**Ascension Lutheran Church Statement of Welcome**

May 2018

Ascension Lutheran Church is a community of faith that deeply values relationship and human connection. As such, we feel called to a ministry of hospitality, learning to take seriously the wide-netted welcome that our gift of hospitality requires.

From the very beginning, God created us to be in relationship. We understand that our relationship with God calls us to love *all* people—not just in word and speech, but in action—reflecting God’s boundless love in our lives and in the world (1 John 3). We affirm the goodness and sanctity of relationship—romantic and neighborly, same-sex and opposite-sex alike and to the same extent.

In response to God’s boundless love for us and striving to model Christ’s life and ministry of inclusion, we affirm the beautiful diversity of God’s human creation. We welcome and affirm everyone regardless of age, race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. In doing so, we strive to support one another in being our true selves and fulfilling God’s purpose for our lives.

We welcome and affirm everyone without regard to physical or mental health, imprisonment, addiction, socio-economic or family circumstances, political affiliation, or anything else that divides us. We echo the words of Saint Paul, “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female.” (Galatians 3:28) Christ has made *all* of us one.