

Expanding Our Welcome

February 2024 Edition



Radical Hospitality looks like . . .

By actions and through parables, Jesus throughout the gospels offers radical hospitality and asks us to do the same. How can you communicate this radical hospitality to LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC communities? The imagery we use conveys subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) messages about who is welcome in the community. Imagery includes photos on your church website and in the newsletter as well as artwork hung on walls or graphics featured in the bulletin or worship slides. As you consider the images around your church, ask, do these images authentically represent a range of ages, abilities, family types (including single people), skin colors and gender expressions? Keep in mind not every image needs to represent every community. It is the sum of images, words, and actions that will reinforce your intent.

While working to ensure the imagery in our churches conveys radical hospitality, we also want to avoid treating any community members as tokens (that is repeatedly featuring one or two people). Likewise, steer clear of stock photographs or images that may give prospective folks an inaccurate expectation of the community. One can remain authentic to your membership, while also offering radical hospitality to all visiting your website, your sanctuary or other space.

One way we can convey an inclusive environment is by including more multicultural images. This can include high quality images from member photographs and is especially meaningful if the image reflects a relationship that exists.

Idea: Consider conducting an “audit” of the images that are present on the walls and on your bulletin covers and church publications. What message is being sent about who Jesus welcomes? About who your community welcomes? How could you take a step toward expanding the welcome of Christ through your images?

~Newsletter articles written by ELCA Lutherans in the SWWA Synod who support RIC

Consider This

RIC Work Team

The RIC Work Team serves as a resource for congregations and ministries throughout the synod as we all seek to expand our welcome in creative and life-giving ways. In this new publication we hope to provide practical ideas for your congregation to consider. Each month will have a different focus and some resources you may find valuable.

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God's work. Our hands.