

Expand Our Welcoming Spirit Update

Hello, church family. The “Expand Our Welcoming Spirit” task force has been meeting for a little over a year now to explore the possibility of becoming a Reconciled in Christ (RIC) congregation. During that time, we’ve met one on one with a number of congregation members. We’ve held several learning sessions where we’ve explored the importance of welcoming hospitality.

Before we proceed forward, we want to check in with you. To become a Reconciled in Christ congregation, we would be agreeing to:

- Adopt a welcome statement (draft statement can be found below)
- Additionally, we would act out that welcome by being open to calling an LGBTQIA+ and Black, Brown, Indigenous Person of Color (BIPOC) and also by allowing our space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings.
- Remember the national RIC program through an annual gift

Hope’s Draft Welcome Statement

The congregation of Hope Lutheran Church invites all to join in experiencing God’s love and grace. We recognize that each of us is a unique creation and a child of God.

We welcome you: a Christian, a member of another religious community, a lifelong Lutheran or seeking a spiritual home;

We welcome you: Black, Latinx, White, Asian, Native or any other racial identities; here we are committed to striving for racial equity;

We welcome you: your relationship status – married, divorced, widowed, single or partnered;

We welcome you: whatever your sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;

We welcome you: whatever your political allegiances, socioeconomic status, age or past history;

We welcome you: fully-abled, disabled or a person of differing abilities;

We welcome you: to all the rites, sacraments, ceremonies and gatherings of our community.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we invite you to share in the unfolding experience of Jesus Christ.

At this point we’d like to see if we’ve given you enough background on the topic. We ask you to respond to an exploratory survey during the month of June. You can either fill out the paper

survey and turn it in or respond to the online survey (a link is on our church website). That survey is below. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Proposed Welcome Statement and Commitment Survey

If a vote were held today on becoming a Reconciled in Christ congregation, how would you vote?

- ☐ Yes, wholeheartedly.
- ☐ Yes, but I would appreciate more education
- ☐ Yes, but I would appreciate more scriptural engagement
- ☐ No, because I need more _____

Additional comments: