

For Immediate Release

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Interfaith Vigil to Note Anniversary of Pulse Nightclub Massacre Deadly Attack on LGBTQ+ Citizens

An interfaith anniversary vigil honoring those slain in the Orlando Pulse nightclub massacre last June will be held on Monday, June 12, at 6:30 p.m. in Veteran's Park, at the corner of Main Street and Western Avenue in downtown Fond du Lac. The vigil is being organized and sponsored by the Equality Project of Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in partnership with Honor Them with Action (<https://honorthemwithaction.org/>).

Multiple members of the community will speak in remembrance of the LGBTQ+ individuals slain in the hate crime. Attendees are invited to bring a candle to light in memory of the lives extinguished by senseless violence.

"The people killed in Pulse nightclub were targeted for being themselves," said Equality Project Coordinator Christopher Szymczak. "We will gather to say that, although their murders were violent and senseless, they did not live in vain. We honor their memories, and acknowledge that they had a right to live as themselves, true to who they were."

"Many of us know and love LGBTQ+ people, and believe it is important to speak up for equality and safety for those we love," said OCUUF Social Justice Now Committee Chair Paisley Harris. "We want to be a beacon of love and social justice in our community, and we invite other like-minded citizens to join with us in standing on the side of love."

The June 12, 2016, massacre killed 49 people and wounded 53 others in the Orlando, Fla., gay nightclub. It is considered both a hate crime and a terrorist attack. It was the deadliest mass shooting by a single shooter and the deadliest incidence of violence against LGBTQ+ people in United States History. It was also the deadliest terrorist attack in the U.S. since the September 11, 2001, attacks.

The Equality Project is created and supported by the Open Circle Social Justice Now Committee and features a monthly gathering, September-June, to educate, support, and take action to achieve equality for LGBTQ+ persons. Like the local Humanity Project, with its goal of getting past race as a barrier, The Equality Project aims to remove gender and sexuality as barriers in understanding each other, and to improve relationships across the community.

Unitarian Universalists strongly believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and the spiritual practice of welcome is a very important part of UU faith communities. For 25 years, congregations have worked hard to make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people are

full members of UU faith communities. Being welcoming means striving for radical inclusion, and creating spaces that honor every part of individuals' identities, backgrounds, and experiences.

Follow The Equality Project on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/equalityprojectfdl/> .

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