

GUIDELINES FOR WELCOMING STATEMENTS

A Welcoming Statement is the primary way a public statement of welcome is developed. It is a grass roots approach to build understanding one congregation at a time. This program will promote an intentional inclusive ministry and will help heal the pain of gays and lesbians who have been excluded in the past.

1. Language is important! You will need to use language which is inclusive of genders, ages and sexual orientations. Many gay men and lesbians do not like the term "homosexual". In the past it has been associated with illness and oppression. Self-identified people are more comfortable with the terms bisexual, lesbian and gay men.
2. Review the samples below for inspiration, but make it your group's expression of vision and ministry.

SAMPLE STATEMENTS OF WCN CONGREGATIONS AND OTHER MINISTRIES

- In working to bring about the realm of God, Basileia: An Open Door Community of Christ values diversity and celebrates those differences as intentional acts of God's creation. In that the realm of God includes all persons, we welcome and include all persons including persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities and family units in the full life of the congregation.
Basileia Community of Christ, Los Angeles, CA www.basileia.net
- Many times, in many ways, we have affirmed our desire to be a congregation that is inclusive of all persons. Such a statement implies that we welcome all, without regard to race, sex, socio-economic status, age, mental or physical ability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
St. Paul Community of Christ, St. Paul, Minnesota
- As a people of faith, we recognize the diversity of people created in the image of God. We welcome to this congregation people of any age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, health status, and any element of humanity of created by God."
Lafayette Park United Methodist Church, 51. Louis, Missouri lpumc@stlnet.com
- God calls Broadway United Methodist Church to be a faith community embracing the diversity of our Chicago neighborhood and larger community. We welcome all persons celebrating the human family's God-given diversity of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, and physical or mental capabilities. We also welcome persons. regardless of social and economical class and faith background. At Broadway, we are accepted into God's nurturing family, which invites us into spiritual growth through worship, study, mission, and social action. We are grateful for the opportunities God gives us to experience the love of Christ."
Broadway United Methodist Church, Chicago, Illinois BrdwvUMC@BrdwvUMC.org
- We, the people of Epworth-Roanoke United Methodist Church, believe that God's love is expansive and unconditional and that, through Christ, God calls us to love one another as God loves us...

We declare that all persons are recipients of God's love and grace. God intends the church to

be a community that embodies love, grace, and justice for all people. In particular, we discern that God is challenging our Christian community to accept lesbians and gay men as sisters, brothers and co-workers in the household of faith. We affirm the full participation of lesbians and gay men in every aspect of our church and society.

Further, we welcome and shall support all persons regardless of gender, race, age, cultural or religious heritage, ethnic background, sexual/affectual orientation or identity, or economic circumstances.

We celebrate the worth, dignity, and gifts of every person as a child of God. We hope that our affirmation of the worth of all persons we bring reconciliation to all people within the church who, because of prejudice, hate, homophobia, or ignorance, find themselves exiled from the body of Christ."

Epworth Roanoke United Methodist Church, Kansas City, Missouri www.ERUMCKC.org

- "We take up in love the challenge of discovering and celebrating the diversities we find among us-diversities of culture, theology, gender, sexual orientation, and congregational size-so that these diversities may strengthen us all, and so that our life together may witness to the presence of Christ's Spirit."

The Episcopal Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

- We recognize that gay men and lesbians, both lay and ordained, have made significant contributions within the life of the church throughout history. Some of these Anglicans believe that they were called to celibacy, and others as with heterosexuals, believe that they are called to express their God-given sexuality with a committed relationship. We regret that many gay men and lesbians are still forced to deny both their sexual orientation and their committed relationships in order to participate fully in parish life.

We therefore declare ourselves to be a parish that is open and affirming of the celebration of the Christian faith by all people including *gay* men and lesbians, and supports all people in all aspects of the life of the Church:

St. John's Parish, Anglican Church of Canada

- Who is welcome here?
 - If you are Asian, Hispanic, Black, or White...
 - If you are male or female or transgender...
 - If you are three days old, 30 years old, or 103 years old...
 - If you've never stepped foot in a church; or if you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic or are a life-long Lutheran...
 - If you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered...
 - If you are straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual...
 - If you are a Republican, Democrat, Independent, Socialist, or not registered to vote...
 - If you have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...
 - If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless...
 - If you are fully-abled, disabled, or a person of differing abilities...

You are welcome here!

This congregation is committed to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith, centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ. Therefore, in faithfulness to the Gospel and our Lutheran heritage, and to the best of our ability, we promise to provide programs, ministries, and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place.

Prince of Peace Lutheran, Philadelphia, PA