



**STATEMENT OF INTENT
MADE BY
RAINBOW DOOR, A FAITH COALITION**

Violence against people perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ) has existed for millennia. Recent anti-LGBTQ violence in New York City is the latest chapter in this sorry history of bigotry, oppression and discrimination. Urgent action is needed to put a stop to the growing number of targeted bashings and murders in our community.

Religion is complicit in this violence.

For too long, fearful religious rhetoric has been used to attack the LGBTQ community and to justify discrimination against its members. The Rainbow Door Faith Coalition strongly affirms the right of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identification, to be free of the burden of prejudice in their practice of religion and in all other areas of their lives. We reject the antiquated dogma that LGBTQ people are "sinful" or that their so-called "lifestyle" is immoral or threatening to religion or society. We support full equality for LGBTQ persons and encourage respect for their relationships both inside and outside the spiritual traditions that we represent.

We call upon faith leaders and communities to:

- acknowledge that speech condemning LGBTQ persons is violent speech and, therefore, unacceptable.
- encourage congregations and denominations to accept, affirm, and celebrate the whole identities of LGBTQ persons as gifts from God.
- mark their buildings with the "Rainbow Door" symbol of solidarity and sanctuary.
- exercise "Rainbow Door Safe Sanctuaries" practices, offering compassionate pastoral and congregational care to LGBTQ persons, not to convert or change, but to empower each person's sense of wholeness and well-being, particularly in this current culture of anti-LGBTQ violence.
- choose to hold themselves accountable to this pledge of safety through education of other faith leaders and communities, through reexamination of their beliefs, actions, and words that instigate violence, and through support for the LGBTQ population in general, as well as all marginalized populations within it.

Our respective faiths call us to not only stand up for victims of direct violence and oppression, but to cooperatively work to transform violent religious rhetoric until all LGBTQ persons are safe inside and outside faith communities, not because of changing times, not because of shifting politics, but because our faith has commanded and will always command such truthful, anti-violent action.