



RUFFLED BY
grace.

A STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVITY

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The heart of God is vast, accepting everyone.

I am a faithful and proud Presbyterian. I affirm my heritage in a church with roots from the 16th century, which has over 20,000 ordained pastors today.

Presbyterians believe in several important concepts that have brought me to a better understanding of love, blessing and a God who is much larger than me.

The Presbyterian Book of Confessions was written over the centuries by many faithful witnesses. Our Presbyterian roots date back to the 16th century. There are several crucial tenants of Reformed faith and Presbyterianism, which help point us toward a greater understanding of diversity and inclusivity in our faith.

The first and perhaps most important tenant is the foundational in our understanding of faith. It states, “people of good faith may differ.” It is here, where most denominations fall toward division, while Presbyterians have chosen a path of discussion, education, and a movement of the Spirit to help lead the church forward.

Second, we believe that we are reformed always reforming. The same Spirit that led my denomination to reinterpret Scripture and allow me (as a woman) to step foot into the pulpit and lead as pastor, has led the church to affirm that all people deserve love and blessing.

In this way, the Presbyterian Church has been in discussion over many years on issues of human rights, social justice, and diversity, leading our denomination to be more inclusive, welcoming, and affirming to all people.

In my work of love and blessing, it is crucial to give extra attention and care to groups of people who have in the past been excluded from the love of Christ and the institution of the church. To this end, the Presbyterian Church, USA offered an apology to the LGBTQIA+ community acknowledging the

church's past mistakes. It encourages the welcome and acceptance of all gender identities.

You can read the most recent statements by the Presbyterian Church, USA here:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/sexuality-and-same-gender-relationships/>

As a classically trained and ordained pastor, I am proud that I belong to a church that values humanity and sees clearly enough to apologize when it comes to new understanding. This newest document included in our polity not only apologizes for the church's previous unwelcoming stance on LGBTQIA+ parishioners, "but also celebrates LGBTQIA+ church pioneers, and states the church will welcome, lift up, and fight for the human rights of all people created in the eyes of God."

There is no doubt that the inclusion of all peoples is an incredibly important cultural and theological issue. The human rights campaign points to this by listing denominations safe to people groups, specifically the LGBTQIA+ community. You'll see the Presbyterian Church, USA listed there:

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/stances-of-faiths-on-lgbt-issues-presbyterian-church-usa>