



As you and your faith community continue to incorporate helpful and inclusive language, to extend welcome through your worship and gatherings to people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions, ReconcilingWorks' hopes that this tool may help support you in that holy work. We have compiled pieces of worship from the 2017 – 2020 Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday Resources, such as prayers of the people, hymns, and more; while the list is not extensive, it should provide a great starting place for faith communities like your own to continue your journey of welcome, inclusion, and celebration. Enjoy!

+ GATHERING +

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy Service*

+ CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS +

Giver of Life, in the midst of life exploited by greed and abuse of power.

Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life, in the midst of life shortened by hate and exclusion.

Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life, in the midst of life destroyed by war and conflict.

Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life, in the midst of life groaning for fullness and dignity.

Have mercy on us.

Giver of life, you created us all in your image and we squandered this gift of life. And the whole humanity and creation lament with us.

Have mercy on us.

When God created the whole creation. God saw that it was good. God loved it. And continues to love all. May the giver of life make all things new through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2017: Always Reforming Toward Fullness of Life Service*

OR

God of dreamers,

We are often oblivious to the ways in which we oppress and are complicity in the oppression of our neighbors. We have sinned through our actions and our lack of action. Our sins are unique and varied and yet we are all consumed by the same fire of sinfulness. We have not loved and welcomed the LGBTQIA+ community into the church with open arms and a mindset of re-imagining. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us so that we may live and serve you in newness of life in your holy name.

When we have had power, we forgot what it is for.

We raised ourselves further up.

**We have not used our gifts to speak truth to power in love,
to lift up the voices of those beaten down.**

**When we have been weak, we have let ourselves be told
we are broken beyond repair, and forgot the promise
that each of us is Your child, made in Your image.**

**We have listened to the siren song of the world
that says what we get is what we deserve.**

We have forgotten your grace.

In this space, remind us.

Hear the good news! God has not watched from far way, but has come near to be with us, to free us from our pain, and to offer us new life. God has declared that we are not separate, but children of one family, united in Jesus our Lord.

Amen. Alleluia!

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2018: Dreams & Visions of the Church Re-Imagined Service*

OR

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

Our trust is broken, We cannot earn it faithful 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.

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.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2019 in partnership with The Naming Project Service*

OR

In the name of the Holy Parent,
And of the + Son,
And of the Holy Spirit, Her whom we invite into this space.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, and in particular your LGBTQIA+ children whom for too long the church was a harmful place. Turn those of us who have actively participated in the sins of homophobia, transphobia, and fear to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Liberator.

Amen.

Gracious God,

Have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and our LGBTQIA+ siblings and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done to the queer community and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, to the full vision of the Kingdom of God, and uphold us by your Spirit, She who loves us and encourages us towards liberation, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Friend. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. All have been saved and quite simply all means all. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to advocate and love our neighbors, all of them. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy Service*

+ HYMN SUGGESTIONS +

253 – He Came Down
306 – Come, Beloved of the Maker
327 – Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow
581 – You Are Mine
593 – Drawn to the Light
641 – All Are Welcome
715 – Christ Be Our Light
720 – We are Called
726 – Light Dawns on a Weary World
798 – The Summons
841 – Lift Every Voice & Sing
Music by David Lohman (<https://www.davidlohmanmusic.com>)
“Beautiful Things” by Gungor
“All Who Enter Here” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2Ev9A_fE_E&feature=youtu.be)

+ READING SUGGESTIONS +

Genesis 37:2-11, 19-24, 29-36
Psalm 15
Psalm 19
Psalm 139
Micah 6:1-8
Matthew 5:1-12
Matthew 19:10-15
Luke 4:14-21
Acts 8:26-40
Galatians 3:23 – 29
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

+ CHILDREN SERMON SUGGESTIONS +

When it comes to cultivating intentional conversation with children and young adults on the topic of welcome, inclusion, and celebration of our LGBTQIA+ siblings, seek out messages that help them really engage in the message. Read stories that spark wondering and hospitable curiosity (see suggestions below), invite children to share what it feels like to be accepted, how it looks when everyone can be included on a playground/in class/at home/etc., and if they have ever been pushed away because of who they are or maybe they were the ones pushing. Make this time a place where the message of God’s overwhelming love for ALL of God’s children, and the grace that we are given, is at the root of your conversation.

"I Am Human" by Susan Verde
"Julian is a Mermaid" by Jessica Love
"Stella Brings the Family" by Miriam B. Schiffer
"Red: A Crayon's Story" by Michael Hall
"Same, Same but Different" by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw
"A is for Activist" by Innosanto Nagara
"Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights" by Rob Sanders
"10,000 Dresses" by Marcus Ewert
"God's Dream" by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams

+ PRAYER OF THE DAY +

Lifegiving God.

We thank you, divine Seamstress for you never stop creating. From the dawn of time, to our mother's womb, even in the age to come, your creativity is as endless as eternity. Today you are knitting us, your people, into a garment of many colors.

We thank you, Holy Spirit, for you do not allow us to grow complacent. You stir up dreams and visions within us, making us restless for a new Heaven and a new Earth. You clothe us with power to bring these dreams to life. In you, we are beginning to see all things anew.

We thank you, Christ our Savior for your wondrous transformation, Word made into flesh. You challenge us with foreign experiences, teaching us that those we thought were strange and cut off are members in your holy body.

