



You are invited to join the RMN Working Group on Sunday, May 22nd after worship for a Welcoming Statement Workshop where we will be breaking down this Welcoming Statement to discuss how it reflects our identity as a welcoming and inclusive church. The RMN Working Group will graciously welcome any questions, concerns, feedback and ideas!

Please note: no vote of any kind will be taking place on this date

Welcoming Statement - Draft 1

(Note: Text in blue written by our RMN working group. Text in purple is required language to affiliate with Reconciling Ministries Network.)

Hebron United Methodist Church is a reconciling congregation.

We believe every individual person is a sacred and valuable child of God. We recognize that we are each on a faith journey and whether an individual's belief is strong, wavering, or non-existent, we gather as friends, grow in faith, and support all people together toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect. We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

We invite you to join us as we seek to faithfully live our HUMC vision: "We will be God's inclusive love."

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We ask that you print this page and do the following:

1. Re-read this statement several times. Consider which phrases or words resonate with what you love about our church. Which ones need more clarification?
2. Consider why you think a Welcoming Statement is important for our church and in what ways we can use this Welcoming Statement to support our HUMC mission and vision.
3. Come to the May 22nd Welcoming Statement Workshop with a joyful heart! Come with questions - *any questions* - you have about what it means to be a reconciling church. Here are a few links that the RMN Working Group has found helpful:

Aren't we already welcoming? What is a Reconciling Church?

East Longmeadow UMC has a great list of Reconciling FAQ's:

<https://www.elumc.org/reconciling-FAQ.htm>

Does this make us a "gay church"?

North Bethesda UMC has a good answer to this in their list of what reconciling *does mean* and what it *doesn't mean*. They provide many additional links and

resources: <https://www.northbethesdaumc.org/reconciling/>

What does it mean to affiliate with RMN and what is the process?

The Reconciling Ministries Network provides a video and other information about the process of affiliating with their organization:

<https://rmnetwork.org/get-involved/reconciling-ministry/>