

Litany of Celebration and Commitment for [insert congregation]

L: Christ be with you!

A: And also with you!

L: This congregation [or insert name] became a Reconciling in Christ community in [insert year]. Let us celebrate that journey and how it still infuses our ministry of hospitality, welcome, affirmation, and justice.

Welcome Statement

Suggestion: Recruit a few lay members who reflect the diversity of the community and have them read out the full statement, taking turns with sentences or sections that make sense based on the length of the statement.

L: In years past we have strived to live into the hospitality and promises in our welcome statement, but we know there is always more to learn and more to do to support people who have been marginalized in our community. We promise to listen to the stories and honor the experiences of our neighbors who are members of the LGBTQIA+ [or Queer] community so that we can better understand the difficulties of living as themselves in our church and society.

A: We have open hearts and open minds and strive to learn more about our many different neighbors.

L: In the years ahead, we commit to continue to work towards full inclusion in our congregation and in our community. We promise to work together with others to make this space one that provides a welcome in both words and deeds, one that is safe from humiliation and violence and offers sanctuary to those cast out by families and shunned by friends.

A: We commit to the spirit of hospitality and authentic welcome.

L: We renew our commitment to welcome all who have been treated as less than or who were told they do not belong, especially transgender, non-binary, and intersex people. We also commit to welcome and support women, children, and foreigners who have been ignored or treated like property.

A: We commit to the work of justice and inclusion.

L: We renew our commitment to advocate for all LGBTQIA+ people [or *Queer people*] as well as [*renew our or add a*] commitment to racial and gender equity. We commit to advocacy and support for immigrants regardless of status. We commit to advocacy and support for neurodiverse and disabled people, who are often targets for shaming language that diminishes their humanity.

A: We commit to using our voices to speak up for those who have been rendered voiceless in our church and society. We promise to continue to advocate for inclusion, affirmation, and justice in our church and in our community and in the wider world even when we encounter resistance or ignorance, or when our steps falter as we grow tired.

A: We promise all these things as we take another step in our journey towards understanding God's asymmetrical love.

L: Let us pray: O God of compassion and liberation, guide our feet as we strive to walk the good road with Jesus, a road towards justice. We ask You to strengthen our hands as we use them to build Your Blessed Community [or *Kin-dom of God*] with space at the table for all of God's beloveds. We ask You to support our voices as we speak words of welcome and compassion. We ask Your Spirit to inspire and sustain us when our hearts grow weary, when our steps falter, when our boats feel so small on an endless ocean of pain and suffering. Be with us in and out of every day and night.

And as God's children we say: **Amen!**