

Sample Reconciling Statements

Please note that these statements are written by specific groups. They are to be used as an example for how you might craft your own. If you are going to use one of these samples, or something close thereto, for your own statement - please be in touch with your Regional Organizer who can connect you with the Reconciling Community to make sure that is okay with them.

Campus Ministries

Vanderbilt Divinity School – United Methodist Student Association: Reconciling Campus Ministry in Nashville, TN

“We, the UMSA at Vanderbilt Divinity School, take seriously the importance of the open communion table to our beloved UMC. With that sacred encounter as our vision, we claim that we are a group open to all students. We embrace as a gift the diversity of our neighborhood and the world. We celebrate all ways that the human family of Christ finds its diversity, including through difference in sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and know that all, as beloved children of God, are worthy of God’s love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of the UMC as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ. We recognize that there are differences among us, but believe that in the vision of John Wesley we can love alike though we may not think alike. We proclaim this statement of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in the church or in society, and as students at a school that seeks to make agents of social change, we covenant to work together until all are fully embraced in our churches and we can live into our dedication to “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.”

NOLA Wesley Foundation: Reconciling Campus Ministry serving the communities of Tulane University, Newcomb College, Loyola University and Uptown New Orleans. Louisiana Annual Conference.

“The NOLA Wesley Foundation is a reconciling campus ministry representing and embracing all of God’s children as persons of sacred worth regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, culture, tradition, sexual orientation or gender identity. In the full expression of the radically transforming and all-inclusive love of God as revealed through Jesus Christ, all are welcome!”

Feast United Christian Campus Ministry at University of California, Santa Cruz - California-Nevada Conference

We are an ecumenical and progressive campus ministry dedicated to social justice, service, and an emerging Christian faith based in inclusion and an open-minded faith. We follow Jesus by serving each other and our communities; we live out our faith by working for social justice and change, hoping to heal our broken world. We welcome questioning and doubt as expressions of great faithfulness. We see in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ an extravagant welcome where people of all genders, races, backgrounds, creeds, sexual orientations, and gender identities are celebrated and affirmed. Everyone is welcome!

Congregations

Woodlawn UMC: Reconciling Congregation in Birmingham, AL

“Woodlawn United Methodist Church is a family of God dedicated to worshiping, learning, and serving with all people as we embrace Jesus Christ’s message of love and acceptance. Together we are called to share God’s love through ministry with and around our immediate community and beyond. We are committed to a ministry built on the themes of reconciliation, friendship, compassion, and service to others. As a United Methodist Church we stand fully behind the statement open hearts, open minds, and open doors. Building on our tradition and the welcoming of those who have come before, we celebrate our diversity and invite all persons regardless of age, gender identity, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, marital or socioeconomic status, nationality, physical or mental ability into full participation in the life of this community of faith. May we continue together in the hard work of reconciliation and love for all people.”

Green Street United Methodist: Reconciling Congregation in Winston-Salem, NC

“Green Street United Methodist Church is called to the ministry of the sacred worth of all people. We embrace as a gift the diversity of our neighborhood and the world. We celebrate our human family’s diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, education, and any other difference, real or perceived. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worth of God’s love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Green Street United Methodist Church as we journey towards reconciliation through Christ. We recognize that there are differences among us, but believe that we can love alike even though we may not think alike. We proclaim this statement of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion and discrimination in the church or in society and know that everyone’s participation in our ministries enriches us. We invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.”

Living Faith UMC: Putnam, CT

Living Faith United Methodist Church celebrates that all persons are created in God's image and are of sacred worth. We are a faith community that welcomes persons without regard to age, race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, family configuration, religious background, economic status, or developmental and physical ability. Living Faith United Methodist Church welcomes the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Living Faith United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church of Woburn: Woburn, MA

We are a radically hospitable community that reflects God's love as revealed in the life of Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, we celebrate our diversity in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, gender, ability and social status. All are welcome!

