

ACTION NEEDED FROM LUTHERANS:

Write a Letter to the Editor of Your Paper!

Did you know letters to the editor are one of the most read sections of a newspaper? What a great way to get out our message as we defend LGBTQIA+ folks against discrimination. Using the four easy steps outlined below, we can send hundreds of letters to the editor to newspapers all across the map.

As people of faith we have been taught through our traditions, sacred text, and worship the values of love, welcome, inclusion, and non-judgment. We know that treating some differently because of who they are and who they love is wrong. But too often an inaccurate story is told that people of faith, especially Christians, are “anti-LGBTQIA+.”

We can help change this perception and bear witness to our faith and values. One way to do this is with letters to the editor. This worksheet will help you and your friends, family, and fellow faith community members write letters to the editor that will help share our convictions against discrimination.

STEP 1: Pick 1 or 2 of the talking points below to write about.

- Treating people differently because of who they are causes tremendous harm and unforeseen consequences to them. As people of faith, we believe in the common good of treating people as we want to be treated. We believe that treating people differently, simply because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and aromantic (LGBTQIA+) is fundamentally wrong. This discrimination, for any reason, is counter to who we are and the values we share.
- LGBTQIA+ people are our friends, neighbors, work with us, worship with us, and are members of our family. They work hard, serve in the military, and pay taxes. When they walk into a business or a government office, they should be treated like anyone else and not be discriminated against. This is how my faith inspires me to act -- treating people with dignity and fairness.
- Business owners and service providers have the freedom of their religious beliefs just like everyone else. But businesses and services that are open to the public should be open to everyone on the same terms, regardless of their customers sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- If these bills pass, it will allow people to take advantage and claim that their religion gives them the right to ignore laws. It would mean the law no longer applies to everyone in the same way, resulting in special treatment.

NOTE: Feel free to base your letter off this language-- or you can put it in your own words!



Don't forget to look up the sponsors of ANTI-LGBTQIA+ bills and utilize the power of social media. Ask your pastor to tweet your letter to them from your congregation.

ReconcilingWorks
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



STEP 2: Make sure your letter is between 150 - 200 words

What prompts you to write? Are you responding to an article, editorial, letter to the editor, or local event? State the date and headline. (20 to 30 words)

What is the “big idea” you want to convey? What are the overarching values that informs your view? (50 to 100 words)

What is your hope or wish for the community? What do you want people to take away from your letter? What do you want people to do? (25 to 30 words)

Reaffirm your commitment to vote against the discrimination measure. (15 words)

STEP 3: Sign the letter with your first and last name

Include your phone number and street address as well as city, state, and zip code. Only your name and city will be published.

STEP 4: Send in your letter to your local newspaper

Please copy
info@reconcilingworks.org Or
mail copy to:

ReconcilingWorks Attention:
Aubrey Thonvold
PO Box 8070
Saint Paul, MN 55108

Sample Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As a person of faith, I am writing in response to the up and coming discrimination initiative ____ will be seeing in the legislative session.

My Lutheran faith has taught me through its tradition, sacred text, worship, and community strong core values. Those values are love, welcome, inclusion, and non-judgement. It is because of my faith I know treating someone differently because of who they are and whom they love is wrong. Religious freedom is a fundamental part of America, which is why it is in the federal and state constitution. However, that freedom does not give businesses or corporations the ability to deny good and services to someone because of who they are and whom they love.

I believe all ____ should treat one another as one would want to be treated. Faith is about loving our neighbors, not discriminating against them. I understand not everyone holds the same religious beliefs I do, however, I do know ____ is about building strong communities. Discrimination has no place in _____. Religious freedom is not being threatened. What is being threatened is strong communities and a strong economy.

It is because of my faith I want to keep discrimination out of _____.

Sincerely,

Sarah Smith

Note: Replace “_____” with your state’s name.

Dear Editor,

I recently heard about the proposed legislative bill that, if passed, would discriminate against LGBTQIA+ people, including LGBTQIA+ youth. I sincerely hope that this measure does not pass, as it would appear to rewrite discrimination into our laws.

As a life time resident of our community, I have seen the ways we have come together in times of adversity. It is in our strength as a community that I have continued to support, live, and contribute to _____. We as a community have fought against discrimination for people of every race, skin color, age, ability, and today are confronted with a bill, that if passed, goes against all we have worked for over the years. We must support people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

We need to work now to keep our communities moving forward as this bill seeks to penalize trans youth for participating in school sanctioned sports. Discrimination doesn't belong in _____ and we have to come together to defend our state against this legislative bill.

Sincerely,

MIKE JOHNSON