



# Reconciling Ministries Network

## Three Steps to Affiliate

Congregations, communities, and campus ministries who affiliate with Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) embrace RMN's goal of full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in the United Methodist Church, both in policy and in practice, and engage in the Ministry of Reconciliation in two ways:

1. Outreach, welcome, and ministry with and for LGBTQ persons in the local setting.
2. Create ongoing opportunities to engage in dialogue, build relationships, and advocate for the necessary changes to the discriminatory statements and policies in our Book of Discipline including those that prohibit same-sex marriage officiated by UM clergy, same-sex marriage ceremonies held in our sanctuaries, and the ordination of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons called to ministry.

RMN has a recommended, relationship-based model for engaging in intentional conversation, education, and discernment toward affiliating with the Reconciling movement. Contact your Regional Organizer to learn more.

### STEP ONE

#### Craft and adopt a welcoming statement.

**The basic requirement to affiliate with RMN is a public statement of inclusion that clearly and boldly welcomes *people of all sexual orientations and gender identities*.** Because the Book of Discipline specifically singles out lesbian and gay persons for harm, and because RMN is committed to ensuring that bisexual, gender-expansive, and transgender persons are equally valued and included, *it is critical that each statement explicitly welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities*. See examples below.

**Required language** - Example: "The Wesley Sunday School Class welcomes and affirms people of all sexual orientations and gender identities."

**Recommended** (but not required) **language** - Example: "The Wesley Sunday School Class welcomes and affirms people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions."

We encourage unique statements that name who you are as a church or community. Are you a social justice based class? A church that focuses on hospitality? Proud of your Wesleyan heritage? In addition to the required or recommended language above, share your distinct calling and/or ministries in your Reconciling statement. Sample statements can be viewed [here](#) or obtained from your Regional Organizer.

Once adopted by a vote (we recommend a minimum of 75% support), Reconciling statements from congregations should be typed on church letterhead. (Communities may not have letterhead.) Statements can be signed by whomever is most appropriate for the Reconciling group: pastor, lay leader, Council chair, Sunday school teacher, UMW President, or the signatures of your entire community. Please save your statement as a .doc file and email to your Regional Organizer along with the [New Reconciling Community form](#) and photo.

Note: A "community" is defined as anything other than a congregation - examples being a Sunday School class, campus ministry, youth group, bible study group, UMW Chapter, etc.

<b>STEP TWO</b>	<b>Complete the New Reconciling Community Form.</b>
<p>The <a href="#">New Reconciling Community Form</a> collects basic information about your church or community, and contact information for the one person you choose as your primary contact. Along with your Reconciling statement and photo, this form will be sent to your Regional Organizer and become part of your RMN record. (Download form, save, complete, save again, and return via email.) <b>The primary contact listed on the New Reconciling Community Form must be registered as a Reconciling United Methodist (RUM).</b> <a href="#">Register here!</a></p>	

<b>STEP THREE</b>	<b>Take a high resolution photo.</b>
<p>A photo will accompany your Reconciling statement and New Reconciling Community Form in RMN records. It will also be shared as part of the announcement and celebration on social media. Cell phones take great high resolution photos so feel free to use them. Small groups of smiling faces, class members signing their statement, congregations gathered on the sanctuary chancel, or your outdoor sign all make great photos. Be creative! Landscape/horizontal photos preferred. Photos will be emailed to your Regional Organizer.</p>	

<b>Additional Steps</b>	<b>These steps are not required, but are critical to the continued success of the movement and therefore strongly encouraged.</b>
<p><b>We encourage Reconciling congregations and communities to keep their statement in visible places.</b> Most Reconciling congregations print their statement in the Sunday bulletin, on the main page of their website, and in their Facebook “about us” section as part of their ongoing welcome. It can also be displayed on bulletin boards or other places where first-time visitors would likely see it. Consider newsletters, outdoor signs, letterhead, etc. Seek opportunities in your community to share your commitment to inclusion – participate in pride festivals, local UM gatherings, etc. Think of it as placing your “welcome mat” on the outside of the building, not just the inside.</p> <p><b>We encourage individuals to commit to the movement as well.</b> This creates an individual relationship to the movement and ensures that all receive important communication directly from the larger connection. Hold a Reconciling United Methodist (RUM) drive, inviting everyone in the community to become a RUM. <a href="#">RUM cards</a> are available for download on the RMN website or through your Regional Organizer.</p> <p><b>We encourage Reconciling congregations and communities to donate annually.</b> Just as we give to our local church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, we invite you to do the same with RMN. It is from the generosity of those who believe in full inclusion for LGBT persons that we are able to provide training events, travel to annual conferences, and witness at large UM gatherings. As a guideline, many communities give \$250, while congregations may give \$1000 per year - some more, some less. Churches and communities raise these gifts in various ways – special offering, fundraisers, a line item in their budget, etc. Many keep the annual tradition of celebrating their anniversary of voting to affiliating with RMN by holding an anniversary worship service that includes a special offering. RMN receives no money from the UMC. Our financial support comes solely from churches, communities, individuals, and charitable foundations.</p>	

## What next?

Final steps for submitting your information and staying in touch.

### **What to *email*** to your Regional Organizer:

- Your adopted Reconciling statement
- Your completed “[New Reconciling Community Form.](#)” (found on website or provided by your Regional Organizer or Process Coach)
- A high resolution photo of your congregation or community

### **What to *mail*** to the RMN Office:

- Completed [RUM cards](#) for individual members. Note that the primary contact person listed on your “New Reconciling Community Form” must be registered as a RUM. Where possible, please ensure at least 50% of your group have signed up as well.
- Your financial gift (when able to make one) should be mailed to:  
Reconciling Ministries Network, 123 W Madison St, Ste 2150, Chicago, IL 60602

### **For more information or support, please contact your Regional Organizer.**

Northeastern Jurisdiction: <a href="mailto:northeastern@rmnetwork.org">northeastern@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5306
North Central Jurisdiction: <a href="mailto:northcentral@rmnetwork.org">northcentral@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5306
Southeastern Jurisdiction: <a href="mailto:southeastern@rmnetwork.org">southeastern@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5307
South Central Jurisdiction: <a href="mailto:southcentral@rmnetwork.org">southcentral@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5309
Western Jurisdiction: <a href="mailto:western@rmnetwork.org">western@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5313
Transgender Community Organizer: <a href="mailto:liam@rmnetwork.org">liam@rmnetwork.org</a>	336-970-7703
Africa Central Conferences: <a href="mailto:dennis@rmnetwork.org">dennis@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5314
Other Central Conferences: <a href="mailto:centralconf@rmnetwork.org">centralconf@rmnetwork.org</a>	312-448-5313

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