



Reconciling in Christ

We continue to follow up after our congregation's vote at the Annual Meeting to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation. St. Stephen's information will be listed on the Lutherans Concerned/North America website (www.lcna.org) and we'll have more on how to be the most welcoming soon. Below is our "Affirmation of Welcome." Be sure to watch for the rainbow heart symbol, as well!

As a community of the people of God, we are called to minister to all people in our world, knowing that the world is often an unloving place. Our world is a place of alienation and brokenness. Christ calls us to reconciliation and wholeness. We are challenged by the Gospel to be agents of healing within our 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" (Galatians 3:28). Christ has made us one. We acknowledge this reconciliation extends to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Because gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons and their families are often scorned by society and alienated from the Church, we wish to make known our caring and concern. It is for this purpose that we affirm the following:

- *that people of all sexual orientations and gender identities share the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God;*
- *that people of all sexual orientations and gender identities are welcome within the membership of St. Stephen's upon making a common, public Affirmation of Faith; and*
- *that as members of this congregation, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities are expected and encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of this community of faith*