

Dear Friends,

Westminster is a place of welcome for all people, regardless of background, race, sexuality or gender. We are proud to have been an active part of the fight for inclusivity and welcome both in our region and nationally in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Our story as a church is like many others: beloved members of our congregation were moved to love and affirm members of their own families who came out as LBGTQIA+ and the hearts and minds of fellow congregants and pastors were changed to see the image of God in all people. We believe that this was the work of the Holy Spirit, and are thankful for those in our church whose hearts were opened to transformation.

In 2003, Westminster affirmed the following Inclusivity Statement:

The incarnation of God in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us our mission and understanding of membership. We become active members of the church through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and acceptance of His Lordship in all of life. We believe that any act or statement of injustice, discrimination or violence works against the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, Westminster Presbyterian Church welcomes into full membership persons of every race, culture, economic status, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation. We pledge to work for change within the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. to obtain every privilege of membership for all. Confessing our own weakness, we commit ourselves to Christ's ministry of love, justice and peace.

In 2015 that statement was amended to reflect the change in our denomination's constitution to open and inclusive of all (removing the line, "We pledge to work for change within the Presbyterian Church U.S.A to obtain every privilege of membership for all."). In 2019, Westminster joined More Light Presbyterians, a broad-based advocacy and education group in our denomination which continues to work support us and other congregations in learning more about gender and sexuality and working towards equality in our congregation.. With the help of MLP we continue to be an active place of welcome for our LBGTQIA+ siblings in Christ. As one of our elders noted, "We want to go beyond acceptance to affirmation."

As we approach the 51st anniversary of the riots at Stonewall Inn, we are mindful both of how far we've come in the fight for equality for our LBGTQIA+ siblings in Christ and of how much more we need to do. We will continue to work to be a place of faith where all people are seen as created in the image of God. We affirm that ALL are welcome in our community of faith.

With Thanks,

Julie