Bering Memorial United Methodist Church: Reconciling Congregation in Houston, Texas. Texas Annual Conference

"We proclaim that all people are created in the image of God and affirm that each person, regardless of age, economic status, faith history, ethnicity, gender, mental or physical ability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identification, is a beloved child of God and worthy of God's love and grace. We support the full participation of all persons in every phase of church life. Through education and informal discussion, we will strive to better understand those who are different from ourselves to bring about a more accepting society. We recognize ourselves to be a reconciling congregation within The Texas Annual Conference and choose to officially associate ourselves with the Reconciling Ministries Network within the United Methodist Church. We see this network as a sign of hope and through this association offer our witness to other congregations within our denomination to foster the spirit of reconciliation and movement toward inclusiveness."

Fort Collins First UMC, Fort Collins CO - Rocky Mountain Conference

Open Hearts: We devote ourselves to a mission of intentionally showing God's love in our daily lives, supporting each other in becoming the best we can be, and actively working to make this world a better place for all. We embrace those who have been hurt in the name of Christianity. We know that the way we act toward others is the fullest expression of what we believe.

Open Minds: We value exploring and questioning. We pursue our search for meaning together. We gain wisdom from scripture, tradition, reason and experience. We know no one of us has all the truth, and each of us has some of it, so in community we learn from each other. And even if we do not always see eye to eye, we strive to ensure a safe and respectful environment that transcends differences.

Open Doors: Our doors are open to all people: believers and agnostics, traditional Christians and questioning skeptics, women and men, those of all ages, gender identities and sexual orientations, those of all races and cultures and those of all classes and abilities. We are each at a different place on a spiritual life journey that for us includes Jesus, but we also value the truth of other faiths.

Communities

Reconciling Community of Red Bank UMC: Red Bank, NJ

The Reconciling Community of the United Methodist Church of Red Bank welcomes all persons and affirms the individuality of all. We seek to live the credo of the United Methodist Church – Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors. We support marriage equality and full pastoral privileges for all persons regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Communities Seekers Adult Sunday School Class: Reconciling Community within First UMC Eureka Springs, AR. Arkansas Annual Conference

“We, the Seekers Adult Sunday School Class of the First United Methodist Church of Eureka Springs, Arkansas, declare ourselves to be an Open, Affirming, and Reconciling Sunday School Class. We celebrate that all people are created in God's image, and that each person is an individual of sacred worth. We value Christ's inclusive love and we embrace as a gift the diversity in the world. We proclaim this statement of welcome to all and particularly to those who have known the pain and exclusion or discrimination of the church. Our faith inspires us to be part of an intentional ministry with all people, including those who have not always been accepted because of sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, age, physical and/or mental abilities, social or economic status, family make-up, education, or faith background. We recognize our differences and do not seek to erase them but to use them as a source of strength and power as we journey together toward greater understanding, mutual respect, and love for each other, while humbly serving our God.” “All this is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation”

2 Corinthians 5:18 (NIV)

Open Hearts of Southwest Oklahoma: Regional Reconciling Community. Wichita District, Oklahoma Conference

“We are members of the Wichita District of the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church. Our fellowship is open to all followers of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the spirit of John Wesley's guidance. We embrace as a gift the diversity within our neighborhood and

throughout the world. We celebrate our human family's diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, and education. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ. We recognize that there are differences among us but believe that we can love one another even though we may not think alike. We proclaim this statement of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in the church and society. We invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.

Oregon-Idaho Reconciling United Methodists - Oregon-Idaho Conference

We, the Reconciling United Methodists of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, in order to embody "open hearts, open minds, open doors" will:

- encourage churches and ministries to become more inclusive in their day-to-day life, language, witness, and teaching;
- provide resources and support to local churches and ministries to help them discuss, develop, and publish statements that proclaim their welcome to all persons, specifically every race, nationality, age, gender, social condition, ability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, previous faith experience, and questioners; and
- state clearly that "we are not leaving" the United Methodist Church and that we will find ways to promote unity.

