

ReconcilingWorks:
Lutherans for Full Participation
presents

2019 RECONCILING IN CHRIST SUNDAY WORSHIP

in partnership with
The Naming Project





INTRODUCTION

ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation advocates for the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community. ReconcilingWorks offers resources for Reconciling In Christ Sunday, the last Sunday in January.

This Sunday is recognized ecumenically throughout the welcoming church movement. For faith communities that have made a public stand in welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, this Sunday is set aside to highlight our shared ministry of hospitality and reconciliation.

ABOUT THE NAMING PROJECT

The mission of The Naming Project is to create places of safety for youth of all sexual orientations and gender identities where faith is shared, and healthy, life-giving community is modeled.

The Naming Project Summer Camp is for 14-18 year-olds or those who have completed 8th-12th grades who are of any sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, who are interested in discussing and understanding sexuality and gender in terms of their own spiritual journey and are excited to spend time with other teen campers and staff while canoeing, swimming, hiking, singing, and doing arts and crafts.

WORSHIP SERVICE CREATED BY:

Naming Project leaders: Ross Murray, Logan Rimel, Greg Fedio, Sue Schneider, Dwaine Wells, Ray Plaskett

Naming Project Youth: Lou (17), Julian (16), Auggie (18), Grey (17), Jade (16), James (15), Hunter (17), Emily (15), Elias (17), Jordyn (18), Lexi (18)



2019 RECONCILING IN CHRIST SUNDAY

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prayer of the Day

Naming God, you sent your Beloved Child to us to dissolve the binaries between clean and unclean, holy and unholy, human and divine, saved and unsaved, and even death and life. Grant that we, following in your Child's footsteps, may see our whole lives as Scripture, so the coming of your Kingdom may be witnessed in the way we love one another beyond binaries. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Companion and Protector. Amen

CONFESSION

Our hearts are broken. We don't know how to love properly.

Our trust is broken. We cannot earn it faithfully or give it freely.

Our community is broken. We cannot love our neighbor as ourselves.

We confess that we are both the victims and the perpetrators of our brokenness.

We implore you, dear God:

Break the cycle of brokenness.

Provide the grace and trust that we cannot provide.

Open our eyes to our neighbors who are near to us, and those who are far away.

Heal our hearts.

Restore our trust.

Build our human community.



ABSOLUTION

God created you, knows you intimately, and calls you “Good.” As a minister of Christ, I proclaim that God loves you and forgives all your sins.

But this absolution is not just for you. We live as forgiven in cycles of oppression. As forgiven Children of God, created in God’s image, our forgiveness creates our ability to fight the unjust system we find ourselves in.

Go forth as created, known, and loved people, forgiven to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim God’s favor.

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

God created us in God’s own image

God knows us deeply and intimately, more than we know ourselves

God loves us, just as we are

God calls us each by name.

And in baptism, God gives us the name Child of God.

Therefore, let us live as the named and loved Children of God that we are.

Amen

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

ReconcilingWorks would like to encourage congregations to utilize the resources available to them through David Lohman Music. David is a progressive singer songwriter whose music focuses on the intersection of faith, queerness, and song.

<https://www.davidlohmanmusic.com>



READINGS

Third Sunday after Epiphany/Lectionary 3

- Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
- Psalm 19
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
- Luke 4:14-21

This is the word of God.

**For the Word of God in Jesus,
for God's wisdom all around us,
for God's Word and wisdom within us,
thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN SERMON IDEAS

- Talk about what makes each child unique, what they like about themselves; share how that can be different from the child next to them.
- Share different books that highlight diversity in gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, etc. (taken from HRC's "15 Great Diverse Picture Books for a Welcoming School")
 - "Red: A Crayon's Story" by Michael Hall
 - "Julian is a Mermaid" by Jessica Love
 - "Stella Brings the Family" by Miriam B. Schiffer

SERMON*


***Covered by leaders of RIC settings**

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

- The many parts of the body / many life experiences that give people knowledge about God
 - For too long, cisgender and straight Christians have told lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) people that the church does not need us. If we are “allowed” to be present, it is an allowance given to us by cisgender and straight people, as if this is a generosity. But LGBTQIA Christians have specific roles to play in the church, and the ways we know and practice and celebrate God are valuable. The body is not complete without us, and we don’t need to be “allowed” to participate. We’re already here, and we are necessary.
 - While in adolescence, youth are in discernment about who they are, and how they relate to the rest of the world. They may not yet know if they are an eye, an ear, or a foot. We should not be quick to put a label on someone, but rather help them to discern who they are, how they describe themselves, and what relationships they want to form with the community around them.

