



## STATEMENT

*For immediate release*

### **RELIGIOUS LEADERS CALL ON GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE CARIBBEAN TO REPEAL ANTI-LGBT LAWS**

**KINGSTON, Jamaica October 4, 2018** — Laws that criminalize consensual same-sex intimacy exist in a majority of Commonwealth countries, an unwelcome holdover from colonization — despite the fact that such laws have been long since repealed in the United Kingdom. But repealing these laws has proven difficult in some countries as they continue to be falsely “justified” by religious arguments put forward by conservative faith leaders and churches, which in turn fuels an unfortunate hate that is distinctly un-Christian. But the tide is now turning.

One year ago, over sixty faith leaders from many different denominations came together in Kingston, Jamaica, for the first ever “Intimate Conviction” conference. Today, an edited volume of some of their compelling presentations, *Intimate Conviction: Examining the Church and Anti-Sodomy Laws Across the Caribbean*, is launching and will now serve as an important tool to make the case for the repeal of anti-LGBT laws in the Caribbean and indeed across the Commonwealth. We are proud to support today’s historic release and stand firm in our conviction that love is love, and that God’s unconditional and all-inclusive love extends to everyone. We must always strive to demonstrate that same unconditional love and respect for all members of our human family.

Today’s launch of the *Intimate Conviction* volume demonstrates broad, cross-denominational support from churches for the much needed repeal of anti-LGBT laws. We urge governments across the Caribbean to repeal anti-LGBT laws in their jurisdiction and to support the human rights and health of their LGBT populations.

**Signed:**

Rev. Michael Blair, Executive Minister, Church in Mission, United Church of Canada/L'Eglise Unie du Canada

Michiko Bown-Kai, Co-chair, Affirm United/S'Affirmer Ensemble, United Church of Canada/L'Eglise Unie du Canada

Rev. Andrew Chisholm, Rector, St. James (Anglican), Kingston, Ontario

Francisco DeBernardo, Executive Director, New Ways Ministry (Catholic)

Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo, United Church of Canada

Rev. Matt Glover, Director, MGA Counselling Services, Australia

Sister Jeannine Gramick, Coordinator of the National Coalition of American Nuns

The Rev. Canon Dr. John W. B. Hill, presbyter of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, Canon of St. James Cathedral

Rev. Dr. Boon Lin Ngeo, Metropolitan Community Church of New York (MCCNY)

Rev. Jide Macaulay, Founder & CEO House Of Rainbow

Very Rev. Fr. Sean Major-Campbell, Rector, Christ Church, Kingston, Jamaica

The Ven. Alastair McCollum, Archdeacon, Anglican Diocese of British Columbia

Rev. Canon Garth Minott, Anglican Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

Rt. Rev. Dr. Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham, Diocese of Oxford

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**For more information, contact:**

Joshua Terry, Communications and Campaigns Officer

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Telephone: +1 415-595-1666, ext. 236

Email: [jterry@aidslaw.ca](mailto:jterry@aidslaw.ca)