

The Reconciling in Christ Team is a group of members (Celene Welch, Nathan Graham, Chris Clarkson, Nancy Johnson, Suzanne Terry, and Pastor John Bell) tasked to explore with the congregation whether it is time for Christ The Servant to commit to becoming a 'Reconciling in Christ' (RIC) community. An RIC church is one that proclaims itself to be welcoming and inclusive to people of

In Need of Good News

by Nathan Graham

I came out in 2013, the same year I joined Christ the Servant, and only two years later the Supreme Court ruled in Obergefell-Hodges to uphold marriage equality as a civil right in all 50 states. You could, and still can, legally be fired for being gay in Texas, but on the whole, it felt like society was becoming a safer place for people like me. In my privilege, I even considered the furor over my trans friends' right to use the restroom—and thus exist in public spaces—just the next hurdle in the race towards equality, easily overcome because of the momentum that we had built up.

That's not the case today.

Unless you are deeply entrenched in the queer community, and especially the online queer community, it may be difficult to appreciate how scary the world is becoming for LGBTQ+ people. Target is selling Pride merch, yes, but the community is the target of a rhetorical, political, and legal campaign that is amassing strength.

Justice Clarence Thomas, in his concurring opinion on the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade, indicated that not only Obergefell but also Lawrence, which protects those engaging in non procreative sex from anti-sodomy laws, are due for review. Transgender people, especially trans teens and kids, are already seeing their rights to privacy and bodily autonomy eroded in many states. A van of armed white nationalists attempted to attack a Pride celebration in Idaho. There's been a concerted effort on social media to brand The Trevor Project, a suicide hotline for LGBTQ+ youth, a "grooming organization."

We are inundated with bad news, to the point that even the tiniest bit of good news (gospel) feels like a relief. The church publicly standing with the LGBTQ+ community at this time would not solve our problems, but it would be another tiny bit of good news, and we need that desperately.

If the cultural tide does not turn soon, it may become increasingly risky to affirm God's image in our LGBTQIA+ siblings. But that's where the gospel should and does operate, not where it is easy, not among those who already have hope, not where needs are already being fulfilled.