Luke 4:14-12

- Christians believe that Jesus is the Word of God, and that Scripture is fulfilled in Jesus’ person.
- Jesus is not harkening to some imagined future when the Kin-Dom will come, but is rather saying that it is possible right then, even living in an occupied state under an imperial power.
 - What does it mean to say that the oppressed have already been liberated in the conditions that Jesus lived in? What does it mean for the conditions we live in?
- When we have known someone from birth, it can become easy to construct identities and narratives FOR them. When a child grows up in



our church, we know their family, we know how they acted as a child, we know their relationships. The act of growing up and claiming your own identity, of “coming out,” can be jarring, because it sends the message that the narrative and identity we have constructed about someone else was wrong...and no one wants to be wrong.

- The reaction of Jesus’ claiming that scripture was fulfilled in their hearing counteracts everything they THINK they know about Jesus. How do we think of the people sitting next to us in worship today? How can those narratives be disrupted?

CREED

With the whole church

We affirm that we are made in God’s image, befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit.

With people everywhere

We affirm God’s goodness at the heart of humanity, planted more deeply than all that is wrong.

With all creation

We celebrate the miracle and wonder of life, the unfolding purposes of God, forever at work in ourselves and the world.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Naming Project eats dinner at Bethany Lutheran Church in Onamia, MN, on their drive up to camp. Each year, the congregation has gifted the campers with prayer squares, small knitted squares with a cross in the middle. During the course of camp, we ask the campers to pray with the prayer squares, and give them the following prayer pattern. This can be replicated by any church that has a dedicated team of knitters or crocheters and will follow the order that we created for The Naming Project camp.

(Pattern - https://www.oslclaurelprayershawlmunity.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/prayer_cloths_cross.pdf)

Order of Prayer Square:

- Hold one corner and pray a “thank you” for something that has happened recently.
- Move to the second corner and pray “I’m sorry” for something you need to repent for.
- Move to the third corner and pray “help” for something that you, or a loved one, needs God’s help with.
- With the final corner, pray “wow” for something that is amazing around you or in your life.


For more traditional prayers of the people co-created by the youth of The Naming Project:

Creating God, you know your creation well and love all you have made. We pray for equity and the even distribution of the earth’s’ abundance. Specifically, we pray for the trees that cover our landscape, beautify our homes, purify our air, and provide homes for animals of all kinds, including humans. We pray for firefighters, wildlife, and all affected by wildfires. God, in your mercy...hear our prayer.

Naming God, you know us by name and call us by name. Be with all people yet to come out with some aspect of their identity, to colleagues, friends, family, and themselves. For support of friends who are struggling with, discerning, or discovering their identity. Help us to be the friends and allies that we wish to see in the world, lending supportive guidance on the journey to self-discovery. God, in your mercy...hear our prayer.

Nurturing God, you provide loved ones as a source of support, but there are those who do not experience acceptance, love, and support. Heal relationships between families and children, and help us all to be better, more loving and accepting. We remember especially today those who have lost their children, and for those families traumatized and separated through our immigration system. God, in your mercy...hear our prayer.

Homecoming God, be with all those who cannot return home, or for whom visiting their hometown causes anxiety or stress. Guide those who move to new homes, schools, jobs, and towns, and for military people experiencing



homecoming. Be with all of us as we make our home in our bodies and discovering who you created us to be. We pray for those affected by periods, may they be short and painless. And for everyone who supports others during time of transition. God, in your mercy...hear our prayer.

EUCHARIST

God be with you.

And also with you.

Our hearts are all we have.

We lift our hearts up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to offer thanks and praise.

Spirit of Life and God of Many Names, we give you thanks and praise that you have poured out your grace upon us, now in this moment. It is through grace that you have called us all, in our many differences and vocations, to be together in this moment and offer our common prayer to you. You love us so much that, even when we are dead in our sin and incapable of wholly loving, you send Jesus our Brother and Teacher to dwell amongst us. We praise you, because you have promised that whenever a few of us are gathered together in the name of liberation and love, that the Spirit of Jesus is already there in the midst of us.

