

Why Pride Month?

Every June, rainbow flags appear in storefronts, on social media feeds, and in front lawns. It is a celebration of identity and belonging. But its roots run deeper, and (sadly) bloodier, than flags and parades.

Pride Month commemorates the Stonewall Uprising of June 1969, when patrons of a Greenwich Village bar — many who were transgender women of color, drag queens, and homeless queer youth — fought back against a police raid. Such raids and harassment were common. This uprising was an act of survival by people who had been told, in every register of public and private life, that they did not belong.

More than fifty years later, LGBTQIA+ people continue to face discrimination in housing, employment, healthcare, religious and family systems. They remain at dramatically elevated risk for depression, anxiety, and suicide, risks that drop significantly when their families and faith communities offer genuine, unconditional welcome and inclusion. Pride is not a declaration that the struggle is over. It is a defiant, joyful insistence that queer people are here, beloved, and worthy of flourishing.

This matters especially for the church. When we gather under the sign of the cross, we gather as a community formed by the conviction that every human being is made in the image of God and claimed by grace. ***If our welcome has an asterisk, it is not a welcome at all!***

For Congregations Ready to Go Deeper

Becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation is one of the most significant public commitments a Lutheran community can make to show its love, support, and welcome. It is a declaration that LGBTQ+ people and their families are fully welcome, included and celebrated in worship, leadership, and membership.

ReconcilingWorks supports congregations who are considering becoming RIC by guiding them through a discernment process, from first conversation to official recognition. Their resources include:

- **The RIC Welcome Process** — a guided congregational discernment journey with study materials, facilitation guides, and pastoral support.
reconcilingworks.org/ric
- **Accompaniment and Coaching** — regional staff and volunteers who can walk alongside your congregation
- **The RIC Community** — connection to more than 1,000 RIC congregations, campus ministries, and synods across the ELCA

The process is not about passing a resolution and creating a welcome statement and just moving on. It is about the slow, meaningful work of becoming a community where people do not have to wonder whether they are truly seen and known. That work is worth doing, and your congregation does not have to do it alone.