

From: Heart for Missions Team (Jan Arney, Mary Beth Mankin, Carol Simpson, Debbie Setlock, Pastor Andrew, Larry VanSpriell, Chair)

Re: Proposal for Pine Street Church to Partner with the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB)

Submitted to: The Council of Ministries (CoM) of Pine Street Church

As a Christian faith community, Baptist in heritage and ecumenical in outlook, we, the Pine Street Church, are committed individually and collectively to the core values of acceptance and hospitality; diversity and inclusion.

Being that we celebrate the diversity and beauty of all God's children, and being that we welcome the participation of all people of any ability, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation, our Pine Street Church Heart for Missions team unanimously proposes that we strengthen our congregation's public witness for justice and inclusivity by making official our desire for partnership with the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.

This relationship will empower us to not only claim that we embrace everyone; it will be a clear and conscious way to actively spread the inclusive message of Christ. In a perfect world we would not need to be specific about what we mean when we say that we "embrace everyone." That perfect world, or as Jesus called it, the "kin-dom" of God, does not yet exist in fullness.

And so it is our sense that the least we can do for our part in helping to heal the wounds that the history of Christianity has inflicted on the LGBTQI+ community is to be explicit in our care and conviction: To proclaim boldly that we are a safe haven for all, and specifically, our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender siblings who wish to live out their own discipleship with the full loving care of this body of Christ's followers.

This is why at this time in the life of our church and the challenging times in our culture, when so much hate is sanctioned by those who would use the Bible or Christ's name to condemn and exclude others, the Heart for Missions Team unanimously proposes that Pine Street Church join the nationwide community of churches, organizations, and individuals who are the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.

We, the Heart for Missions team, sincerely request that the Pine Street Church Governing Board approve this proposal for the congregation to consider and vote on at the Annual Meeting in January, 2020.