

As a Reconciling Lutheran, I call on the Lutheran church to extend God's extravagant welcome and a genuine invitation for acceptance and full inclusion to

People of every age, class, color, and ethnic origin....
People of all sexual orientations and gender identities....
People who are single, married, divorced, separated, blessed or partnered....
People who are temporarily-able, disabled, or of differing abilities....

And I ask God, the giver of life and all creation, to guide my ways in living out the ministry of reconciliation always seeking to follow in the steps of Jesus Christ.

You can also sign the covenant online at: www.lcna.org/RL

(please keep this top portion for your reference)

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I want to be a Reconciling Lutheran!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

e-mail: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

Signature(s): _____

Congregation: _____

Please return this slip to:

Lutherans Concerned/North America; PO Box 4707; St. Paul, MN 55104



RIC Sunday January 30, 2011

The ecumenical community which welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities celebrates the last Sunday of January each year as "welcoming" Sunday. In the Lutheran tradition, we call this day RIC Sunday. This year, RIC Sunday will be more important than ever for our churches in the ELCA. The decisions and actions of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly have invited welcoming congregations to continue their ministry of reconciliation.

Begun in 1983, Reconciling in Christ (RIC) is a program for Lutheran communities of faith to answer the inclusive call of the Gospel by welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Currently, there are over 480 Lutheran settings on the RIC roster, including congregations, campus ministries, synods of the ELCA and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, camps, colleges, and other independent organizations. Additional information about the RIC program, including a complete listing of RIC settings and resources for personal and congregational use, are available on-line at the website www.lcna.org.

"Building an Inclusive Church" Trainings are held several times each year to help folks from RIC or prospective RIC congregations learn how to work with church members to discern if a congregation wishes to "come out of the closet" about welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. If you are interested in attending such an event, check out the events listed on the website.

In addition to our Reconciling in Christ program for congregations and organizations, LC/NA offers the ability for individuals to become Reconciling Lutherans. *Whether you are a member of an RIC congregation or not*, it is important for your voice to be heard as a Reconciling Lutheran. Joining is easy and does not cost you a penny. You do not need to become a member of LC/NA to be added to the roster of Reconciling Lutherans. All you need to do is sign the Covenant of Welcome, affirming your commitment to encourage the Lutheran church to extend a genuine invitation for full acceptance and inclusion to all people. Please sign the attached covenant and return it to the church to send to LC/NA.

Just a Sampling of Recent RIC Congregations:

St. Peter's Church, Port Jervis, NY

Proud to support their members of all sexual orientations and gender identities, St. Peter's is happy to perform weddings for same or different gender couples and regularly uses gender neutral and LGBT specific language in worship. The congregation is currently excited about a prospective partnering with their local school on anti-bullying initiatives.

Shekinah Christian Community, Lewiston, ID

Shekinah, which can be translated as "presence of God," is a non-traditional house church in which the community worships liturgically together. Their original formation included the concept of LGBT inclusion and they have now adopted an official affirmation of welcome.

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Monona, WI

Home to both traditional and rock worship services as well as a variety of outreach projects including a food pantry and refugee sponsorship, St. Stephen's openly affirms their welcome of all people whatever their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Augustana Lutheran Church, Portland, OR

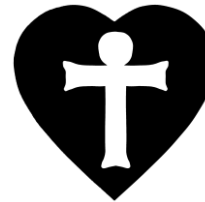
Augustana has dedicated itself to peace and social justice, in part by partnering with community agencies including Well Arts Institute, *Familias en Accion*, Community Alliance of Tenants, Irvington Cooperative Preschool, Oregon Farmworkers Ministry, Oregon New Sanctuary Movement and the National Community Land Trust Network. Augustana is actively involved in the Albina Ministerial Alliance and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

Lutheran Church of the Reformation, St. Louis Park, MN

Lutheran Church of the Reformation is a community of diverse and engaged members, caring for one another and sharing a feeling of belonging committed to the beauty of the Word, and to the beauty of the world. They are blessed with natural, serene spaces to connect with the Holy Spirit. They are honored to live as the recipients of those that have gone before and consciously shaped by the past and the wellspring of riches that are given to the congregation.

Reconciling Lutherans

is a program of Lutherans Concerned/North America inviting all Lutherans to publicly witness to their call for a church and world that welcome and include.



All this is from God who reconciled us through Jesus Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. 2

Cor 5:18.

Data privacy: Lutherans Concerned / North America cares about your privacy. We will not sell, rent, or lease any information regarding Reconciling Lutherans to any third party. In order to have a public impact in both the church and society, the list of Reconciling Lutherans is designed to be a public list. LC/NA may publish a list of names and hometowns (City, State/Province) of Reconciling Lutherans. We will not, however, publish post-office addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, or any other information. From time to time, LC/NA may contact Reconciling Lutherans with messages related to, and in support of, the mission of Reconciling Lutherans.

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As members of the body of Christ, we are called to be ministers of reconciliation both in the church and in the world. Through our baptism we are reconciled to God through the saving grace of Christ Jesus. As children of God, Christ calls us to lives of reconciliation, wholeness, integrity and authenticity. We are challenged by the Gospel to be agents of healing and love within our church and society.

We affirm with the apostle Paul that in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal 3:28). Christ has made us one body with many members, equal at the foot of the cross and at Christ's table of blessing and promise. God's extravagant welcome is sure.