

## **What's Next: Ways to Embody LGBTQ Welcome**

### **Immediate Steps**

Incorporate your welcoming statement into various facets of your ministry – i.e. include it in your bulletin, announce it on Sundays, highlight it on your website or social media pages.

Have pride symbols around your worship space.

Include lgbtq people in the leadership and creation of worship.

Include lgbtq people and particular concerns during your time of corporate prayer – i.e. pray for youth who are living in rejecting families, being bullied at school, or in the vulnerable process of coming out.

Use nametags that include pronouns.

Designate gender neutral bathrooms.

Display a rainbow sign or banner on your building; or consider making a rainbow bench part of your church landscaping.

Observe lgbtq events such as Pride Month, National Coming Out Day (October 11), Transgender Day of Remembrance (Nov 20) and HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

Maintain an Inclusion Committee to continue to monitor and challenge your congregation to be more welcoming.

Evaluate your church library and make sure that it contains books that are lgbtq affirming.

### **Ongoing Commitments**

Be sensitive to language that is used in worship and public events. Avoid reinforcing binary language like brothers/sisters or men/women. Replace with terms like siblings, beloved, people, etc.

Be intentional in lifting up the diversity of families within your congregation and/or community.

Make certain that all of your church staff members and volunteers are regularly trained in lgbtq terminology, etiquette.

Continue to check in with members of the lgbtq community to ascertain their needs and priorities.

### **Community Engagement**

Network with other welcoming congregations to host an event, educational series, or together discern ways to impact your neighborhoods and communities.

Form a relationship with your local junior high or high school's lgbtq advocacy group. Offer your congregation as a safe space to meet or hold an event.

Host a PLFAG support group

As a congregation, celebrate Pride by marching in a parade, sponsoring a booth at a Pride event, or flying a banner outside.

Participate in community events related to LGBTQ civil rights.

Within your district or conference, volunteer to host a table or insight session dealing with LGBTQ welcome.

### **Serious Work**

Engage in an intentional process of reconciliation/transformation:

Confession of wrongdoing - reflect upon individual and communal acts, policies and practices that had a direct impact upon the lives of LGBTQ people and their families; - think about the theological assumptions that shaped and contributed to attitudes and acts of harm;

Repentance – including ritualized expressions of apology and remorse

Repair/Reparation initiatives – active steps to both remember the wrongdoing, and re-member those who have been excluded/alienated from the church

Transformation

Deepen your understanding, through study, prayer, reflection and engagement of intersectional oppression and how it operates in the lives of individuals and their communities

Using the skills and insights developed in your advocacy and transformational work related to LGBTQ people to address critical issues of racism and gender discrimination.

Be an active advocate for LGBTQ affirmation and inclusion within your district, conference, and denomination.