[SANCTUS]

[WORDS OF INSTITUTION]

God, through this meal, fulfill our common desire for love and liberation as will be best for each of us, different as that will be. Teach us in the here and now to see the world as it really is, and offer prophetic witness for what the world can be through the Scripture of our real, living bodies. Throughout our lives, teach us to live that abundant life that you promise



PRAYER

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Creator of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and
come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and
forever.

Amen

- New Zealand Prayer Book

SENDING

(heavily adapted from Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals)

In the name of the divine Trinity,

let us pray.

God, you have called us into being



through love.

You have joined us to one another

in love.

How good and pleasant it is

when your people dwell together in unity.

Shine your light upon your LGBTQIA children,

that we can see the glory of eternal life.

Grant each of these individuals the strength

to carry your blessing from this place to the next.

May they be at home in any land,

for all the earth is yours.

May their hopes be set

on your kin-dom of justice and peace.

May the lamp of your word

guide their feet on the unsure paths of life.

Our lives are but a breath,


but our breaths are drawn from your divine Spirit.

You have created us as walking paradoxes.

Specks of dust and divine-image bearers.

We are constantly restless

until we rest in you.



Grant them a deeper fullness
of being and spirit,
by carrying the memory of this time and this place
in the coming journey.
May their work ahead be fuller in glory and joy,
now bearing new shape,
as our work transforms and supplements one another.

Go in the peace of Christ to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

BLESSING

In work and worship

God is with us.

Gathered and scattered

God is with us.

Now and always

God is with us.

God is with you - of whom shall you be afraid? May you go out into the world filled with Spirit of the God who made you, loves you, and empowers you to live fiercely.

Amen.

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO CELEBRATE YOUR RECONCILING IN CHRIST DESIGNATION THE MONTH OF JANUARY.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:



Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians.

By Austen Hartke

Writing as a white, bisexual, transgender man who happens to be a committed Christian, Hartke nevertheless confesses that to this day he feels just a little bit nervous when he walks into any unfamiliar church building.

And no wonder, for, as he will point out, many churches in America are less than welcoming to the 1.4 million transgender adults in their midst,

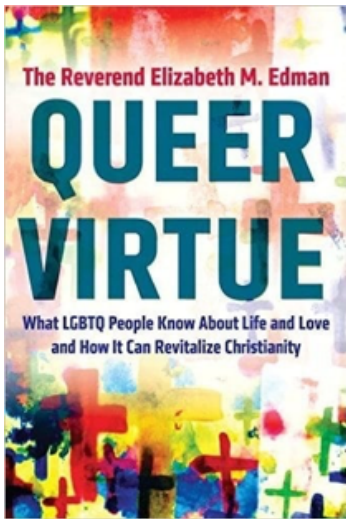
a staggering 41 percent of whom will have attempted suicide.

In this connection, he points out the importance of finding a supportive faith community.

He writes movingly about his own search for such an environment but also offers the perspectives of a wide variety of other transgender people, whose stories he generously shares.

Along the way, he writes about such practical matters as definitions of gender identities and what parts of our gender identities are socially constructed and what may be biologically set in stone.

He poses many questions about his subject, of course, and finds answers in the Bible, sometimes surprising ones, as his equation of contemporary transgender people with eunuchs, the gender-nonconforming people of the ancient world.



Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ People Know About Life and Love and How It Can Revitalize Christianity.

By Rev. Elizabeth Edman

This is the fundamental premise of Queer Virtue. Christianity persistently calls the followers of Jesus to rupture, or queer, false binaries that pit people against each other.

Jesus does this when he presses the question, “Who is my neighbor?”, calling his followers to hit a reset button in their assumptions about who “we” are, who “they” are, and how we are supposed to treat one another.

Queer people navigate this kind of rupturing every day.

Queer people must:

- discern an identity
- tell the truth about it even in the face of material risk
- find others who share this identity
- build community.

LGBTQ community persistently looks to the margins to see who isn't yet included and decide what we're going to do about it. This “path” bears remarkable similarity to the path that Christians are called to walk.



COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Teen Clothing Drive:

40-57% of youth experiencing homelessness are LGBTQIA+. As a community collect clothing for youth and young adults that you can give to a local shelter who works with younger populations.

God Adores You:

Words are powerful. Take time as a congregation to write notes of affirmation affirming LGBTQIA youth that can be dropped off or mailed to a local or statewide LGBTQIA organization for distribution:

www.rwks.org/gay

Paraments and Vestments:

While green is the color for the liturgical season, we would invite congregations to be color full as they celebrate the diversity of the Divine that is lived out through the lives of LGBTQIA people.

