

## Sherman Street is LGBTQ+ Affirming -- What does that mean?

As part of our mission to be a living testimony of God's grace and justice in this city, the Council and congregation of Sherman St. CRC decided in November 2020 that all who follow Jesus are welcome and should be able to fully participate in the life of the church.

This means that LGBTQ+ people at Sherman Street, those who are single and those who are in relationships, as led by the Holy Spirit and as their gifts allow, are able to receive the Lord's Supper, be ordained to all offices of the church, preach, be married, have their children baptized, and fill all leadership roles.

This decision comes after many years of prayer, listening, studying the scriptures, and discernment. We have held small groups and listening circles, taken surveys, written reports, and engaged with organizations such as [All One Body](#).

The reasons for this decision are as diverse as the members of our congregation. Some emphasize grace, some emphasize justice, some emphasize love, and some members disagree. All are welcome. We are one in our commitment to our God. We embrace our shared identity as God's children, redeemed through Jesus Christ.

Together, we are part of the body of Christ, but we know that the body is incomplete without our LGBTQ+ members.

We lament that too often the body of Christ has rejected its LGBTQ+ members. We repent for the ways in which our own congregation has participated in that rejection, in both our actions and our inactions.

As we move forward with the work of the church, we commit ourselves to being a place where all those who are hurting experience God's grace and love, a place where we work towards the justice and liberation that are at the heart of God, a place where if one part of the body suffers, all suffer together with it; if one part is honored, all rejoice together with it (1 Corinthians 12:26).

We are all one body, and if the body is to flourish, we need our LGBTQ+ members. We need their gifts and their voices.