


# DEEPENING & EXPANDING ONLINE WORSHIP

*Living into your commitment to welcome during COVID-19*

**During these unprecedented times, now more than ever, it is important to create an inclusive worship space for your lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual/aromantic (LGBTQIA+) siblings in Christ. While COVID-19 has shifted daily experiences, the way that we relate to one another, and work and social lives, it is also a time to be creative in the ways that we gather with one another through faith. Here are just a few ways to live out your welcome in your online worship experiences:**

- Communicate in your welcome or introduction that your faith community is LGBTQIA+ friendly
  - Begin your service by reading your Welcome Statement
  - Include a link to your Welcome Statement in your bulletin or on your slides
  - Encourage ministers, clergy, or rostered leaders to wear a PRIDE themed stole
  - Include LGBTQIA+ affirming symbols in your worship spaces or within your slides
  - Consider including LGBTQIA+ people in your Prayers of the people, praying for
    - those at home in an environment that might not be the most affirming or safe for them
    - homeless youth who cannot self-isolate
    - those with under-treated conditions or less access to affirming medical care, making them more susceptible to COVID-19
  - Emphasize the welcome and belovedness of those who are LGBTQIA+ in your liturgy, especially at the table
  - Create and share your creative worship practices with other welcoming ministries
  - Include pronouns on screen names as well as with introductions
  - Incorporate LGBTQIA+ voices in leadership of the service
  - Pay attention to language of hymns, prayers, and liturgies around reinforcing binary language; some language to be mindful of include
    - Brothers/Sisters, Men/Women; and replace with
    - Siblings, Beloveds, Folx, People, etc.
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- Integrate music that is inclusive in its language as well as its theology
  - Consider what messages are communicated implicitly, including but not limited to who is speaking, and what voices are being represented and unrepresented
  - Reach out and seek pulpit supply from LGBTQIA+ pastors, rostered leaders, and seminarians
  - Invite someone who lived through the HIV/AIDS epidemic to share about their experience, to life up how the queer community has cared for one another, resiliently, in the midst of deep confusion and fear
  - Share online access to your service publicly through your website and social media
  - Publicly name and refute the accusation that COVID-19 is "God's punishment" for queer folx, or other marginalized groups of people

**Created in Partnership with the following Welcoming Church Programs:**

ReconcilingWorks:Lutherans for Full Participation, Room for All, Disciples LBGTQ+ Alliance, More Light Presbyterians, and Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests