



Lutheran Introduction to  
**CONVERSATIONS  
ABOUT HIV/AIDS**

ReconcilingWorks  
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION





This resource is inspired by ReconcilingWorks' engagement at the 21st International AIDS Conference in July of 2016. It is a reflection guide and is provided as an entry point to deepen and expand an RIC community's commitment to welcome, inclusion, and celebration.

Historically, many faith communities have displayed strongly judgmental attitudes toward LGBTQ people living with HIV. We must instead provide compassion, hospitality and dignity for all people. This guide will help your community begin discerning steps to take to create an open, compassionate and hospitable place for those living with HIV and AIDS.

## PROMPTS FOR COMMUNITY REFLECTION

- 🎗️ Is your faith community known as a place of hope, support and advocacy for people living with HIV?
- 🎗️ Are there members or participants in your community that are open about their HIV or AIDS status?
- 🎗️ How often are gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV and AIDS discussed openly during worship services?
- 🎗️ If these topics are discussed what is the theological tone? Graceful and compassionate, or something else?
- 🎗️ If these topics are not discussed, why are they not discussed?
- 🎗️ Do members or participants in your community understand what HIV and AIDS is and how it is transmitted? Are there misconceptions being expressed?

## PROCESS STATEMENT

After engaging with the reflection prompts, you may realize your community needs to commit to an intentional conversation about deepening and expanding your RIC welcome. ReconcilingWorks encourages you to take three steps:

1. Put together a team of committed individuals.
2. Have one-to-one conversations with congregation members to hear from your community. This will help you discern where your community stands in terms of knowledge about HIV and AIDS and ideas and perceptions about HIV and AIDS.
3. Engage deeply with the organizations and resources listed below. These organizations have missions that focus on HIV and AIDS advocacy and prevention. The resources they can offer will enrich a faith based conversation about HIV and AIDS.

## RESOURCES TO DEEPEN AND EXPAND COMMUNITY REFLECTION

### [EmpactAfrica.org](https://www.empactafrica.org)

Don't miss the conversation guide titled, "Stigma-Free Faith Communities." It is a great starting point.

### [ELCA.org/aids](https://www.elca.org/aids)

This social statement from the ELCA speaks to the concern for those living with HIV & AIDS.

### [HIV & AIDS Ministry at the United Church of Christ](https://www.hivandaidsmi.org)

A selection of faith based resources is available along with various advocacy network connections and news articles.

### [UCC.org/health\\_hivaids](https://www.ucc.org/health_hivaids)

### [AIDS.gov](https://www.aids.gov)

This is the official U.S. Government resource website for HIV and AIDS. Great basic information on HIV and AIDS is found here and could enhance a deeper conversation.

### [iasociety.org](https://www.iasociety.org)

The International Aids Society is a global organization leading efforts to stop HIV and end AIDS. This website provides more advanced resources for the HIV/AIDS conversation.



**The AIDS Memorial Quilt** in Washington, D.C. contains more than 48,000 memorial panels and is still growing today. It is a powerful symbol of why action must continue to end HIV and AIDS.

**World AIDS Day** is held on the 1st of December each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. [WorldAidsDay.org](http://WorldAidsDay.org)

## ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation

Since 1974, ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation has advocated for the full welcome, inclusion and celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations and community. The Reconciling in Christ (RIC ) program of ReconcilingWorks is for congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries and other Lutheran organizations that publicly welcome LGBTQ people.

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