



The Reconciling in Christ Team a group of members (primarily: Suzanne Terry, Celene Welch, Nathan Graham, Chris Clarkson, and Pastor John Bell). We have been meeting over the last year, asked by the Congregation Council to explore whether it is time for Christ The Servant Lutheran church to be formally recognized as a 'Reconciling in Christ' (RIC) church. An RIC church is one that proclaims itself to be welcoming and inclusive to people of all sexual orientations (LGBTQIA+ people).

As we continue on this journey, we will be hosting conversation with all members so we reach an answer to whether we, as a body of believers, wish to become an RIC congregation. This is a significant decision. A decision which will flow from the faith we have. This faith is grounded in the Biblical story

Every day, God changes me.

Suzanne Terry

I grew up in a Southern Baptist church. I was the in-church-every-time-the-door-was-open girl. I participated in all the missions organizations, sang in all the choirs, performed the offertory music, played hand-bells, and taught Vacation Bible School. I came to UNT and sought out people just like me, the ones who understood (and shared) my fears.

I also met people who didn't share my views, the ones I had been warned about who would change me if they could because that was The Gay Agenda™. I had been taught that they would belittle my faith, tempting me to not only engage in their lifestyle but denounce everything I held dear.

Knowing them did change me, but not necessarily in the way I had been taught.

I changed because none of the people I met fit my preconceived notions.

I changed because one night at Mable Peabody's, I knew I had to apologize to my friend.

"I'm sorry about that thing I said when we met." When he looked at me quizzically, I reluctantly reminded him.

He rolled his eyes, "That is so past. What made you even think of that?"

"I just want you to know that I don't think that anymore."

He clicked his tongue and waved his hand at me, shooing away my concern. "Girl, I know you love me."

And that was it. It was that easy.

I changed because there is something essential to the fullness of God in the church in the experiences of those who are marginalized. The love of secure friendship. The grace of forgiveness given before it was even requested. The faith to accept people as who they are rather than who they've been told they have to be. The hope of a God who really sees us.

God changed (and continues to change) my self-righteous heart. Every day, God changes me.