



Room for All

Room for All is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2005 “to support, educate and advocate for the full participation of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) persons in all aspects of the life and ministry of the Reformed Church in America as compelled by the inclusive love of God revealed to us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (Certificate of Incorporation, Room for All, Inc., Article 4)

As our mission statement implies, we believe that the overwhelming biblical message, fulfilled in Jesus’ teachings and example, mandates inclusion--with no distinctions--of all those whom God loves and calls to discipleship. Inspired by that gospel, our ministry affirms that persons of all sexual orientations or gender identities who seek to follow Jesus may fully participate in the life of the church according to God’s unique, grace-given gifts.

RfA is not sanctioned by the General Synod, nor do we receive funds or any form of support from the RCA. Our ministry *is* RCA-centered, in that it encompasses those in RCA congregations and campuses who identify as LGBT, along with their family members and allies. However, it is not our goal to force overtures or denominational votes. Rather than advocate for externally-driven change, we trust that LGBT inclusion in the RCA will come from within—one personal story, one breath of the Spirit, one welcome at a time.

In addition to our Scriptural foundation, we firmly believe that LGBT inclusion is missional, and will build up the body of Christ in the Reformed Church in America. (There is strong evidence that believers and seekers of all ages today are looking for a faith community that welcomes all people, including those who are LGBT, and are leaving churches that are not inclusive.) To that end, we encourage congregations to consider becoming publicly welcoming and affirming, both to signal a reliable welcome and “safe space” to all who enter, and also as a testimony of belief within the denomination. We invite RCA congregations to join a public roster of such “Room for All” churches by signing a statement of affirmations.

This document is intended to serve as a guide for discussion and discernment at the congregational level. We believe that the decision to join the roster needs to be considered prayerfully, seeking and listening for signs of the Spirit’s guidance. Congregations that have entered such a process of discernment report that it has been a positive and faith-enriching experience, whether or not they feel ready to formally sign. Since June of 2011, sixty-four RCA congregations have been invited by personal letter to consider joining the roster. Of these, thirteen have signed and returned the affirmations statement (one more is pending) and we know that at least twelve more are in active processes of study and inquiry around it.

We are humbled and grateful to God for the ways this ministry has been blessed and grown, much of it beyond our doing. Guided and inspired by stories from the early days of the church, when those formerly excluded from the faith community found welcome and were baptized, we know that “if this plan is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, [none] will be able to overthrow it” (Acts 5: 38-39). In that light, we can only ask, “If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who [are we] that we could hinder God?” (Acts 11: 17).

RfA Executive Director
December 10, 2011

Room for All Board members:

Jane Dickey
Jes Kast Keat
Marlin VanderWilt
David VanHeest

“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” (Acts 10:47)

AFFIRMATIONS OF “ROOM FOR ALL” CHURCHES:

Welcoming & Affirming Congregations in the Reformed Church in America

Because we...

Affirm the face of God in all:

We are intentionally inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Within our congregational life, we make a conscious and deliberate decision to celebrate the Creator’s diversity as uniquely embodied in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

Because we...

Confess the harm done to LGBT people in the name of God:

We challenge theologies, beliefs, and doctrines that oppress or exclude anyone of any sexual orientation or gender identity who seeks to follow Jesus from full participation in the community of faith.

We intentionally design church systems and structures that include every such person in the full life of the church.

Because we...

Embrace the inclusive love of Jesus Christ:

We seek to proclaim Christ’s selfless and unconditional love in what we teach and in how we live together within our congregation and our community.

We encourage persons of all sexual orientations or gender identities to pattern their relationships after the model of Christ’s love.

Because we...

Recognize the need for greater understanding of LGBT people within our faith community:

We walk with each other on our identity/orientation journeys, encouraging lives free of shame or fear.

We continue to study, to learn and to deepen relationships in order to share the concerns of LGBT persons and families, so as to be equipped actively to resist and to overcome exclusive practices.

Because we...

Look forward to the time when the Reformed Church in America

lives consistently with its baptismal affirmations

recognizes that all persons belong to God

fully welcomes and includes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities into the life and ministry of our denomination:

We encourage and advocate for the full inclusion of LGBT followers of Jesus within our congregation, our classis and our regional synod, as well as within the General Synod.

We support the mission of Room for All with our prayers, words, actions and gifts.

Name & Location of Congregation

President of Consistory

Clerk of Consistory