

Check in

Announcements:

PL returning January 24!

Friday, January 28, 7 – 9 pm Youth Event

Review (Last Year's Topics):

1. Baptism
2. Stewardship
3. 10 Commandments
4. Luther Movie
5. Justification



**What makes you feel welcome?**

**What about the things that make you feel unwelcome?**

**Read the Welcome Statement and circle or underline what stands out to you.**

**Listen to a story of welcome. What do you hear?**

## Welcome to Holy Spirit Lutheran Church

*In this place you feel the full, liberating embrace of Christ's love and you are inspired to be the best version of yourself and share Christ's love with everyone you meet.*



All are welcome in this church, and all means all.

You are welcome regardless of your country of origin or ancestry. You are welcome regardless of whether you are one day, 10 years, or 100 years old; whether you are male, female or transgendered; whether you are a new or lifelong Christian, of another faith, agnostic, atheist, or have never set foot in a place of worship.

All are welcome here.

You are welcome regardless of whether you are single, married, divorced, separated, widowed or partnered, whether you are straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual; whether you are politically active, apolitical or indifferent; whether you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless; whether you are mentally, physically, or not noticeably challenged or gifted.

All are welcome here.

This church is committed to being a loving and welcoming Christ-centered community of faith. Therefore, in faithfulness to the Gospel, in reflection of our Lutheran heritage, and in honour of our shared baptismal covenant, we promise to seek ways to enter into shared ministry with all who would seek God here.

***"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28 (NRSV)***

## **There is a difference between WELCOME and AFFIRMATION** (isn't there?)

“Welcome” means/might mean:

+ Providing hospitality, seeing someone in need, wanting to include someone  
- may also hide an intent (e.g. I'll welcome them and then change them...), only welcoming those like you or who fit in, may be temporary and change with the circumstances, may come across as privileged.

“Affirmation” means/might mean:

+ we accept people for who they are, don't expect people to change to meet our needs, understand that people change and grow in their own way and as God calls them, seeks to value the gifts and ability to share as offered, seeks to learn and grow, is open to being shaped by others, reduces divisions and the space between privileged/oppressed.

### **Why Welcoming/Affirming is a BIG Deal in Churches**

Simply put, churches are usually NOT affirming. They may welcome anyone, but often don't “affirm” them, seeking to eventually conform people to certain standards or expectations.

This comes out of our traditions and some understandings of some biblical passages that seem to condemn people for their behavior or actions or simply because of the way they were created.

Many people (as per our “Welcome Statement”) suffered spiritual trauma for the way they were treated in churches. At Holy Spirit, we seek to welcome and affirm all, because in our understanding God loves all and so should we.

Holy Spirit has been a welcoming congregation since 2008 when we became an “RIC” church (Reconciled in Christ.)

On the next page: write your own affirmations to give to self/others (see examples):



