

The Reconciling in Christ Team is a group of members (Suzanne Terry, Celene Welch, Nathan Graham, Chris Clarkson, and Pastor John Bell) tasked by the Congregation Council to explore whether it is time for Christ The Servant 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 and gender identities (LGBTQIA+ people).

The simple practicality of an RIC designation

By Suzanne Terry

The Reconciling in Christ team was formed out of concern for our LGBTQIA+ friends. We want CTS to be a place where everyone knows they are loved and accepted by God. Many of us who haven't fit anywhere else have found a home here, and we want that for others.

But there is also a simple practicality to an RIC designation.

The [Reconciling Works website](#) is one of the first places many Lutheran LGBTQIA+ people and allies go when they are looking for a new church. Their directory provides a practical, easy way to discern between churches that merely give lip service to inclusion and churches that actively live it out. For those who are searching for any church in the area that affirms LGBTQIA+ identities, other [online directories](#) list churches of various denominations that have done work similar to RIC.

CTS Denton is not currently on those lists.

Thankfully, that has not kept us from experiencing the blessing of LGBTQIA+ members who not only attend but also enthusiastically serve our church. I wonder, however, how much of that blessing is the result of their courage in giving us a chance rather than our faithfulness to the great commission to go and tell the world the good news that there is a God who loves and wants them. I wonder how many blessings we're missing out on because we are still laying the risk of rejection on people who already have reasons to be skeptical of church rather than doing the work needed to reach out to them ourselves.

If there is an online directory of churches that believe that God loves people - no exceptions - I want CTS Denton to be on it. I want that to be our reputation. For all the world - not just the ones who happen to stumble across our website or threshold - to see. Because I believe, and many of you can also attest, that's who we are.