

## DIVERSITY TASK FORCE ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER EXPRESSION 2026 SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT

*... those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.  
Isaiah 40:31*

The *Diversity Task Force on Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression (DFT)* has served Southeast Michigan Synod for many years by welcoming lay and rostered individuals from diverse sexual and gender orientations, addressing issues surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community and offering educational opportunities and resources to those seeking to explore questions of sexuality and gender.

Task Force Leadership (Wendy Wellman of Trinity Lutheran Church/Ann Arbor, Rob Montry of Zion Lutheran Church/Ferndale and Merton Spencer of Lord of Light Campus Ministry & Trinity/Ann Arbor) held monthly meetings and ensured a Task Force presence was in place at all public synodical events, such as Synod Assembly and more recently the Justice Summits.

They also assisted congregations seeking RIC (Reconciling in Christ) status and supported [ReconcilingWorks](#), the organization that teaches what “welcoming” really means for everyone, and how to bring people and their buildings towards living out their own welcoming statements.

We are extremely thankful for all the work these three individuals, in particular, have done to continue their compassionate service to the task force and to the congregations of our synod.

Leading up to the 2025 Synod Assembly, DTF and Synod staff engaged in a visioning process to determine how the Task Force could move into its next phase of providing space for the LGBTQIA+ community and allies. That process began with a meeting in the fall of 2024, followed by an online survey in the spring of 202, followed by a workshop at the 2025 Assembly.

The results of the discussions, surveys and workshop follow in an attached Results Document.

As we continue the work started by DFT through engagement, the Justice Summit and the PRIDE Worship Service, we recognize that this Task Force is experiencing similar circumstances as many of our congregations and committees experience – a lack of leadership. This is not a bad thing, but one that calls for both rest and prayer for the one(s) God will call to help us re-engage the work for a time such as this.

We celebrate with the 23 congregations + this Synod that are RIC ministries. We celebrate our clergy roster includes many who identify as LGBTQIA+. And we celebrate the work originated by this task force over the years.

For further information or to inquire about leadership opportunities, please contact me at [r.mccants@semisynod.com](mailto:r.mccants@semisynod.com) or 313.821.1055.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Robin McCants, Assistant to the Bishop  
Justice Issues and Lay Ministry



## The Southeast Michigan Synod is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Synod

We adopted the ***RIC Affirmation of Welcome*** by an 84% majority vote at our 1992 Synod Assembly. The RIC Program of ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation (formerly Lutherans Concerned/North America) recognizes Lutheran congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, and organizations that publicly welcome believers of all sexual orientations and gender expressions into full participation of the church. Acknowledging that general statements of welcome may fall short of past or current practices, the RIC Program seeks to make clear the policy of churches where all people are welcome as full members regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or that of their children, siblings, or friends.

The Affirmation of Welcome promotes a publicly inclusive ministry and helps heal the pain of doubt. In addition to our Synod's RIC standing, 23 ministries within the Southeast Michigan Synod have intentionally elected to join a roster that now exceeds 1100 designated as RIC in North America:

- **Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 1550 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills, MI 48309-1858**
- **All.together Campus Ministry, 21915 Beech St., Dearborn, MI 48124-2805**
- **Christ Lutheran Church, 225 E. Elm Ave., Monroe, MI 48162-2652**
- **Christ Lutheran Church, 5987 Williams Lake Rd., Waterford, MI 48329-3280**
- **Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 7 Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48152-1102**
- **Fed Up Ministries, Southeast Michigan Synod: <https://fedupministries.org/>**
- **Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 30650 6 Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48152-3461**
- **Holy Faith Church, 6299 Saline Ann Arbor Rd., Saline, MI 48176-8805**
- **Hope Lutheran Church, 39200 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 49331-2941**
- **King of Kings Lutheran Church, 2685 Packard Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6829**
- **King of kings Lutheran Church, 47500 Schoenherr Rd., Shelby Township, MI 48315-4771**
- **Lord of Light Lutheran Church, 801 S. Forest Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104-3540**
- **Love Rising Lutheran Church, 21230 Moross Rd., Detroit, MI 48236-2035**
- **Our Risen Lord Lutheran Church, 4040 Lapeer Rd., Burton, MI 48509-1708**
- **St. John Lutheran Church, 460 Riley St., Dundee, MI 48131-1033**
- **St. Martin Lutheran Church, 805 Chestnut St., Port Huron, MI 48060-5823**
- **St. Paul Lutheran Church, 21915 Beech St., Dearborn, MI 48124-2805**
- **St. Philip Lutheran Church, 1790 Fort St., Trenton, MI 48183-2008**
- **Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church, 749 W. 14 Mile Rd., Clawson, MI 48017-1401**
- **Trinity Lutheran Church, 1400 W. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103-5353**
- **Unity Lutheran Church, 12250 Fort St., Southgate, MI 48195-1007**
- **Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4141**
- **Zion Lutheran Church, 143 Albany St., Ferndale, MI 48220-1835**

Further information regarding the RIC Program may be obtained from ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation (<http://www.reconcilingworks.org/what/ric>)