

Writing a statement for your community is an exciting, rewarding, and historic task! It is a time to share with others your commitment to creating a welcoming environment in your faith community, invites others to be a part of something special, and becomes a tool of accountability as a faith community. Below are the four public commitments that each Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Partner must meet to become a part of the RIC roster, and examples of welcome statements to help inspire you and your faith community as you begin drafting your own welcome statement.



## RIC Public Partner Commitments

1. Your community explicitly states a welcome to people of "**all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions**" or "**LGBTQIA+ people**" and names its commitment to "**racial equity**" or "**anti-racism**" in its welcome statement.
2. **Open to calling** an LGBTQIA+ and Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) Rostered Leader.
3. Will allow community space/sanctuary to be used for **LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings**.
4. Will **make a meaningful contribution** annually to support the national RIC program.

## Sample Welcome Statement 1

We are called by Jesus to love God and one another, to practice radical hospitality, and to serve all without stipulations. We welcome you to join us, no matter your race, culture, ethnicity, age, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic position, family status, background, or where you are in your faith journey. You are a unique and beloved child of God. You are accepted and affirmed just as you are - with all your differences and all your gifts. We commit ourselves to embracing the work of anti-racism, social and economic justice, and environmental care. We invite you to join with us, as through Christ, we joyfully and inclusively love and serve our community.

- St. Paul's Lutheran Church (Wichita, KS)

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## Sample Welcome Statement 2

Holy Trinity recognizes that each of us is a unique creation made in the image of God. We celebrate and give thanks for the many diverse gifts that God has bestowed on us. We proclaim ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation to all of God's creatures welcoming into our ministry persons of every race, culture, age, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, and economic status. We commit ourselves to the work of anti-racism and creating an anti-racist space through the protection against oppression internally, in institutions, interpersonally and structurally. We believe that through our openness we all grow in our faith through Christ's teaching to love one another as God loves us.

*-Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (Buffalo, NY)*

## Sample Welcome Statement 3

A Community Called Grace commits to live as a community of people seeking reconciliation and wholeness in our life together and in our outreach to the world. We commit to the work of anti-racism, liberation, social and environmental justice for all of God's beloveds.

We affirm the sacredness of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion because of race, ability, age, or culture. We affirm the sacredness of those who wrestle with addiction, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.

You are absolutely invited to join us in this lifelong journey. We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We need each other and our sincere hope is by being in community together we will know the kin-dom of God has come near.

*-A Community Called Grace (Bemidji, MN)*

## Sample Welcome Statement 4

FedUp Ministries is committed to welcoming and celebrating all people, especially those in the LGBTQIA+ community who express their gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation in ways that buck societal norms. We also commit to welcoming and celebrating Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and white folks who are committed to allyship. FedUp strives to make antiracist choices and works toward racial equity in all areas of our life together and especially in communities that are food insecure and economically exploited by unjust racial and economic systems. All people, inclusive of age, race gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family structure, economic status, ability or disability, are invited into this sacred space not only as members of our community but also as volunteers and leaders.

*-FedUp Ministries (Ann Arbor, MI)*

***For more support with your faith community's welcome statement, connect with our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program Coordinator at <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/ric/ricinfo/>***

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