

Saint Cautious

The majority of faith communities are in this group.
Do your homework, but do not be afraid.

The faith community assessment tool is designed to pace your Reconciling in Christ (RIC) welcoming journey and take the temperature of your faith community's overall temperament when considering extending a specific welcome to LGBTQIA+ people. When you complete it, have other members of your Core Team take this assessment and then compare notes. This document has the recommended pacing for **Saint Cautious**.

STEP ONE: LEADING THE PROCESS

3-6 months

Tasks: Conduct One-to-One Visits and gather a Core Team. Check in with LGBTQIA+ people in the faith community to determine their preferred level of involvement in the RIC journey. Contact ReconcilingWorks if you need help beginning this journey.

Tools: Graceful Engagement, One-to-One Visits

People Involved: Core Team, LGBTQIA+ People and ReconcilingWorks

STEP TWO: GATHERING INFORMATION

2-3 months

Tasks: Examine your faith community's history, conduct a power analysis, and examine your community's culture to gain a better understanding of how it deals with change and conflict. Choose a pace for your journey using the Faith Community Assessment.

Tools: Graceful Engagement, One-to-One Visits, Faith Community Assessment, Faith Community and Conflict, How Does Change Happen in Faith Communities or Any Organization.

People Involved: Core Team, Formal and Informal Leadership of Faith Community

STEP THREE: OUTLINING THE PROCESS

1 - 2 months

Tasks: Outline each step of the Reconciling in Christ journey for your Faith Community based on the pace and frame you've chosen.

Tools: Graceful Engagement, Framing, plus the information you've gathered up to this point

People Involved: Core Team

STEP FOUR: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

6-9 months

Tasks: Conduct One-to-One Visits with formal and informal leadership and faith community members.

Tools: Graceful Engagement, One-to-One Visits, Public Storytelling

People Involved: Core Team, formal and informal leadership, faith community members

STEP FIVE: MAKING IT OFFICIAL

3 meetings with governing body

Tasks: The Core Team transitions into a formally-recognized committee of the faith community, often called the Welcoming Task Force.

Tools: Consult your faith community's policies, One-to-One Visits, Framing

People Involved: Core Team/Welcoming Task Force, faith community governing body

STEP SIX: SETTING THE FRAME AND PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

1-2 years

Tasks: Set up a series of educational opportunities for the faith community.

Tools: Graceful Engagement, One-to-One Visits, Framing, Public Storytelling, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Bible studies, films, panels, newsletter articles, Reconciling in Christ Resources

People Involved: Welcoming Task force, rostered leaders, educators, community members

STEP SEVEN: WRITING YOUR WELCOMING STATEMENT

2-6 months

Tasks: Create a draft Welcoming Statement (that meets the requirements of ReconcilingWorks) and present it to the formal faith community leadership. Revise statement as needed based on feedback.

Tools: RIC Sample Affirmations, your chosen frame

People Involved: Welcoming Task Force, formal leadership, ReconcilingWorks

STEP EIGHT: CONDUCTING AN EXPLORATORY SURVEY

2-6 weeks

Tasks: Send out postcards or develop an anonymous

online survey for the entire congregation.

Tools: Postcards and postage or free online survey service

People Involved: Welcoming Task Force

STEP NINE: HOLDING THE VOTE

When Exploratory Survey Shows at Least 75-85% Support

Tasks: Schedule and hold a vote according to your faith community's policies and procedures.

Tools: Faith community's policies and procedures

People Involved: RIC Task Force, Council, all members, ReconcilingWorks Regional Coordinators and/or staff (if needed)

STEP TEN: CELEBRATING AND PUBLICIZING

Soon After Successful Vote

Tasks: Notify ReconcilingWorks. Hold a worship service or celebration, and publicize your new RIC status to the greater community.

Tools: Special liturgy, bulletin inserts, website, sign, sample press release in online RIC welcome packet

People Involved: Welcoming Task Force, rostered leaders and staff

STEP ELEVEN: WE'RE WELCOMING NOW WHAT?

Ongoing

Tasks: Ensure church policies are LGBTQIA+ inclusive. Provide ongoing educational opportunities. Provide opportunities for community members to take action on LGBTQIA+ social issues beyond the community's doors.

Tools: Community policies, RIC Now What Resource

People Involved: RIC Task Force, rostered leaders, educators, Social Justice committee, greater LGBTQIA+ community