shifted to providing education on lesbian and gay issues. After a dormant period in the 1990s, a new board took over in 1999, changed the name to Equality NC Project, and the organization became the non-profit sibling of Equality NC PAC. Expanding on the organization's history of education, the group began working to educate not only within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community but to educate the non-LGBT community on LGBT issues as well.

Like Equality NC, the Common Woman Chorus believes in the power of individuals to create change. We encourage you to stay informed, get involved, inspire others to care about equality, a true American value.