Therefore, with Joseph and all of Israel's children, with the confused disciples and the Ethiopian eunuch, with all who have shown us your way, all you have gone before us, and all those we gather with this day, we praise your name.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2018: Dreams & Visions of the Church Re-Imagined Service*

OR

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 Kin-dom may be witnessed in the way we love one another beyond binaries. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Companion and Protector. Amen

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2019 in partnership with The Naming Project Service*

OR

Gracious and liberating God, whom in Jesus knows what it's like to be an oppressed person, knows what it's like to live in a world as a rejected soul, cut off from the community, and to experience state sanctioned violence just for being yourself, guide us to be fierce advocates for our LGBTQIA+ siblings in Christ.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy Service*

+ PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE +

As people proclaimed blessed on the mount and invited to be a guiding light toward fullness of life, let us pray for God's wisdom, strength and healing. [*A brief silence.*]

We give thanks for all of nature, and the beauty in the world. For all that you made, and after said, "it was very good." All people, all animals, all plants, mountains and oceans, the stars in the sky. Allow us to be good stewards of your creation. Loving God, in your mercy,
You hear us calling.

We pray for our LGBTQIA+ siblings who have lost their lives to hateful and fearful acts. And we pray for those who work to make our neighborhoods safer and more peaceful places. End violence. Restore communities. We pray for the families and friends of queer siblings who have lost their lives. Strengthen us and keep us. Loving God, in our mercy,
You hear us calling.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2017: Always Reforming Toward Fullness of Life Service*

OR

With the whole earth, let us lift our hearts and voices in prayer.

For our planet and all creation. Shield those places in danger, inspire us to protect the earth. We pray especially for the victims of hurricanes, earthquakes, fires, and flooding around the world. God of love, **Hear our Prayer.**

For people in our lives and those unknown to us who need healing, care and compassion, especially the hungry, those without homes, the refugee, and the stranger. God of love, **Hear our Prayer.**

We pray for those who need hope. For those who feel excluded. For those who are experiencing dysphoria. For all to know they are beloved by God, and worthy of love. We pray for all those we hold in our hearts and name now, either silently or aloud...God of love, **Hear our Prayer.**

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2018: Dreams & Visions of the Church Re-Imagined Service*

OR

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.**

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.**

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2019 in partnership with The Naming Project Service*

OR

Trusting in the One who made us, dwells in us, and calls us to life, we pray for the world, the church, and all in need...

Spirit of Life who paints the skies in every hue, we praise you for morning and night, for dawn and dusk, and for every moment in between. We praise you for the vibrant, loud, and serene colors of creation. We revel in the ever-changing of the seasons. We thank you for the infinite and as-yet undiscovered diversity of your creatures, of galaxies beyond our imagining. Teach us to feel awe again. Teach us to see and celebrate the stunning beauty in all you have made. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the People, you made us in your image and you call us good. Silence voices of shame and hatred – including the ones in our own heads – and inspire us to love ourselves and one another the way you so desperately, passionately, and deeply love us. Teach us a fondness and delight for our bodies as we are called to live in them, in all of their holy, messy, fabulous glory. Teach us to love neighbors who live in different skin. To love intelligences and abilities of all kinds, and loving-kindness most of all. Make us bold in our proclamation that the lives, loves, and gifts of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Ace, Queer, Intersex, Native, Black, Brown, Incarcerated, Disabled, and Migrant people matter to you, and so they matter to all of us – manifest in both word and deed.

God of Grace, **hear our prayer.**

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy Service*

+ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER +

May we who have fed
At Wisdom's table
Take her welcome out
To where tables are reserved
And doors are closed;
May the Spirit drive us
To break our bread
On the altar of the world.
Amen.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2018: Dreams & Visions of the Church Re-Imagined* Service, originally written by Steven Shakespeare, *Prayers for an Inclusive Church*

OR

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 people 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 the 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

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2019 in partnership with The Naming Project* Service, taken from the *New Zealand Prayer Book*

OR

On the night before Jesus was tried and executed by the state,
he dined with his friends, even the one who would betray him.
Jesus took bread, broke it, and gave it to his friends.
Take this bread, the Word made flesh,
to feed you to speak words of justice and truth.

He then took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to his friends to drink.
Take this wine, the blood of Christ,
to quench your throats parched by forced silence.

Let all who hunger for justice, eat.
Let all who thirst for mercy, drink.
Let this meal strengthen and encourage you.
Let this meal remind you, you are not in debt to Empire.

We are to seek the new reality of the realm, the Kin-dom of God in this world.
We are to advocate for our LGBTQIA+ siblings.
We are to advocate for one another,
as Christ advocated for us, his arms outstretched in love for all.

Let this table be the place where the spark of the Spirit is ignited,
to fuel us from this place into the world,
embodying a justice and peace
setting the world ablaze.

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy Service*

+ SENDING & BLESSING +

God invites us into Their future,
Where the one who makes all things new
has made Their home among us.
We are called and chosen, together embraced by God
in whom tears, mourning, crying, pain, oppression
unwelcome, and even death will be no more.
Remember God's future of a re-imagined church, for this is our story.
May the God of dreamers and visionaries bless you and keep you.
Amen

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2018: Dreams & Visions of the Church Re-Imagined Service*

OR

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 peace of Christ to love and serve the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2019 in partnership with The Naming Project* Service

OR

May the Holy Parent ignite the fires of advocacy in your heart
May the Spirit place the scroll of knowledge on your tongue in tough conversations
May the Son walk with you as you march with your queer siblings. Amen.

Go out into the world and shout from the rooftops that All means all!

THANKS BE TO GOD

- From the *Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020: Faith & Advocacy* Service

ReconcilingWorks.org
PO Box 8070, St. Paul, MN 55106
651-665-0861